

# Radboud Universiteit



## Master Thesis – Responsibility and religion among Entrepreneurial leaders

‘How does religion affect the type of responsibility in  
leadership among entrepreneurial leaders?’

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This critical triple-case study examines if and how religion has an effect on responsible leadership among entrepreneurial leaders by looking at a Christian case, an Islamic case and a non-religious case. The cases are examined by conducting semi-structured interviews, focusing on their depth of devotion, CSR, leadership and responsible leadership in order to gain an in-depth overview of the situation and the influence religion has on the three main concepts.

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction

The modern day business climate is increasingly expecting businesses to fulfil their role in and towards society. Definitions of the role of organisations in society differ between scholars and other individuals, but recently different members of society such as customers, governmental organisations, suppliers and NGO's expect organisations to actively contribute to society and the environment rather than solemnly striving for a surviving and profitable business. Recent trend research (Singh & Amarnath, 2016) shows that sustainability, in all its forms, is increasingly gaining a more relevant position in society. This notion of corporate social responsibility (CSR) has, additionally to public trend research, vastly acquired a prominent position in business and in academic business literature. CSR theory argues that organisations have a responsibility towards their society, environment and other relevant stakeholders. Older studies such as Friedman (1970) as well as recent more economist/instrumentalist oriented studies, argue that an organisation's responsibility solemnly lies with themselves, implying that an organisation's responsibility is to strive for profit maximisation (Friedman, 1970; Waldman & Siegel, 2008). The term CSR stems from studies back in the fifties (Bowen, 1953) but has seen a surge of popularity mainly in the last fifteen to twenty years. One of the main contributors to lighting the spark of interest for responsible business was John Elkington (1997), who introduced his triple-bottom-line theory, expanding the field of sustainability from environmental practices with the addition of people and responsible allocation of profit. The focus on CSR in organisations is not limited to the corporate level, but goes as far as to the single employee. Reaching the single employee and convincing this individual to partake in striving for responsibility, leads to the topic of the responsible leader. The responsible leader's role is to create and maintain a work environment in which the employees can and want to work responsibly (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bass, 1990, 1998; Maak & Pless, 2006a, 2006b; Pless, 2007; Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993).

In this thesis, the responsible leader is further examined by looking at responsible leadership behavior among entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship is not limited to the founders of organisations; entrepreneurs, as defined in this thesis, are comprised of all people that are actively involved in managing and organising an organisation while assuming risk for the sake of profit and organisational development (Hull, Bosley, & Udell, 1980). Recent studies

have given attention to the social and civic entrepreneur, implying a movement of responsible entrepreneurial business as opposed to the prior definitions of entrepreneurship where the definitions strongly refer to innovative profit maximisation.

In the Netherlands, as well as other Western-European countries, we live in a multi-cultural society in which 17 million people work and live together. Within those 17 million people, there is a high level of diversity. Academic literature has shown that people with different backgrounds have a probable chance of having a different interpretation of the notion of responsibility in business. Therefore, it is safe to argue that people with different backgrounds have a reasonable chance to have a different view on responsible leadership behavior than we do. In this thesis, the background of entrepreneurial leaders is narrowed down to religion. Religions are hard to define and frequently subject to a personal interpretation. For this reason, the aspects and dimensions of different religions that may or may not alter an individual's behavior are not defined prior to the empirical research, but may become clear as a result of this thesis' research. Although there is no clear definition, it can be argued that religions provide individuals with a predefined set of norms, values and perception of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) that have the possibility to alter ones perception of responsibility. The CBS [Central Bureau of Statistics in the Netherlands] (Schmeets, 2014) identifies ten different religions (Schmeets, 2014, p. 7) in the Netherlands that see frequent representation in society, including the 'absence of religion/ no religion' and 'different, namely..' as independent religious groups. This wide variety has led to the research in this thesis; examining the possible influence of religion on responsible leadership behavior among entrepreneurial leaders.

## 1.2 Problem Statement and Research Question

The influence of religion on responsible leadership behavior among has as of yet not been justified empirically and is a topic in the academic business literature that resides in theory and assumptions. There is a lack of empirical substantiation to make grounded arguments as to whether religion has any effect on responsibility among entrepreneurial leaders. Miller & Timothy (2010) argue that Weber's (1905) proposition of the importance of religion in the marketplace has resurfaced after being oppressed by economic and standard practices in the last century. Other integrating studies on religion and entrepreneurship, such as Ummi Salwa et al. (2013) show that religious background does indeed affect business significantly. The

lack of substantial evidence regarding responsible leadership and different types of religion leads to the following research question;

### **How does religion affect the type of responsibility in leadership among entrepreneurial leaders?**

In order to answer the research question, a set of sub-questions has been formed that guide the thesis towards the empirical research and ultimately to the results of this research. The theory chapter will cover the following sub-questions.

1. How is the responsible leader defined in the literature?
2. What are the different types of responsible leadership?
3. What degrees of responsible leadership within the different types of responsible leadership can be identified?
4. How is the entrepreneurial leader defined?
5. How does religion affect the day to day life of individuals?
6. How does religion translate in to business behavior?

Following the theory chapter, qualitative empirical research will be conducted to answer the following sub-questions. Qualitative research, as opposed to quantitative research, leaves room for the researcher to interpret the respondents' personal perception and contextual influence on the matter. The topics of social-, civic entrepreneurship and religion are prone to be context- and individual dependent and therefore it is argued in this thesis that the inclusion of behavioral aspects of the research objects requires qualitative research.

7. How does religion have an effect on the type of responsible behavior of entrepreneurs?
8. How does religion have an effect on the entrepreneurial behavior of entrepreneurs?
9. How does religion have an effect on the responsible leadership behavior of entrepreneurial leaders?

## **1.3 Relevance of the research**

### *1.3.1 Scientific Relevance*

Religion as a factor of change in the public's attitude towards CSR has proven to be true (Brammer, Down, Williams, & Zinkin, 2006).. This research focuses on whether religion affects the type of responsibility an entrepreneurial leader conducts in his or her leadership behavior and whether there are observable differences in the degree of responsibility within these types of responsibility. This type of research opens a new field of research, where

religion may or may not affect entrepreneurs in their attitude towards responsibility in their leadership style.

### *1.3.2 Societal Relevance*

As argued in the first section of this chapter, CSR has taken a prominent position in the perception of businesses by the public. Exemplary, fortune-500 companies based in the UK and the USA spent over \$15bln on CSR-related activities in 2014 (Smith, 2014). A research by KPMG in 2015 showed that in the first nine months of 2015, private investors had invested more capital in start-up businesses than in the full twelve months of 2014 (KPMG, 2015). These trends are reason to believe that responsibility among entrepreneurs is rising in popularity. This research attempts to provide managers and entrepreneurial leaders to perceive entrepreneurial leaders with different religious backgrounds as to possibly have a different interpretation of and approach to responsibility. The results of this research may also provide customers or potential business partners of said entrepreneurs with a different angle of approach in their dealings with the company.

## 1.4 Structure

Following chapter one, chapter two will provide the theoretical background defining all the relevant topics and providing all the relevant background information necessary to understand notions and definition choices in this research. Chapter three, conceptualisation, includes the argumentation for the chosen research methods and includes an operationalization of the used notions and definitions in this research. Chapter four contains the results and analysis of results, in which assumptions are made and new theory is generated. Finally, chapter five contains the conclusion and discussion in which the results of the research are summarized and reflected upon. All documents, transcripts of interviews and other data that is used in the empirical research are provided in the appendix.

## 2. Theoretical Background

### 2.1 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

CSR or responsible business is a term first coined by Bowen (1953), defining responsibility for businessmen as: ‘responsibility refers to the obligations of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society (p. 6)’. Responsibility in business in its early academic stages was mainly focused on a business’ responsibility towards their shareholders, implying that a business’ sole responsibility is to increase its profit (Friedman, 1970).

Perceiving organisations as an entity within society, with its aligned responsibilities towards society gained popularity when Elkington (1997) introduced his ‘triple bottom line theory’ (TBL), consisting of the three well-known factors (p’s): *people*, *planet* and *profit*. Elkington in his study argued that an organisation has three main forms of responsibility; responsibility towards people both in and outside the organisation, e.g. unemployment rates, female empowerment, relative poverty or small-scale social factors such as small commute time of employees (Slaper & Hall, 2011) and the individual development of employees (Meijer & Schuyt, 2005); a responsibility towards the planet and the environment, e.g. pollution, waste and fuel consumption and lastly responsibility towards its economic environment, consisting of both internal profit gains as well as maintaining a positive contribution to the market in which the organisation operates, e.g. job growth, organisational gains (Elkington, 1997; Slaper & Hall, 2011, p. 5). Elkington states that the three factors of the TBL have to be balanced in order for a business to strive as a responsible organisation.

Later studies on CSR have expanded the notion of responsibility further. Carroll (1991), as shown in Figure 1: Pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility. Carroll (1991, p. 42), divided CSR in to four dimensions, each respectively addressing a layer of the total sum of responsibilities of an organisation; (1) economic responsibilities, produce and/or sell goods and/or services in order to make a profit; (2) legal responsibilities, business operations remain within the legal boundaries of the national/ global law; (3) ethical responsibilities, expected society-contributions that extend one’s legal responsibilities and lastly (4) philanthropic responsibilities, which consist of voluntary contributions to society that exceed the societal expectations. A responsible organisation that fulfils all four responsibilities arguably is an organisation that strives for *rich survival* (Achterbergh & Vriens, 2009). Rich survival

implies that organisations go beyond *poor survival*, which means that the organisation's goals are 'selfish' goals only and survival is economic and legal survival only.



Figure 1: Pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility. Carroll (1991, p. 42)

The definition of CSR that will be used in this thesis is the definition by Waldman & Siegel (2008). They define responsibility as 'actions on behalf of the firm that express their commitment to preserving and improving the community and environment they operate in by stimulation of the goals of identifiable (non-market) stakeholder groups. This implies that organisations are willing to go beyond their obligated commitment by law' (McWilliams & Siegel, 2001; D. A. Waldman & Siegel, 2008, p. 117). This definition refers to CSR as striving for rich survival (Achterbergh & Vriens, 2009), covering all four types of responsibilities for responsible organisations (Carroll, 1991) and implying that responsible behavior is treated as a goal rather than a means to a goal. This view on responsibility is hereafter referred to as *inclusive responsibility*, opposing *instrumental responsibility* whereas CSR is treated as a means to the serve the organisation's pursuit of its own goals (Achterbergh & Vriens, 2009).

## 2.2 Leadership

Leadership includes the 'process of social influence in which a person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task' (Chemers, 1997, p. 1). Over the years, scholars have studied different types and forms of leadership, the most commonly known and used being Bass' (1990) distinction between transactional and transformational leadership. Transactional leadership revolves around a constant exchange between leader and

recipient, in which the recipient is rewarded (positive exchange) for good behavior and is threatened or disciplined for bad behavior (negative exchange) (1990, p. 20).

Transformational leadership, or charismatic leadership (Burns, 1978), is defined by Bass as the superior form of leadership. He argues that ‘transformational leadership - occurs when leaders broaden and elevate the interests of their employees, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group, and when they stir their employees to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group’ (1990, p. 21).

The transformational leader is characterised by; (1) *charisma*, which refers to the leader providing a sensible vision and mission, while instilling pride and gaining respect and trust; (2) evoking *inspiration* through challenging goal-setting; (3) *stimulating intellect* by promoting intelligence, rationality and careful problem solving and lastly is characterised by (4) *considering the individual* by giving each employee individual attention and treatment through coaching and advising (p.22). Shamir et al. (1993) build on the works of Bass (1985, 1990) and Burns (1978) and argue that ‘charismatic leaders change the salience hierarchy of values and identities within the follower's self-concept, thus increasing the probability that these values and identities will be implicated in action’ and ‘that charismatic leaders increase self-efficacy and collective efficacy through expressing positive evaluations, communicating higher performance expectations of followers, showing confidence in followers' ability to meet such expectations, and emphasizing the individual's ties to the collective’ (p.584). In the following chapter, the relation between CSR and transformational leadership is explored by introducing a theoretical framework of responsible leadership.

### 2.3 Responsible Leadership

Responsible leadership is the field of study where the type and degree of responsibility in leadership behavior is analysed. In this section, two types of responsible leadership will be defined and explained. The general definition for responsible leadership in this thesis is ‘responsible leadership is the art of building and sustaining good relationships to all relevant stakeholders through leadership’ (Maak & Pless, 2006a, p. 40, 2006b, p. 104). Stakeholders are people, groups or organisations that have an interest in the operations of an organisation, consisting of both internal and external parties (Schneider, 2002). In this multi-interpretable definition of responsible leadership, one can argue whether *planet* from the TBL is included. In this thesis, it is argued that *planet* is included by building and sustaining good relationships with government- and non-government organisation fighting for the preservation of local and

global environmental issues. Other stakeholders may include; employees, managers, board members, owners, customers, suppliers, and competitors. Several scholars have studied and defined the two different forms of responsible leadership. Waldman & Siegel (2008) in their study argue internally about the definition of responsibility from an economist's and a more social/ ethical perspective. Miska et al. (2014) later distinguished two forms of responsible leadership, monetary and non-monetary responsible leadership. These two types, in line with the two types of CSR as explained in 2.1 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), will hereafter be referred to as *instrumental responsible leadership* and *inclusive responsible leadership*.

In this thesis, two figures from two different studies will be shown to illustrate the differences between the two types of responsible leadership. Figure 2: Responsible Leadership Views (Miska, Hilbe & Mayer, 2014, p. 351) shows that there are two main dimensions which, when increasing, change the type of responsible leadership of a leader. *Degree of stakeholder inclusion* refers to the amount of stakeholder parties that are considered relevant in the leadership strategy. *Scope of responsibility* refers to the bandwidth of diverse types of responsibilities (Miska et al., 2014, p. 350). It is safe to argue that the two dimensions go hand in hand, whereas the leader's scope of responsibility will widen when there is a higher degree of stakeholder inclusion. It is debatable whether inclusive responsible leadership as defined in this thesis is considered to skew more towards the stakeholder views or the converging views as defined by Miska et al. This debate leads to the assumption that the two views provide a scale of degree within the inclusive responsible leadership type.

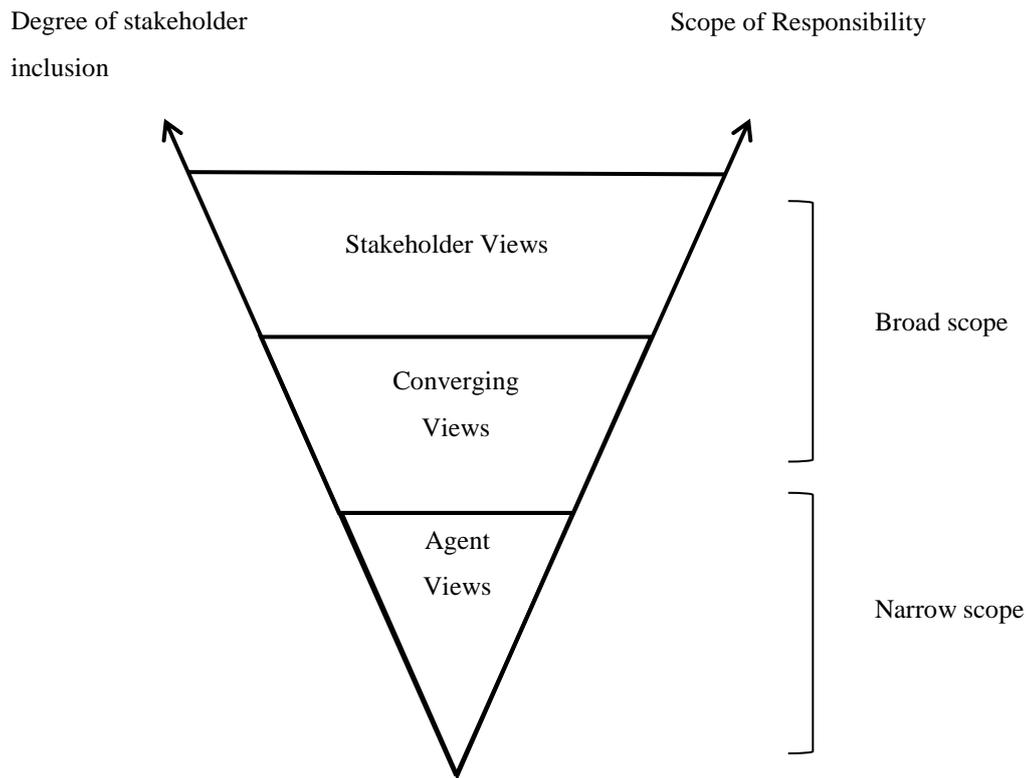


Figure 2: Responsible Leadership Views (Miska, Hilbe & Mayer, 2014. p. 351)

A different approach to categorising different types and degrees of responsible leadership is the study by Pless, Maak and Waldman (2012) who identified four types of responsible leadership which vary by the degree to which leaders feel accountable for others and by the breadth of the constituent group focus, as seen in Figure 3: Matrix of Responsible Leadership Orientation (Pless, Maak & Waldman, 2012. p. 56).

*The traditional economist*, traditionally referred to as the homo economicus, is the responsible leader whose sole purpose is to strive for profit-maximization. In the matrix, the traditional economist scores lowest on degree of accountability towards others and the breadth of its constituent group focus. In line with Friedman (1970), the responsibility of this leader is towards the company only. Within the scope of this thesis, the traditional economist is not considered a responsible leader. Completely opposing the traditional economist in the matrix is the integrator. *The integrator* is a leader who runs a responsible business of which profit is most likely the outcome (Pless et al., 2012, p. 58). This definition inherently implies that profit is not the sole goal of the organisation or the leader, running the responsible business is. The integrator is arguably the most responsible leader within the matrix, pursuing responsibility as a goal. The integrator leader can be seen as to be in the stakeholder views of Figure 2: Responsible Leadership Views (Miska, Hilbe & Mayer, 2014. p. 351).

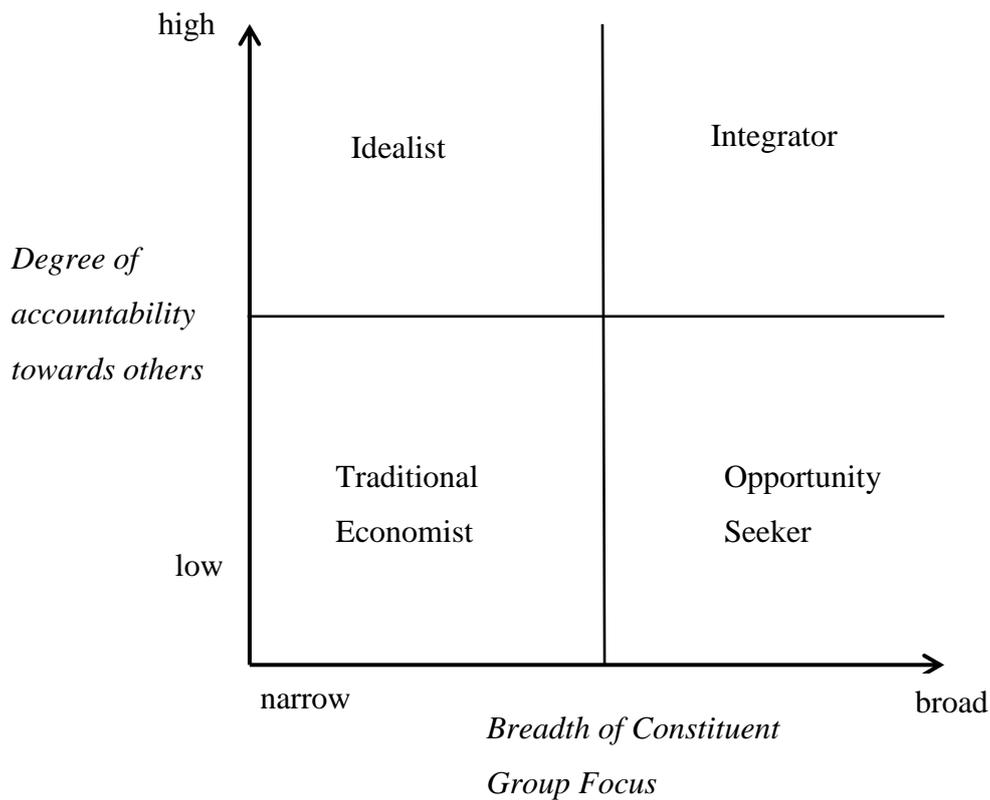


Figure 3: Matrix of Responsible Leadership Orientation (Pless, Maak & Waldman, 2012. p. 56)

The remaining two types of responsible leaders have either a high accountability towards others or a high breadth of focus, but do not possess a high score on both dimensions. *The opportunity seeker* seeks opportunities for profit by focusing on a very large group of stakeholders; all that are deemed somewhat relevant are involved. This broad group focus, but low accountability towards others leads to a selfish way of operating, using CSR practices as a means for the leader’s own goals. Lastly, *the idealist* uses business as a tool to tackle social problems and stakeholders in need. Business is not used as an end in this form of leadership. Idealist leaders were found to be driven by strong ethical intentions, often rooted in religious or spiritual beliefs (p. 59). This narrow focus with a high degree of accountability leads to very specific charitable practices when looking at the whole picture. In this thesis, it is argued that both the opportunity seeker and the idealist can be found in the converging views of Figure 2: Responsible Leadership Views (Miska, Hilbe & Mayer, 2014. p. 351), as they perform socially responsible practices that only affect a part of their stakeholders or serve a private goal. The following two sub-sections will elaborate on the two defined types

of responsibility in more depth, outlining the main aspects of the respective form of responsible leadership.

### *2.3.1 Instrumental Responsible Leadership*

Instrumental responsible leadership, as explained prior in this thesis, uses responsibility as a goal to the organisation's own goals (Achterbergh & Vriens, 2009). Instrumental responsible leaders focus on stakeholder incentives that directly or indirectly increase the company's economic gains. Instrumental responsible leadership most often has a lower degree of stakeholder inclusion/ a narrow constituent group focus and a lower scope of responsibility and accountability towards others (Miska et al., 2014; Pless et al., 2012). Instrumental responsible leadership makes use of any stakeholder party that can positively benefit the organisation, but only involves the financially invested stakeholders, shareholders, in the gains of the organisation. Miska et al. (2014) define three practical implications of instrumental responsible leadership; (1) strategic considerations; (2) anticipated negative costs and (3) sanctions for irresponsible behavior. These three practical and strategic implications for instrumental responsible leadership all have the opportunity to indirectly contribute to the economic gains of the organisation.

Strategic considerations for responsible leadership are an increase to the organisation's reputation and image, help in the attraction and retaining of talent and lastly assist in justifying a higher price strategy (Waldman & Siegel, 2008). All three examples of strategic considerations in some way contribute to the economic gains of the company. Reputation, image, and talented personnel are indirect ways by which the company attempts to increase its profits, whereas a higher price is a more direct method for increasing profit.

The anticipation of negative costs are based on the outcome of irresponsible behavior and the negative costs give an indication as to what degree of CSR involvement the company and the leader need to avoid negative costs. Irresponsible behavior is defined as 'the intentional or unintentional harming of stakeholders or business leaders (Miska et al., 2014, p. 353). In their study, Miska et al. provide examples of negative costs based on prior studies; alienated customers and suppliers; damaged corporate reputation and the need for internal surveillance mechanisms which arguably refers to a loss of internal trust (Waldman & Galvin, 2008). Devinney (2009) argues that business leader's irresponsible behavior results in the inflicting of social sanctions upon the leader by society. The fear for these social sanctions often leads to a higher degree of stakeholder inclusion. Guay et al. (2004) argue

that social sanctions extend beyond the notion of CSR. They state that NGO's challenge the quality of leadership, regardless of the degree of CSR activity within the leadership strategy. This ultimately leads to the filtering of bad leaders through a high expectation profile set up by the shareholders of the organisation.

In addition to the Miska et al. study, Friedman (1970) argues that ethics do not have a place in business. This rigid mind-set towards ethical behavior goes further than to reject ethical behavior as positive, he argues that partaking in CSR activities comes at a cost. The loss of profit, regardless of contingent gains such as e.g. reputation, is to be seen as irresponsible behavior towards one's shareholders. Later studies, such as Siegel's economist perspective in Waldman & Siegel (2008) and McWilliams & Siegel (2001) build on the notion of responsibility solemnly towards shareholders and argues that companies engage in profit-maximizing CSR. A cost/benefit analysis is to determine the optimal level of CSR-engagement for a company, making sure the company's economic interests have priority (McWilliams & Siegel, 2001; D. A. Waldman & Siegel, 2008).

### *2.3.2 Inclusive Responsible Leadership*

Inclusive responsible leadership refers to stakeholder incentives that do not contribute to the company's economic gains. These incentives focus on societal and environmental goals, and are considered a goal: making a positive contribution to society and environment (Cameron, 2011). Inclusive responsible leadership strives for a high degree of stakeholder inclusion/broad constituent group focus and a high level of accountability and responsibility towards others (Miska et al., 2014; N. M. Pless et al., 2012). Miska et al. identify three practical categories for inclusive responsible behavior; (1) values and authenticity; (2) a sense of care and duty to help and lastly (3) personal corporate citizenship (Grit, 2004). An inclusive responsible leader has certain ethical values which they want to possess and strive for, values that make them a 'good and virtuous person' (Cameron, 2011). Freeman & Auster (2011) argue that the notion of authenticity in responsible leadership refers to 'acting on the basis of not only one's perceived values but equally 'one's history, relationships with others, and aspirations'(2011, p. 15; Miska et al., 2014, p. 353). Creating and maintaining a sense of care and duty to help extends beyond societal expectations, it is considered to be an inherent characteristic of an inclusive responsible leader: feeling the urge to help and care for people in society. Lastly, corporate citizenship is a notion that argues organisations are to be treated as a citizen of society, and all citizens have their ethical duty towards preserving and

improving the society and environment they live in (Grit, 2004).

Inclusiveness can have different interpretations, the most all-inclusive being the notion of virtuousness in business introduced by Cameron (2011). Cameron argues that virtuousness in leadership is less a means to another desirable outcome than an ultimate goal itself (p.28). Virtuousness refers to striving for ethical and moral excellence. This pursuit of excellence is, as argued by Cameron, the ultimate goal for the inclusive responsible leader.

### *2.3.3 The responsible leader role-set*

The responsible leader can fulfil one or many roles within an organisation, changing based on the interpretation of the notion of responsibility. Role fulfilment is a macro-oriented approach to leadership research, as opposed to leadership trait research. By focusing on leadership roles from a macro-perspective, the research becomes less focused on the individual aspect of leadership behavior (Christensen, Mackey, & Whetten, 2014) as is intended in this thesis. Scholars have found some proof that suggests that supervisory support behavior influences the probability that employees will try to be innovative and come up with solutions to environmental problems in an innovative way (Christensen et al., 2014, p. 169; Ramus & Steger, 2000). Early leadership studies (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bass, 1990) suggest that transformational leadership is at the basis for responsible leadership. Characteristics of the transformational leader suggest an early version of role definition; influence people by invoking ideals, motivate people inspirationally, stimulate people intellectually and provide individual consideration to all employees (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bass, 1990, 1998; Christensen et al., 2014). Shamir et al. (1993) in their study on charismatic leadership add role definitions such as; being visionary, provide inspirational messages, display of confidence in self, and followers and leader expectation setting for follower self-sacrifice and performance beyond the 'call of duty' (1993, p. 578). Pless argues in several studies (Maak & Pless, 2006a, 2006b; Nicola M. Pless, 2007) that the responsible leader has several roles, but more importantly stresses that these roles do not exist separately. The roles together form a coherent role set which is the base for the leader's social status within the organisation. A role set in this context is defined as 'a complement of role-relationships on which persons are involved by virtue of occupying a particular social status (...) relating the status-occupant to diverse others' (Maak & Pless, 2006b; Merton, 1957, pp. 110–111). Merton argues that in order for a role set to fulfill its purpose, all roles must be integrated into the behavior set of an individual. Figure 4: The roles model of responsible leadership (Pless 2007, p. 439, adapted

from Maak and Pless, 2006) shows the set of roles as defined by Pless, which is used as the definite role-set for responsible leader behavior in this thesis.

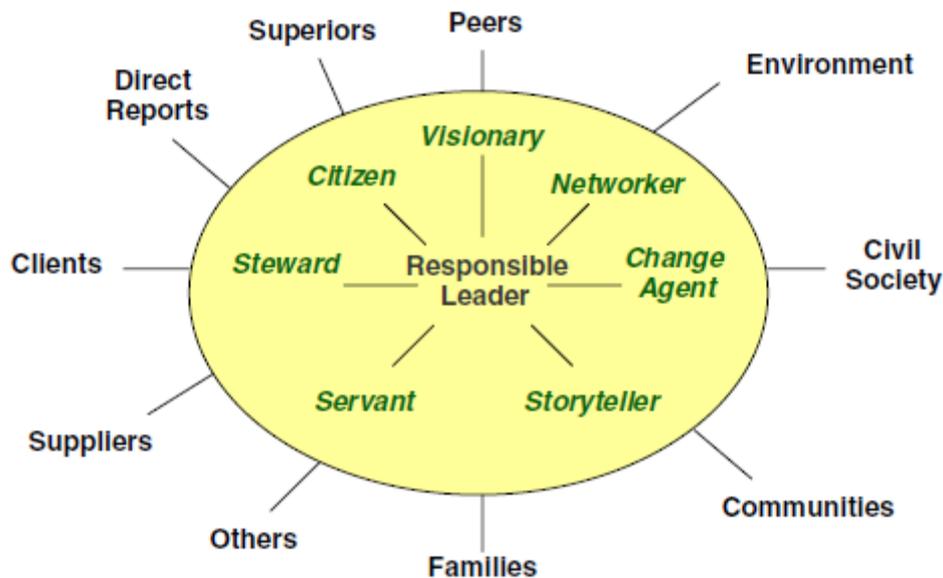


Figure 4: The roles model of responsible leadership (Pless 2007, p. 439, adapted from Maak and Pless, 2006)

Maak (2006a, 2006b) & Pless (2006a, 2006b; 2007) provide descriptions of the defined role-set, which will be summarized in the following part of this sub-section.

The *steward* is a protector of values, protecting personal and professional integrity, steering the organisation responsibly and respectfully. By doing this, the steward includes present and future stakeholder interests. The *citizen* plays the leading role for the company as a corporate citizen; maintaining an efficiently-driven organisation while contributing to a sustainable society by actively participating in society on a personal level as well as encouraging others to do so. The *visionary* provides the vision for the organisation, providing his followers a legitimate and strong vision to follow and commit to (Bass, 1990, 1998). The *networker* creates employee networks in which the employees can operate in a responsible way. By providing employees with strong networks, employees gain more autonomy and task responsibility, since the leader and top-management are no longer the only source for help. This, in turn, stimulates the individual development of the employees for both private and organisational gain. The *storyteller* uses stories to create a shared sense of meaning and understanding amongst employees. Stories help in the illustration and transportation of core values and norms by triggering moral imagination, i.e. sense-making (Weick, 1995). Lastly, the *change agent* is the leader that leads the employees through a period of change. Many

studies have shown that times of change are stressful and face a lot of resistance (Kotter, 1996; Lewin, 1947). The change agent is responsible for mobilizing stakeholders, removing barriers that form resistance of change, building sustaining commitment, reducing complexity and anxiety by producing short-term goals (Kotter, 1996) and ultimately keeping momentum in times of insecurity. Refreezing the organisation (Lewin, 1947) by creating a sustaining environment strongly contributes to the work environment in which the employees operate.

## 2.4 Entrepreneurial Leadership

This thesis focuses on leadership among entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial leadership. Defining the entrepreneur has proven to be difficult ever since the notion was subjected to academic research (Gartner, 1988). Two types of definitions have emerged, behavior-based definitions and trait-based definitions. Behavior-based definitions define entrepreneurs/ entrepreneurship based on the set of activities that takes place in new venture creation whereas trait-based definitions define entrepreneurs based on the inner characteristics of the entrepreneur. In this thesis, the entrepreneur is defined as ‘a person who organises and manages a business undertaking assuming the risk for the sake of profit. For present purposes, this standard definition will be extended to include those individuals who purchase or inherent an existing business with the intention of (and effort toward) expanding it’ (Hull et al., 1980, p. 17). This definition skews toward the behavior-based set of definitions, and arguably represents the process of entrepreneurship and forming a business in an all-encompassing way.

The entrepreneur fulfilling a leadership position introduces the research topic of entrepreneurial leadership. The definition of entrepreneurial leadership, much like the definition of entrepreneurship/entrepreneurs, has evolved over the last 25 years as seen in Table 1: Evolving Definition of Entrepreneurial Leadership (Renko, El Tarabishy, Carsrud, & Brännback, 2015, p. 55). Table 1: Evolving Definition of Entrepreneurial Leadership (Renko, El Tarabishy, Carsrud, & Brännback, 2015, p. 55) shows that the definitions have changed from more instrumentalist, economic definitions to newer definitions in which adaptability is of bigger importance. Due to the responsible nature of this thesis, the definition by Surie and Ashley (2008) for entrepreneurial leadership will be used in this thesis; ‘Entrepreneurial leadership is Leadership capable of sustaining innovation and adaptation in high velocity and uncertain environments’. This definition arguably has the best fit with the theme of responsible leadership due to the lack of any instrumentalist or inclusive direction in

comparison to definitions such as Gupta et al. (2004); Thornberry (2006) and Renko et al. (2015) in which leadership is a definite instrumental tool.

Table 1: Evolving Definition of Entrepreneurial Leadership (Renko, El Tarabishy, Carsrud, & Brännback, 2015, p. 55)

Cunningham & Lischeron (1993)	Entrepreneurial Leadership involves setting clear goals, creating opportunities, empowering people, preserving organizational intimacy and developing a human resource system
Ireland, Hitt and Sirmon (2003)	Entrepreneurial leadership entails the ability to influence others to manage resources strategically in order to emphasize both opportunity-seeking and advantage-seeking behaviors.
Gupta, MacMillan, and Surie (2004)	Leadership that creates visionary scenarios that are used to assemble and mobilize a supporting cast of participants who become committed by the vision to the discovery and exploitation of strategic value creation.
Thornberry (2006)	Leadership requires passion, vision, focus, and the ability to inspire others. Entrepreneurial leadership requires all these, plus a mindset and skill set that helps entrepreneurial leaders identify, develop, and capture new business opportunities.
Surie and Ashley (2008)	Leadership capable of sustaining innovation and adaptation in high velocity and uncertain environments.
Renko, Tarabishy Carsrud and Brännback (2015)	Entrepreneurial leadership entails influencing and directing the performance of group members toward the achievement of organizational goals that involve recognizing and exploiting entrepreneurial opportunities.

Academic literature suggest four conditions that simulate entrepreneurial behavior in firms, (1) effective communication of an entrepreneurial vision, (2) processes to nurture innovation, (3) processes to secure resources and (4) expertise for entrepreneurial efforts and the capacity to facilitate continuous exploitation and idea generation (Surie & Ashley, 2008, p. 237).

These four conditions require leadership to promote and facilitate this entrepreneurial behavior among employees. The four conditions require a certain degree of creativity, which implies that the entrepreneurial leader is the innovator and creator committed to action and value creation in the market (p. 238). Surie and Ashley suggest that entrepreneurial leaders must take into account all consequences for their actions, in order to maintain their long-term survival and maintain a sustainable profile.

## 2.6 Religion

### *2.6.1 Religion as a social construct*

Social constructivism relies on perceiving reality from a social construct's point of view. Social constructs in social studies were first coined by Berger & Luckmann (1966) in their book 'The Social Construction of Reality'. The core concept argued in the book is the notion of people interacting in social systems. Social systems theory implies that people within society are organized by a characteristic pattern of relationships, which stem from a social construct, e.g. religion. . Interacting in a social system assumes that people when interacting, make mental images and concepts of each other's actions which eventually are inherently translated into role definitions within the social system through habitualization (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, pp. 70–71). These habitualized interaction roles are institutionalized, implying that the roles are embedded in the social system of society. Berger and Luckmann argue that knowledge and the perception of what defines reality are embedded in society, leading them to argue that reality is socially constructed: we know what we know and we see what we see based on the premises of the social construct of which we are a part. In this thesis, religion is the social construct that is to be used in research. This implies that, in this research, religion is the base for people's knowledge and for people's perception of right and wrong within society. Perception of right and wrong has seen many interpretations, stemming from old Greek philosophy. Bentham's consequentialism argues that the consequences of one's actions define whether the action is morally right or wrong. Kant's deontological ethics look at the morality behind one's actions, defining whether an action is right or wrong based on the intentions behind the action. Lastly, Plato and Aristotle's virtue ethics emphasize an individual's ethical role/virtue which lead to actions (Fieser & Dowden, n.d.). Different religions may, or may not, change one's perception on what is right and wrong and may therefore affect one's approach towards responsible behavior in an entrepreneurial business climate. The following sections incorporate theoretical bases on whether and how religion directly affects the notions of entrepreneurship and leadership.

### *2.6.2 Religion and Leadership*

Religion in practice resides in a religious individual's norms and values. Values specify why an individual makes certain decisions and the way those decisions will be undertaken (Edgar,

n.d., p. 1). This section attempts to cover the basic, most dominant values that one may take from the Christian and Islamic religion, ultimately attempting to gain insight as to what religious values may shape leaders and how these values translate in to business.

### *Christianity*

Due to the immensity of content in the Bible, and the number of single values running into the hundreds, a selection of 8 Christian values that are assumedly most relevant for present-day society as described by Edgar will be highlighted. This provides an understanding of the main aspects of the Christian faith that can be recognized in day-to-day practices of individuals. Due to the immensity of text and literature on these Christian values, this thesis will conclude a short explanation of these values and a personal interpretation of the author of how those values translate to (responsible) business and leadership.

*Grace* refers to the fact that people ought to get more than they deserve, implying that individuals should aim to go out of their way to help and assist others in their life. Grace can be recognized in inclusive responsible behavior, as described in earlier sections of this chapter, in which organisations strive for responsibility that goes beyond the boundaries of the law. These organisations aim at contributing to society as much as they can under the presumption that this is the right thing to do, CSR is not a means but is an ultimate goal. *Hope* indicates that one must always remain hopeful since God is always present. Edgar states that the continuous presence of God is not to be confused with permanent immunity from harm. It is hard to find a direct translation of hope in to business, one may argue that hope assists in remaining true with a leader's vision, or with the board of director's strategic plan and that God will assist the journey of the organisation forward. *Love* is derived from God's unconditional love in Jesus Christ and translates in to modern day society as 'seeking the good in others'. Edgar argues that it is contrary to all selfish and self-centered attitudes (p. 7). Looking at business, Love may be the foundation of an organisation's culture; a culture in which people love and support one another in order to retain a pleasant work environment. *Justice* is referred to as 'very practical and down-to-earth actions which ensure that the weak, the poor and the socially disadvantaged are cared for, whether they deserve it or not' (p. 8). In business, one may interpret this social justice as an organisation's duty to help societies' less fortunate. This may in turn be interpreted as significant part of CSR; assisting in sustaining and improving society. *Joy* has two components (p. 9): a quality of being happy in life and in work and secondly finding joy in working for God's ministry. The latter means that an

individual assumedly finds joy in seeing other people’s lives being positively changed and relationships enhanced. In business, more specifically in leadership, a leader’s joy ought to be derived from both creating a pleasant work environment and seeing joy in his/her employees, but also in contributing to the greater society and changing lives for the better. *Service* generally refers to people to lay aside their own things in order to help others. The term Servant leadership as introduced in 2.3.3 The responsible leader role-set resembles much of the Christian value *Service*. Lastly, *Peace* has many interpretations; the all-encompassing definition of peace would be described as wholeness, a state of well-being (p. 11). In leadership this may be interpreted as ensuring peace between employees – more practically defined as creating good relationships between employees and avoiding/ resolving conflict.

### *Islam*

The central text within the Islamic religion is the Quran<sup>1</sup>. Rafiki & Wahab (2014) selected the Quran references regarding Islamic work ethics, ultimately summarizing the dominant Islamic values in business in their literature review. In their article, Rafiki & Wahab created a table cross-referencing the separate Islamic work ethics to Quran verses; this cross-referencing is displayed in Table 2: Quran references for Islamic work ethics (Rafiki & Wahab, 2014, p. 2). The Islamic work ethics are based on the Quran and Sunnah which ultimately define what is right and wrong (p. 2).

Table 2: Quran references for Islamic work ethics (Rafiki & Wahab, 2014, p. 2)

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Quran Verse</b>
Agreements and Promises	Ar-Rad 13:25, Al-Qasas 28:28, Yunus 10:71
Consideration for others	An-Nisaa’ 4:36, Al-Mumtahina 60: 9.
Consultation	Ash-Shura 42:38, Taha 20:103, Al-Kahf 18:22
Continuous Improvement	Al-Araf 7:42.
Cooperation	Al-Hujraat 49:9, Maryam 19:96.
Equality and Unity	Al-Isra’ 17:35.
Fairness in dealings	Al-Anaam 6:152, Al-Mumtahina 60:8, An-

<sup>1</sup> The book has several different names, such as al-Quran, Qu’ran, Koran and Quran. In this thesis, Quran will be used as the spelling for the religious Islamic book.

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	Najm 53:32, Al-Maida 5:8.
Fairness in wages	Al-Imran 3:57, Saba' 34:37.
Hard work	Al-Baqara 2:62; 82, Al-Anaam 6:135
Helping others	As-Saff 61:14, An-Nahl 16:97, Yunus 10:41
Honesty and justice	Al-Baqara 2:177, Az-Zumar 39:2; 3
Humble	Hud 11:23
Patience	Hud 11:11
Righteous/ Intention	Al-Baqara 2:25; 225, Al-Baqara 2:62, At-Taubah 9:105, As-Saff 61:8, Al-Qasas 28:19
Social Order	Al-Imran 3:110, Al-Baqara 2:273
Truth	Al-Anfal 8:27, Yunus 10:61, An-Nur 24:8

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When examining the values, one may find that there are many similarities between the Islamic values and the previously defined Christian values. Both religions focus heavily on being a Good Samaritan, implying that one should be good for others. In the table displayed above, this shows in values such as; Consideration for others; Equality; Fairness; Helping others; being Humble and Patient; having Righteous intentions and being Truthful. The Quran furthermore stimulates values like hard work and honouring ones promises, which is not included in the Christian values as defined in this thesis. In sum, the two religions have a high aspect of corporate social responsibility towards the people one deals with; being good and doing good will ultimately lead to fulfilling ones' role in society as a business professional and leader.

### *2.6.3 Religion and Entrepreneurship*

The relation between religion and entrepreneurship has been predominantly absent in business literature (Audretsch, Boente, & Pawan Tamvada, 2007). Early scholars such as Weber and Smith pointed out the fundamental role of religion in shaping business and economy. Nevertheless, very little attention has been given to if and how religion shapes economics (Audretsch et al., 2007, p. 3). Phelps argues that looking at the world shaped by homines economici is faulty; an individual's values and attitude play a big role in economy. He states that these values and attitudes may hinder or enable economic progress (p.3). In this thesis, entrepreneurs are considered to be on the 'religious' side of the spectrum; assuming that entrepreneurs are driven by values and attitudes and do not act as a homo economicus in which they strive for profit-maximization through complete rational decision making but rather make their decisions and base their arguments on both facts and data, and

personal beliefs and values. These beliefs and values may or may not stem from religion. As described in section 2.6.2 Religion and Leadership, religious values play a big role in religious individuals' decision making.

### **3. Research Method and Conceptualisation**

#### 3.1 Research type

As briefly explained in the theoretical chapter, this research is performed from the interpretivist/social-constructivism paradigm of epistemology. The social-constructivism paradigm argues that knowledge and reality are contextually dependent and that our perceived reality is constructed by our observations within our social system (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) and our identity which has been formed based on the premise of this social system. The paradigm will consist of the perception of reality and the identity creation of individuals based on their religion/ religious background. The social-constructivism approach to research implies that the researcher attempts to examine the perceptions, feelings and meanings of his research objects through qualitative research. These situation-/context dependent results are hard to generalize, but provides a contextual analysis of the social construct of religion on responsibility among entrepreneurial leaders. The close relationship between researcher and respondent is likely to result in unique truths and observations, but also has the tendency to be not completely objective.

Based on Yin (2003), this research pursued a qualitative research approach, consisting of multiple case studies. The reasons for choosing multiple case studies are; (1) this research focuses on answering ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions regarding religion and responsibility; (2) the behavior of the respondents cannot be changed or manipulated and (3) the results are contextually dependent (Yin, (2003) as read in Baxter et al., (2008)). The three case studies in this research ideally address the following three types of religious social constructs; Christian (Catholic/Protestant), Islamic and Atheistic (the absence of religion). This qualitative approach provides an interpretative and comparative (Yin, 2003) analysis of a new field of research, ultimately developing a new theory based on the findings.

By researching three cases with the three previously named (non-)religious backgrounds, this research provides results diversifying over the three main religious contexts in the Western world. Three cases provide a low degree of variation as opposed to e.g. statistical research, which provides the base for a holistic and explorative research.

Baxter et al. (2008), citing theory by Yin (2003) and Patton (1990) state that in order to maintain data credibility case studies consist of the collection and analysis of multiple

types of data. Data sources may include; documentation, archival records, interviews, physical artifacts, direct observations and participant-observation (2008, p. 554). Baxter et al. also state that combining and integrating the findings from multiple data sources results in the possibility of reaching a holistic understanding of the phenomenon (2008, p. 554).

### 3.2 Data collection

As explained in the prior section, the data collection took place spread over three cases. The targeted organisations/individuals are organisations lead by an entrepreneurial leader with one of the three stated different (non-)religious backgrounds. This research attempts to obtain the following data: one or more extensive interviews with the entrepreneurial leader and several interviews with the leader's 'followers' in order to get an image from different perspectives that have the possibility to enhance or disprove each other. In the interviews, special attention to language is required. Social-constructivism allows for the same language to be interpreted or used differently in different contexts

#### *3.2.1 Interviews*

The interviews conducted consisted of semi-structured interviews that are guided by theory, revolving around the topics responsible leadership and religion. In these interviews, a set of questions that provide guidance have been set up and used. These guidelines ensure that the interviewer and interviewee stayed on track, ultimately covering all required topics. Since the interviews aimed to go in-depth about the life and accomplishments of the entrepreneurial leader, it is argued that semi-structured interviews fit best. Semi-structured interviews provided the researcher with the opportunity to stay on topics that could not have been prepared or anticipated due to the high level of authenticity of the interviewee's (life-) story. The types of questions in the interviews are mostly open questions, possibly suggestive questions towards topics that the researcher wants to touch.

#### *3.2.2 Structure of analysis*

The analysis of data is conducted according to the following structure; all three case studies are analysed separately based on a set of interviews which are analysed following the discourse analysis technique. The results of the case studies are analysed by following the structure of the theoretical background of this thesis as found in

2. Theoretical Background. In a later stage of the analysis chapter, an objective comparison of the three case studies is made. The conclusion chapter concludes a more in-depth comparison between all three, highlighting the main findings in the three cross-analyses in chapter 4.

### 3.2.3 Research objects

This subsection briefly shows what type of individuals the CEO's and employees of the three organisations are and why they have been chosen as a research object. The researcher promised total anonymity and therefore no individual- or company names are displayed in this thesis; merely the individuals' functions and type of organisations is provided.

Table 3: Research objects characteristics<sup>2</sup>

Organisation	Individual	Function	Age group	Sex	Religion
<b>Christian Organisation</b>	CEO	CEO	40-60	Male	Christianity
	Employee 1	Head of Operations	20-40	Female	No religion
	Employee 2	Online Marketeer	20-40	Male	No religion
	Employee 3	Head of Storage	20-40	Male	No religion
<b>Non-religious Organisation</b>	CEO	Founder/ CEO	40-60	Male	No religion
	Employee 1	Financial Controller	20-40	Male	No religion
	Employee 2	Sales Manager	x	Male	x
	Employee 3	Sales Manager	x	Male	x
<b>Islamic Organisation</b>	CEO	Founder/ CEO	x	Female	Islam
	Employee 1	Broker/ Consultant	20-40	Female	x
	Employee 2	Broker/ Consultant	20-40	Female	Islam

Table 3: Research objects characteristics shows the basic characteristics of the research objects. It shows that the research objects consist of individuals of all age groups, all religions and both sexes. The selection of employees for interviews has been made by the organisation with the researcher's request of employee diversity kept in mind as far as possible. Below I will describe the process of why the organisations have been chosen as research objects.

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<sup>2</sup> 'x' refers to: information not present

The process of finding organisations as research objects followed two main guidelines: religious presence and accessibility. All three organisations have been found through personal networking and with the help of the supervisor (one organisation) and have been chosen based on the following assumptions; (1) the CEO of the organisations fits the spectrum of religions of this thesis (Christian, Non-religious and Islamic); The CEO fulfils the leadership role within the organisation and lastly (3) the CEO has employees/ followers that understand the topics of the interviews sufficiently enough to provide actionable answers. The latter proved to be difficult in two cases; the Head of storage in the Christian organisation and Employee 2 in the Islamic organisation. Due to the inability of the researcher to find other research objects the choice had been made to proceed with the provided research objects. Regardless, the gathered data all three organisations for this thesis allows for sufficient examination.

### 3.3 Reliability, Objectivity and Validity

As stated in a prior section of this chapter, in a social-constructivist based research, the researcher can never be fully objective. The goal of a social-constructivist based research is to uncover contextually dependent truths, which are by nature not objective and cannot be generalized.

#### *3.3.1 Reliability*

The reliability of this research stems from the fact that the truths uncovered in the results of this research are contextual truths about a carefully chosen individual and company. In order to maintain the highest level of reliability possible, the researcher must work in a fully transparent way, documenting and recording every step of the research. By doing so, the researcher ensures that the contextually dependent truths that are to be uncovered in this research are accounted for by the documented logs of the research steps. In this research, circumstances have led to the data collection process for case study 3 on Islam being different than the two prior case studies. The interviews of case study 3 have been conducted through telephone-interviews which did not allow for any type of recording. Yet, the interviews for case study 3 have provided actionable and useful data as shown in chapter 4: Analysis. The high ethical research code of the researcher in which the boundaries of the individuals' willingness to disclose information and a structured and responsible way of gathering and documenting information are maintained, leads to a high reliability of this research.

In this research, the researcher deals with individuals from different religious and gender-based backgrounds. This requires a good understanding of construct-dependent code of conduct and power-relations (Essers & Benschop, 2009); reflexivity. Being a Dutch non-religious male, the researcher found differences with the religious- and female case study respondents. Gaining an understanding of how and why religious values are shaped in a business environment required for an open-minded approach to the interviews and required the researcher to continuously keep the differences in mind when proceeding with the interviews. To exemplify, the CEO of the CO was continuously asked to confirm whether the interpretation of the researcher of the presence and impact of his religion was correct in order to proceed with the interviews correctly. The researcher uses discursive deconstruction (Finlay, 2002) in which the discursive analysis of language and quotes is used to provide a higher level of sense-making in the analysis of the answers by the religious respondents. Due to the different nature of their background, discursive analysis assisted the researcher with interpreting what was meant and said in the interviews without allowing interview-bias and the researcher's personal background to alter the true meaning in the data.

### *3.3.2 Validity*

In a social-constructivist type of research, it is not completely sure what is to be measured. This would imply that the researcher is aware of what the socially constructed reality of the leader looks like, removing the necessity and the use of the research. The researcher attempts to provide a contextual overview of how a social construct is made sense of in a certain situation, based on the results of semi-structured research. The operationalization of this research follows the direction of the theoretical framework which defines the topics that are researched. This way of operationalizing allows the researcher to measure what is intended to measure; a structured step-by-step examination of the topics CSR, leadership and responsible leadership. The chosen topics provide a gradually expanding set of topics that ultimately lead to the topic of responsible leadership. This gradual increase prevents shortcomings in the definition of topics and ensures that the researcher and the respondents are provided with all the required information necessary to grasp the following notions. This results in a high internal validity of the research.

As stated in the first section of this subchapter, the external validity of this research is low due to the possibility of generalisation being absent. However, the goal of this research was not to generalise to the population, but to take a holistic and in-depth take into the topic of leadership and CSR.

## 4. Analysis

All analyses will start with an overview of the presence or absence of religion, after which the connection with business-related topics is examined. This structuring ensures that before looking for any connections, both the researcher and reader are aware of the depth of the respondent's faith and how this may or may not shape his/her personality and actions.

### 4.1 Case study I: Christianity

#### 4.1.1 Depth of devotion

The Christian faith plays a strong role in the leader's day to day life and in his way of leading and managing the organisation.

*'God encompasses my entire life; it is definitely not the case that I separate my private and professional life in that regard. (...) In every part of my life, whether that is work, private, church, relationships or whatever, my relationship with God always plays a leading role.'* (CEO CO<sup>3</sup>, p. 1<sup>4</sup>). *I believe the Bible from front to cover and I try to live by Biblical values as well as I can (CEO CO, p. 8). (...) I don't really see it as a religion, I'm more in favor of calling it a relationship with God. That is very different than religion. I know God and he knows me, and that may sound very mystical to you, but I really think I know him. I pray for very specific things and I really see the result, which may show in various ways'* (CEO CO, p. 8).

The CEO shows that his Christian faith encompasses all aspects in his life. He says that the way he lives his life is according to the biblical values, he believes and lives by the entirety of the Bible. The CEO calls his faith a relationship with God, he describes it as if it is a person that he knows well and that God helps him through life by answering his prayers, regardless of what the prayer is about; God answers in his own way. The CEO is evidently a very religious man, a person whose life is led and guided by the principles of the Christian faith. He further states that he finds it important that people recognize and accept his devotion to the Christian faith and that he expects people to notice it in his day to day behavior.

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<sup>3</sup> CO; Christian Organisation, IO: Islamic Organisation, AO: Atheistic/Agnostic Organisation

<sup>4</sup> Page numbers refer to page number of the transcripts file

*'I would find it very worrisome if people do not notice that religion plays a very big part in my life. This goes for me as well as for the other two owners; it is very clearly displayed on our webpage. One of the owners ends her private piece of text on the website with 'Powered by Jesus', which shows that we are definitely not trying to hide our devotion to the Christian faith; it is simply very important to us' (CEO CO, p. 7).*

The CEO states that he does not wish to hide his devotion to the Christian faith. The organisation's owners and CEO share their love for the Christian faith and show this by for example the 'Powered by Jesus' line. An employee of the CO states that he recognizes the importance and presence of the religious devotion of his boss.

*'I have the idea that the choices made by the CEO are influenced by his view on how people should deal with people in this world. More to the point; is this decision Christian or not?' (Employee 2 CO, p. 17)*

It's apparent that the CEO's wish of visible religion has actually taken form in the organisation. Employee 2 argues that he interprets the decision making process of the CEO as such; the CEO recognizes a problem or opportunity and finds a probable solution or chance to take an opportunity, but whether these possibilities for action take place is dependent on whether these actions are in line with the values as written down in the Bible; the Christian values. The fact that decisions have to be 'Christian' in order to be made shows that the depth of devotion of the CEO and the role it plays in his professional life is very big and does not lack in any area of his life.

#### 4.1.2 CSR

The organisation partakes in many practices that may be referred to as responsible. The included stakeholders that arose from the data are; Employees; Suppliers, Environment; Charitable organisations such as the Romania project and the WATOTO project and members of the WOZL, which is an organisation that provides work for people with a disability that impairs their ability to reach a 100% potential. All respondents in this case study point out that *people* (Elkington, 1997) are the main focus of this organisation; the organisation's management focuses heavily on the well-being of people both in and out of the organisation.

*'If you don't love people, if you are not personally involved with the well-being of the people that work for you, you will not be able to fulfil a manager-position with me (CEO CO, p. 3).*

The organisation is built around, and ran by people, which is one of the leading factors for the CEO leading him to commit most of his', and his employees', energy towards ensuring the well-being of people. The CEO's commitment to the well-being of people is the leading factor in the decision making process; decisions have to contribute to or at least not hurt the well-being of the people in and around the organisation. The CEO expects this from himself and all his managers as shown in the quote above; caring about people from an intrinsic motive is essential for managers in his firm. He states that managers have to 'love' people, meaning that the well-being of people is the highest point of his agenda and he a similar approach from all his managers.

*'He really wants that people feel good when working for the organisation and therefore he hopes that people really want to stay. People genuinely have to feel good in their work or he will feel bad about his position as a boss. With him, you always end up at the people; when I started to work here he said that people are the most important thing: when people are happy, everything is possible' (Employee 1, p. 13).*

Employee 1 shows here that the way the CEO approaches business; centered around people, is translated into practice. She corroborates the CEO's quote by stating that he really wants people to feel good or he will personally feel like he has failed in his position as boss and leader. Focusing on people may serve two purposes as outlined in the theoretical chapter of this thesis; it may serve as a goal (inclusive CSR) or it may serve as a means to a contingent goal such as efficiency and ultimately profit (instrumental CSR).

*'We really had situations where we would rather take a loss than to work contrary to our conscious (p. 1). (...) CSR is not a goal on its own, we do it because we genuinely believe that we should.. even if nobody would know or see, we would do it anyway, (...) we don't use it to portray ourselves outside the organisation. Q<sup>5</sup>: Could I see it as an outsider? A: Not really no, there is one situation where we are going to start advertising it to the outside world, but*

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<sup>5</sup> Q: Question, A: Answer

*that is for the sole reason of raising awareness for the cause itself, not for our own good (CEO CO, p. 2).*

The CEO shows that CSR is never meant to be a means to a goal. He states that he would rather take a loss than to do something that contradicts everything he believes in, which earlier analysis has shown is the well-being of people. He states that they partake in CSR activities because they 'believe they should' and that it's not used as a way of attracting positive attention towards the organisation. In the last part of the stage he strengthens this by saying that the one plan that they have for actually gaining attention, is aimed at creating attention for the cause and not for the organisation itself. The respondents skew heavily towards an inclusive motivation for CSR. Employee 2 corroborates this statement by providing an additional example of the CEO going beyond societal expectations of striving for the well-being of people in the direct community and environment and therefore striving for rich survival (Achterbergh & Vriens, 2009).

*'An example is our collaboration with the WOZL, which is an organisation that provides work for people with a disability; people not fit to perform like a person who is completely healthy. An example is that we have had an employee that was deaf who was given a chance by the CEO. This individual got the same amount of salary as someone without a handicap would, so if you look at it that way it is definitely not 'profitable' to take on that person. So even if the person cannot perform at 100%, the CEO thinks it is very important to bring this individual in and provide this person with a better chance in society' (Employee 1 CO, p. 12).*

This example shows that the CEO indeed does go beyond instrumental motives when looking at the well-being of people. Their collaboration with the WOZL in which they provide people with a disability with a steady job and salary exemplifies this statement; hiring an individual from the WOZL is in no means profitable when the salary is equal and there is no evident signs for outside parties that this collaboration exists: hiring an individual who performs on a lower level compared to peers while receiving the same salary costs money on paper. Yet the CEO does continue with this collaboration. As the employee states; the CEO thinks it's important to hire individuals from the WOZL because he believes that every individual deserves a good chance in society. Looking at Figure 1: Pyramid of Corporate Social

Responsibility, Carroll (1991, p. 42), the CO seems to be fulfilling its philanthropical responsibilities, going beyond economic, legal and ethical expectations:

*'For example, if you would look up the ways of the laws on, let's say taxes. There are a lot of organisations whose accountants think it is a sport to find the most profitable way by paying as little taxes as possible within the boundaries of the law, we simply don't do that. (...) Tax wise I don't want to pay a single penny less than what I am supposed to, I don't want any tax evasion what so ever' (CEO CO, p. 1, 7-8).*

Carroll's pyramid of CSR (1991) distincts four different layers of responsibilities. This quote shows that the CEO succeeds the layer of legal expectations. His example of accountants of other companies who make it a sport points at the fact that it is possible to pay less tax within the boundaries of the law if one would take the time and effort to find certain loopholes in the system, which benefit the organisation. It may be argued that paying tax is a legal obligation, and paying the exact amount of tax which is expected of the organisation exceeds legal and even ethical responsibilities. The fact that the CEO does not want any tax evasion points at the fact that he believes it would be an ethically wrong thing to do and he therefore does not partake. As stated in the theoretical chapter on Carroll's theory, the distinction between ethical and philanthropical responsibilities is set by what society expects from you. It may be argued that tax evasion with regard to societal expectations is a thin line. In this thesis, it is argued that paying the exact amount of tax that is expected without a single penny of evasion through trickery goes beyond what society expects from organisations and that therefore, based on this example, it is arguable that the CEO fulfills his philanthropical responsibilities as defined by Carroll (1991). To substantiate this claim, two additional examples by employee 1 and 2 are shown below.

*'Also if you look at plastic, we used to throw all of our plastic wrapping from the warehouse away. Now we have implemented a system where we keep and re-use plastic wherever possible, with the eye on the environment' (Employee 1 CO, p. 11).;*

*'On a very small scale we have stopped using plastic bottles for personal use on the work floor and we have installed a water cooler with cardboard cups. It shows that the CEO and everyone else think about the environment on many levels' (Employee 2, p. 18).*

In the warehouse, the operations manager (Employee 1) found a new way to recycle and reuse plastic wrapping, instead of throwing everything away and using new plastic wraps for every item like they used to do. Employee 2 shows that on the work floor, they have stopped using plastic bottles and have switched to a more eco-friendly alternative; cardboard cups. Both examples show that the environment, or *planet*, are on the agenda as well as *people* are. One may argue that recycling plastic is a societal expectation, but the new system was not required by law or frowned upon by society. Neither is it known to the public that they have switched methods in order to preserve the environment, which may also be said for the latter example. Both are implementations that contribute to preserving the environment and which go beyond societal expectations, meaning that they are to be assigned to philanthropical responsibilities and rich survival.

The remaining question is whether the apparent heavy CSR-oriented strategy of the organisation is due to the underlying Christian values upheld by the CEO or not. Throughout the interview with the CEO, religion appeared to shape the basis of what the CEO justs to be right and wrong; ultimately translating in to the welcoming and care-taking policy towards his employees and community. In the late stages of the interview, the CEO states that every decision he makes on both a personal and professional level is made based on the question if he would feel comfortable 'answering to God' later at home

*'But that is the reality for me in life. (..), God is a person that I know and whom I have promised truthfulness and loyalty. I cannot betray Him, (..) I have to be able to get on my knees tonight and answer for my decision with a clear conscious' (CEO CO, p. 8).*

The CEO's reality is shaped by God, implying that everything he does is done with God's will in mind. His relationship with God as established before contains an element of answering: the CEO has to be able to answer to God every night which means that he needs to have a clear conscious; all deeds have to be answered for and therefore deeds that may contradict the Bible cannot be answered for. Based on this given, one may argue that the choices the CEO makes with regard to CSR and any other aspect in life are based on whether he believes it is the right thing to do, which in turn is shaped by Christian values.

*'Well in his daily life, both in- and outside of work, he commits a lot of time to his faith. And I definitely think that he encounters stuff in his religious circles that he directly*

*translates in to a way of working for our organisation. (...) If I may say this way, religion is definitely what drives this company' (Employee 1 CO, p. 15-16).*

This quote by Employee 1 confirms the assumption that religion plays a big role in the shaping of the organisation. She believes that because of the strong religious devotion of the CEO, it is with almost certainty that religion has a direct relation to the way of working in the organisation. She goes even further by stating that religion is what drives the organisation and that the religion lies, as shown earlier, with the CEO and the two owners of the organisation.

#### *4.1.3 Leadership*

The gap between CSR and Responsible leadership is filled by the combining variable; leadership. In this subsection, the type of leader in this case study is examined and interpreted, making a distinction whether the leader is more of transactional or transformational nature as defined in 2.2 Leadership.

*'If we're looking at a leadership style is the compassion and passion for people a central aspect, because in the end that is what we do it for. (...) I'm really convinced that the strongest leaders are the ones that go ahead of their people and pulled them forward, (...) the leaders that lead their people forward inspire people, and I think that's leadership' (CEO, CO, p. 4).*

The quote contains several transformational aspects. The CEO believes that good leader focuses on the people through compassion and passion and by providing them with a strong vision that people can and want to follow. Transformational leaders, as defined by Bass (1990) The CEO of the CO skews heavily, if not completely, towards the spectrum of the transformational leader; implying that his leadership-style is characterized by charisma, inspiration, intellectual stimulation and personal consideration for followers (Bass, 1990, p. 22). The quote shows that the CEO believes that providing vision, personal consideration for employees and charisma, which is deducted from compassion and passion for the people, are what make 'strong leaders'. Employee 1 corroborates this story and provides the basis for the remaining aspect of transformational leadership, she defines the CEO as:

*'Fair, very decisive, (...) I really believe that he brings out the best in people, and he does that in about everything' (Employee 1 CO, p. 12)*

A transformational leader who aims at leading people forward and inspiring them to follow arguably requires being fair and decisive. It is safe to assume that an unfair and indecisive leader will not inspire people and will not be able to convince people to follow his or her vision. The remaining aspect of transformational leadership, intellectual stimulation, becomes apparent from the prior quote. Employee 1 states that he brings out the best in people in about everything, which may be interpreted in several ways, one of which is inspiring people to challenge themselves intellectually. Bass' leadership theory states that there is a difference between transformational and transactional leadership, but does not state that one either is one or the other. It states that the two may reside in the same person up to certain degrees. Transactional leadership is mainly characterised by a constant calculative exchange of reward and punishment.

*'There's different types of leadership, on one side someone may be very calculative in which everything's based on numbers, and that can be very important. The CEO does this as well, but always keeping in mind that everything is made possible by the people in the organisation' (Employee 2 CO, p. 19).*

Employee 2 states that the CEO can be very calculative when necessary but that he never forgets that it is the people in the organisation that create the numbers and that they are the ones that make everything possible. This shows that even though the calculative side of transactional leadership is present, it is not used in a transactional way. Any form of an exchange structure has not become apparent from the data it is argued in this thesis that the CEO cannot be assigned any significant aspects of transactional leadership and that therefore the CEO is defined as a transformational leader. The following subsection delves deeper in to the relationship between this transformational leadership style and CSR by examining the interview questions regarding the theory by Shamir et. al (1993).

#### *4.1.4 Responsible Leadership*

The analysis of the type responsible leadership is conducted by analysing the previously defined inclusive responsible leadership spectrum and the presence or absence of the defined roles in the responsible leader role set as seen in Figure 4, read in 2.3.3 The responsible leader role-set. As established in the first subsection of this case study, the CEO of the CO includes a high level of stakeholders in his organisation. Furthermore is the CEO responsible

for a large amount of tasks within the organisation; the data shows that the CEO is always open to help and assist anyone encountering any problems or issues; this is exemplified in a later stage of this subsection. Based on the two prior arguments, it is argued that the CEO works in compliance to the stakeholder views as described by Miska, Hilbe & Mayer (2014). The following two quotes by the CEO contribute to the analysis of the framework by Pless, Maak & Waldman (2012).

*'If we would ever go bankrupt then it will damage the 70 people that work here the hardest, so the societal role of being a healthy organisation is very important. We do not work here simply to make a profit, but mainly to ensure that we can provide the 70 people that work here with a job and a salary' (CEO CO, p. 6).*

*'For example, we have some elderly ladies working in the organisation who only recently got a permanent contract; they were honestly in tears when they heard. They said that other employers always cancelled their contract after three months because they were too old. We just won't do that: if we are satisfied with you, you are welcome aboard' (CEO CO, p. 2).*

The framework identifies four different types of responsible leaders. Within this spectrum, the CEO may be described as an idealist within this spectrum, implying that he uses business as a means to serve social problems and stakeholders in need. The first quote shows that the CEO wants to prevent social problems and prevents the employees of losing their jobs, putting them in a situation of need. The CEO states that profit is not the reason the organisation exists, it is to ensure that the people under his guard can keep their job and keep living their lives with as much certainty as he can provide. The second quote is aimed at a stakeholder group in need due to a social problem; elderly people. Elderly people generally cost more salary than a young person and always have the risk of underperforming when compared to younger people. The CEO states that if we believe you fit the organisation and you can do your job, you should be welcome. Regardless of age or disabilities as seen in a prior subsection, you were 'welcome aboard'. Employing the elderly ladies is a clear sign of using business for more than profit but rather focus on the social problems and stakeholders in need.

The role-set of the responsible leader as defined by Maak and Pless (2006), later adapted by Pless (2007), served as the interview guideline to illustrate the depth of responsibility within

the CEO's leadership and will be used to finish this subsection of the case study. As previously stated in 2.3.3 The responsible leader role-set, in order to fulfill the role of responsible leader, an individual ought to fulfill as many, preferably all, roles defined in the role-set by Pless (2007). The following quotes<sup>6</sup> contribute to establishing the presence or absence of the different roles of the responsible leader.

*'I communicate a very clear vision for the organisation and for the type of leadership I expect from my managers, (...) we know very well what direction we want to head with our organisation. (...) We have a vision document; vision 2021. We have a monthly Tuesday-drink with all personnel, this gives us an hour with everyone present in which I give some insight as to where we are now and what we are doing and going to do' (CEO CO, p. 5).*

The CEO states that during their monthly drinks he communicates what the organisation is doing and where he wants the organisation to head in the near future. As shown in the quote above, this includes company-wide vision but also focuses on what type of leadership and management he expects from the managers that lead the different departments in the organisation. These talks are documented in a document called vision 2021, in which a 5-year plan is presented. The CEO further states that every employee of the organisation is present during these Tuesday drinks, exceptions excluded, which points at the fact that the CEO provides a guiding and *visionary* role for the entire organisation. The two types of vision presented further show that the CEO is involved with the guidance and vision for every employee in the organisation. The monthly talks serve a bigger purpose than the mere providing of vision, the way the CEO speaks contributes to creating a sense of purpose and commitment among employees. Earlier subsections of this case study have shown that the vision with regard to the type of leadership he expects from managers is aimed at whether managers actually love and care about people. This heavy focus on the well-being of people in and around the organisation is at the core of the organisation's values and maintaining this shapes the integrity of the organisation. The monthly talks contribute to maintaining these values, both with managers and other employees. Due to this statement and earlier statements

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<sup>6</sup> If the data regarding the presence or absence of a certain role is by split decision, contradicting quotes will be provided and analysed to come to an analysis on the matter.

made in this case study, it is argued that the CEO fulfills the role of *steward*; a protector of the organisation's values and integrity.

*'He has a strong personality and (...) you really believe what he is saying. He is very convincing and decisive when he speaks during those monthly meetings. The way he tells his story and explains what he wants to achieve with the organisation, why he wants to achieve something and how he aims to achieve this really helps to get everyone motivated and willing to work hard to achieve those goals' (Employee 1 CO, p. 13).*

The CEO has shown to be a very decisive and convincing leader. Employee 1 states that the way he tells his story about where he wants to head with the organisation, why, and how, creates a big sense of commitment amongst employees. This quote points at the second role of responsible leadership; the *storyteller*. The CEO creates a shared sense of commitment and purpose through his way of speaking and convincing, storytelling, during the monthly meetings. The networker role of the CEO has shown to be a split decision with regard to the presence of this role.

*'Well I think if you're going to look at one thing that I lack it would be this one. I tend to draw everything towards myself to make sure that they just knock on my door so I can help them out personally. (...) Our management team is very young, so I'm still very much involved in the day-to-day problems that arise' (CEO CO, p. 5).*

The CEO states that due to having a young management team, he feels like he should be involved in every minor decision or choice people make in order to ensure smooth processing and decision making. This points at a lack of networks in which employees help each other, ultimately making them more autonomous in their decision making process. The CEO states that he likes them to just 'knock on his door' whenever they encounter problems rather than them coming up with solutions off their own by asking colleagues in their direct network first. This open-door policy is widely recognized throughout the organisation, all three interviewed employees corroborate that the CEO is always willing to help and that they can just walk into his office whenever they have questions. Yet, they have experienced a positive change in their networks after the big organisational change that was initiated by the CEO. This organisational change was focused mainly around creating a structure in which the employees know who is responsible for what within the organisation.

*'Yes it became clear to everyone what they were responsible for, so whenever you had a question about something you knew who was responsible for the matter and therefore knew who would be able to help you out. (...) It will probably take some time before this structure is routinized, (...) everyone is still pretty accustomed to the structure where they would go directly to the CEO with questions. I have noticed that in the last year we are definitely making positive changes in embracing this new structure and we are really doing better with regard to networks and lines' (Employee 1 CO, p. 14).*

The newly implemented structure has, as stated by Employee 1, not yet been completely routinized but is solidifying incrementally. The structure is aimed at providing employees with a better understanding of where everyone's responsibilities lie and to have a better overview on who can potentially help them with any problems that may be encountered. The CEO stated that setting up networks is yet lacking and that he tries to stay involved as much as he can with the time he is given, yet, the quote above states differently. Employee 1 states that people have a better understanding about where to head with questions and where to ask for help, opposing the statement by the CEO. The CEO has implemented a big period of change in which he aims to fulfill the networker role in a more complete sense. Based on the arguments presented above it is hereby argued that the CEO does not fulfill the role of networker in the complete sense but is in the process of routinizing this, ultimately leading to him completing this role. The mentioned period of change requires individuals who lead the change, a *change agent*.

The CEO has played a major role as change agent, leading and guiding people through the big change that he initiated. This change [restructuring], entailed a more clear structure and set of job descriptions for every employee. The data shows clear evidence that the CEO was the person that personally lead and guided this period of heavy change.

*'I simultaneously am the initiator of the change and the person who tries to facilitate the change for everyone in the organisation. Change always brings a time of uncertainty and stress. In this time I have clearly communicated that I am in the boat with them, instead of saying; this is what I want changed, go deal with it. I really have a coaching role in the entire process' (CEO CO, p. 6).*

The CEO points at the fact that he is the one who started the change and therefore he feels responsible to lead the change and guide people through this time of uncertainty. The CEO

states that he ‘jumped in to the boat with them’, implying that he made clear that the employees are not left to fend for themselves in this uncertain time. He believes that a time of uncertainty and stress requires guidance and states that he took it upon himself to take the coaching role throughout the entire process and throughout the entire organisation. This commitment to coaching and guidance implies that the CEO fulfilled the role of change agent on a very thorough level, ensuring that the employees are aware of the fact that he is there for them. Below three quotes by the employees are shown that exemplify this coaching role by the CEO.

*‘I used to be the team leader of the fashion editors, (..) after which he asked me if I would be willing to take the position as manager of operations. (..) He was the one who helped me through this process, explained to me what I would encounter and in what way I could look at the issues that would arise’ Employee 1 CO, p. 14).;*

*‘What I remember is that during the re-organisation, he had an extensive talk with everyone, or at least everyone affected by the change, about what type of changes people could expect. He definitely provided a lot of guidance and he really took the leading role in this process’ (Employee 2 CO, p. 22).;*

*‘He made it very clear for me, but in the end it was my direct superior who taught me what to do and who helped me through the process’ (Employee 3 CO, p. 26).*

Employee 1 experienced the biggest change of the three respondents. She states that the new job provided her with a lot of uncertainty and a small amount of fear. The quote shows that the CEO took the leading role in explaining to her that she was capable of the new job and in what way she could tackle the issues and problems that she would encounter in her new job. Employee 2 did not experience many changes in his own job, but does state that he remembered the CEO talking individually with every affected employee and taking the leading guiding role in this change process. Employee 3, who was promoted from a storage worker to head of storage, states that the CEO talked to him and motivated him to start with the new managerial role but also states that his direct superior talked him through the specific aspects of the new position. Considering these three statements, it is safe to argue that the CEO took a very intensive guiding role in the change process. He conducted individual meetings with every layer of the organisation and would provide as much personal guidance and help as possible with the hours and time that were available to him.

The servant role of the responsible leader showed to be the way the leader aspires to work, since it has Christian roots.

*‘Servant leadership has its roots in religion, in the Bible it is written that Jesus washes the feet of his disciples and says: I am your leader, and if even I am willing to do this then so should you. That’s why this serving leadership fits completely in our Christian view of business; you can’t just shout things from the top, you should help people and put your back in to it, that’s when you will go furthest’ (CEO CO, p. 6).*

The CEO states that a leader who serves will accomplish the most. The Biblical example showed in the quote exemplifies the CEO’s view on business and leadership. He states that one should never feel too good or act as a superior when it comes to simpler tasks in an organisation. He says that a leader who helps everyone and shows to his employees that he is willing to go the extra mile [work hard] will accomplish the most. He believes that acting too much out of authority or superiority is not what leaders should aspire to do. Employee 2 of the CO stated that the CEO is indeed fulfilling the role of servant leader;

*‘He shows that he expects things from us because he expects them from himself as well in his work. That really applies to the smallest tasks; he will never expect as CEO that a ‘subordinate’, let’s call it that, for example has to get the coffee during meetings; if it is possible he would rather do it himself!’ (Employee 2 CO, p. 22).*

Employee 2 states two main things in this quote; he states that the CEO expects good and thorough work and reporting because that is what he expects from himself as well. He expects that everyone, including himself, works to their fullest potential and works as efficiently as possible. Secondly, he exemplifies servant leadership by stating that the CEO does not shy away from tasks like e.g. getting coffee during meeting. This shows that the CEO follows his earlier example of washing feet; he believes that if he would not be willing to get coffee, why would anyone else. The CEO does not act superior because of his position, which points at the fact that the CEO indeed does act as a servant leader.

Lastly, the CEO stated to support the notion of corporate citizenship completely and argues that he aspires to fulfill the role of corporate citizen as defined by Grit (2004) to his fullest potential, which can be deducted from quotes in the prior subsections of this chapter; the CEO believes that the organisation’s main goal is to serve the community around the

organisation, ensuring job security and other social facilitations to the people included in this community.

### *Religion as a motivator for responsible leadership*

The analysis has shown that the CEO of the CO fulfills the role of responsible leader on a highly inclusive level. This section attempts to establish the relationship between the Christian religion and the responsible leadership of the CEO based on the data of the case study. In the first chapter of this case study we have established the depth of the religious commitment of the CEO; the CEO is heavily committed to the religious faith and it leads his life both in the professional and private environment. The CEO states that he recognizes a difference in the responsible behavior of individuals when comparing religious people to non-religious people.

*‘Someone who does not believe in God will act a lot more free with their conscious than I do. So two people that are equal on the outside can act very differently, and that’s all about the inside. (...) Somebody who does not follow norms of values described by religion quickly becomes their own norm; they decide what they deem right and wrong’ (CEO CO, p. 7).*

He argues that every decision he makes, he makes based on the premises of the Bible and whether he believes a decision would be accepted by God as discussed in the first part of this case study. The CEO states that the inside [personal norms and values derived from religion or not] has a big influence on how people act, both in private spheres and in business. He states that someone who does not follow a religion because their own norm, which seemed to be interpreted as; people who become their own norm do not act as responsibly as people that follow religious norms and values.

*‘I think that with a lot of people it has to do with how they were raised. When somebody has had a religious childhood then that will shape their personality. People gain their norms and values through their parents. Personally I’m not religious but I think, and definitely hope, that I keep the same norms and values as people who have good norms and values from their religion’ (Employee 1 CO, p. 16).*

His employees follow a different train of thought; the point of view the employees have is generally that an individual may follow a religion, which may shape that individual's perception of what actions and decisions are deemed right and wrong. Yet, the employees, of whom neither is religious, believe that it is the person following said rules that actually decides what is right and wrong. Religion merely shapes this and gives it a tangible form. The quote further implies that there is no distinct difference between religious and not-religious people with regard to responsible behavior or type of leadership but rather a difference between individual people, whose norms and values may or may not have been shaped by religion. Employee 1 believes that religion is not the main predictor of people's responsible behavior, but rather focuses on how people are raised and brought up to their adult life, gaining norms and values mainly through their parents and direct environment. Employee 2 adds that religion may change the interpretation of the notion of responsibility;

*'I think that everyone interprets the word responsibility in their own way. I also think that people look at what society generally finds responsible behavior, and lastly I believe that religion may play a part in what is religious and what isn't. There is a good chance that religion adds certain aspects to responsibility' (Employee 2 CO, p. 23).*

Employee 2 says that he believes that the two 'base' layers of responsibility are derived from personality and environment and that religion may add certain aspects. In this case study, it has become apparent that the CEO follows a certain set of norms, values and rules set by the Bible. This set leads him to believe that acting responsibly towards all stakeholders is a goal on itself and should never be used as a means '*management trick*' (p. 3). The CEO is convinced that religion shapes responsible behavior in a positive way, where employees believe it may change responsible behavior but ultimately believe that it is the individual that decides what is responsible and what is not.

#### 4.2 Case study II: Atheistic/ Agnostic

The CEO of AO does not follow any religion but rather shapes his own norms and values around what he deems right and wrong. These norms and values are based upon/derived from his own view on the world, which is derived from his personal life and the experiences that he's had over the years.

*'No there is no ideology or anything of that matter. I act in the way I believe I should act. I also do this in business, I act in such a way that it profits the company' (CEO AO, p. 28).*

The statement by the CEO shows that religion [read: ideology] plays no part in shaping his norms and values. Neither in his private or professional life is there any external influence on his norms and values. The CEO believes in certain norms and values that he has acquired during his life and acts upon those. Furthermore he states that in business he acts in such a way that it contributes to the organisation. This implies that the CEO keeps the organisation's interests in mind with every decision he makes.

#### *4.2.1 CSR*

The AO partakes in CSR on a low scale, it has no priority within the decision making process of the organisation; the main focus is on surviving and growing as a business and to reach the highest possible market share. With regard to CSR, the CEO answered as following:

*'We are open for CSR but whenever we judge that actions may cause problems in the near or further future, we will decide not to go with these actions. I don't want to make any rules that I have to withdraw later on, I'm very cautious with this' (CEO AO, p. 29).*

The CEO states that they are open to CSR. Being 'open to' is interpreted as CSR being no priority or having no main focus, but is not shied away from if it would be possible. The CEO states that he is very cautious with regard to decision making within the spectrum of CSR, he does not wish to make a decision that would benefit stakeholder parties but carry a risk for the organisation. If there is any sign of a potential risk that comes with a CSR decision, the CEO states that he will not act upon this decision. The main 'responsible' part of the CEO's business is that facilitating a pleasant work environment and taking care of employees is a goal, but answers showed that the underlying motivator is productivity.

*'I try to listen to the employees, listen to what they want. For example, some employees requested to work a couple hours less each week. If this is possible within our scheduling, I will honor those requests' (CEO AO, p. 29),*

Listening to the employees and honoring requests that deviate from the standard can be interpreted as a responsible action; it is arguable that the CEO is not obliged to honor these requests. The CEO states that his decision on these matters depends on whether it is possible within their schedule. As stated before, the CEO keeps the organisation's interests in mind with every decision. Employees that want to work e.g. 35 instead of 40 hours might result in the organisation encountering time-based problems. Based on the quotes above, it is assumed that whenever the CEO deems these requests not possible, they will not be accepted.

*'Well, we get the questions.. and if it is doable and it does not hurt the organisation's plan then why not right?(..) Q: Can I interpret this as a certain amount of flexibility? A: Yes definitely' (CEO AO, p. 29).*

The CEO confirms that he is 'flexible' with regard to employee requests as long as it does not damage the organisation; the company's goals and interest are always kept in mind. Other stakeholders that are included in the company's business plan business partners that request a charitable contribution in the form of sponsoring one of their causes.

*'In those cases we have some sort of relationship with that person and we try to maintain it in this way. Sometimes they are direct relations of the organisation like customers that do these types of things. (..) Q: So the sponsoring is aimed at maintaining strong relationships? A: Yes exactly, but only if we believe the cause is actually charitable' (CEO AO, p. 30-31).*

His contributions to charitable causes [sponsoring] appear to serve one main goal; maintaining (customer) relationships. The CEO states that they sponsor several small charitable causes that are requested by relations of the organisation, which may entail e.g. customers or employees. The quotes with regard to flexibility and the charitable contributions both point in one clear direction; they are open to flexibility and sponsoring as long as it at least does not damage the organisation and preferably indirectly contribute to the organisation's goals. Employee 1 adds that flexibility towards employees entails another big aspect; freedom to act.

*'You want to give people a pleasant work environment in which they feel good. (..) In that sense it is a way of societal responsibility to try to give people a certain degree of freedom, which comes with a level of responsibility to structure their own work and to have*

*power of decision in some matters. (...) When people feel good and appreciated in their work, they feel happy which ultimately leads to higher productivity' (Employee 1 AO, p. 37).*

Employee 1 described 'freedom' based on three aspects: they get a certain level or responsibility in their work, they are free to choose in what way they want to do and structure their work and lastly they get higher decisive power in matters. This freedom results in happy employees that feel respected in their work, which ultimately leads to a higher productivity. It becomes clear that the CEO stimulates personal development for employees by giving them freedom to act. This personal development and happiness amongst employees is a responsible act, yet it is a responsible act with other goals in mind; the organisation. The three topics mentioned above; flexibility, sponsoring and freedom arguably are socially responsible decisions with the organisation's interests in mind. This leads to the argument that the CEO acts responsibly with instrumental motives; responsible decisions are allowed and are made as long as it does not hurt the organisation's strategic and economic interests. Yet, the CEO states that CSR is not used as a direct means to goals:

*'We don't want to put any CSR on our website to try and lure customers in. (...) We don't want to use it as a marketing instrument, not at all' (CEO AO, p. 28).*

The CEO states that CSR is not used as an external marketing tool, they act responsibly whenever they deem it possible and profitable but do not market this. In sum, CSR has low priority, yet when given priority there are indirect profitable results for the organisation such as employee productivity. Arguably, the CEO strives for poor survival (Achterbergh & Vriens, 2009) with regard to CSR and fits the ethical responsibilities level of Carroll (1991), not exceeding any societal expectations by doing exceptional things for society while maintaining a high level of focus on (organisational) profit and a reasonable level of focus on people (Elkington, 1997).

#### *4.2.2 Leadership*

The leadership section of this case study is aimed at establishing whether the CEO is characterized more as a transformational leader, transactional leader or if he shows characteristics of both. The CEO aspires to be a leader that provides a vision that people want to follow:

*'I make sure that I motivate them, I am not a dictator. I would rather pull them forward with a vision than to urge them forward with the whip' (CEO AO, p. 31).*

This quote by the CEO points at transformational leadership. The CEO states that he would rather motivate them and pull them forward with a vision. Motivating people with a vision shows characteristics of transformational leadership: a leader who aims to accomplish motivation amongst employees requires a certain degree of charisma. Furthermore, 'motivating them' implies that he wants to stimulate the intellect of his employees by motivating them to strive for the goals set by the CEO. Furthermore does he state that he wishes not to be a 'dictator' which implies that he wishes to be seen as a charismatic leader. Employee 1 characterizes the CEO as a very open CEO that is always willing to help and who knows how to provide people direction and vision.

*'A very approachable and open CEO. (...) He always succeeds in letting people make their own decision and have them feel supportive of their own decisions; he is very clever in steering his employees towards this situation' (p. 38).*

Employee 1 supports the assumption of transformational leadership characteristics; the CEO aims at guiding people toward good decisions: challenge their intellect and provide them with challenging tasks. Employee 1 says that he is very approachable and open, which points at the earlier named charisma. The CEO aims at creating a good work environment in which individual employees can be creative and thrive

*'The company relies on its employees. (...) He stresses this point during presentations to management, but also makes a regular round through the organisation during which he asks how people are doing' (Employee 1 AO, p. 38).*

This quote refers to the last remaining aspect of transformational leadership; personal consideration. Employee 1 states that the CEO is aware of the importance of the work his employees do and he aspires to provide intellectual stimulation but also has personal consideration for all employees when he makes his round through the organisation to assess how his employees are doing. All aspects of transformational leadership as defined in chapter 2.2 Leadership by Bass (1990) appear present, yet a major transactional leadership aspect is present parallel to the transformational leader; the CEO has implemented a company-wide reward structure aimed at creating efficiency and effort amongst employees.

*'The sales people have a regular polis, which is according to Dutch standards a simple 1/5, 1/6 variable and the rest of their income is fixed. Everyone in the organisation has some sort of bonus, even the administrative and support employees receive bonuses based on their work (CEO AO, p. 31).T*

The motivation referred to by the CEO is points at an exchange between CEO and employee in which hard and efficient work is positively rewarded by a bonus. Transactional leaders are, in theory, harder and stricter than transformational leaders by nature who reward and punish employees based on their actions and performance. The bonus system is of transactional nature; good behavior [efficiency & performance] is rewarded by the bonus that the employees receive at the end of the year. Employee 1 states that:

*'There's very authoritarian CEO's that think very highly of themselves, who 'yell at people' and who constantly want to keep going and growing. The CEO does this, but in a very decent and respectable way' (p. 38).*

Employee 1 shows here that the hard and strict nature of transactional leadership is not present in the CEO's leadership style. Earlier he characterized the CEO as very open and approachable and in this quote states that the CEO can act out of authority but will always do this in a decent and respectable manner. The CEO referred to this same notion not wanting to be a dictator. Based on the presented arguments above it is argued that the CEO is a transformational leader who provides direction and vision and who uses aspects of transactional leadership and CSR to gain maximum efficiency and effort among his employees.

#### *4.2.3 Responsible Leadership*

The degree of stakeholder inclusion by the CEO of the AO has been established in the prior two subsections; the CEO includes a low level of stakeholders in his organisation's practices and leadership strategy, merely focusing on employees and customers with some expansion in to small charitable causes. All focus on included stakeholders ultimately results in a positive result for the organisation's goals. The CEO's scope of responsibility is focused mainly on the organisation's growth and market share. The latter two statements lead to the argument that the CEO of the AO upholds a rather narrow scope and is to be considered to uphold agent- or converging views within the theory by Miska, Hilbe & Mayer (2014);

implying that stakeholders without direct relevance to the organisation's goals are given less to no priority. Within the framework of Pless, Maak & Waldman (2012) the CEO of the AO is arguably defined as an opportunity seeker; the CEO seeks opportunities among a relatively large group of stakeholders with the ultimate goal of advancing the progress of the organisation. Quotes in the prior two subsections substantiate these arguments and therefore no further quotes will be used to clarify these statements.

Similar to 4.1 Case study I: Christianity, the remaining analysis on responsible leadership is conducted by analyzing the role-set as defined by Pless (2007) in 2.3.3 The responsible leader role-set. The CEO aspires to be and arguably is a *visionary*; as shown in the previous subsection, the leader communicates targets and motivates people to work towards these targets. Employee 1 states that:

*'Meetings with managers include discussions about targets, how we reach those, how we do the marketing and are very economically oriented. When we're talking about people on the work floor, he does a really good job at communicating why and how we are going to grow and what that means target-wise for everyone. This vision is shared (..) a few moments per year' (Employee 1 AO, p. 39).*

Employee 1 says that the communication of vision happens on two different levels, as was established in the leadership section of this case study; the CEO communicates a clear target-oriented vision with his managers in order to keep them sufficiently updated. The people on the work floor receive communication in a more practical manner; the CEO outlines what and how they aspire to grow as an organisation and he sets clear targets for the employees. He further states that this vision is updated several times a year, implying that it is a continuous process of keeping the personnel updated of the changes/ process of the vision. The *storytelling* aspect of responsible leadership is shaped by the way the CEO communicates the strategy for the vision. Creating unity and joint effort have been established to be present in the way the CEO motivates and guides his employees and managers. Creating motivation takes place on two fronts within the AO.

*We have software with which we have not yet achieved a 100% market share and we never will, but it is what we want to fight for. I want to invest in this; I want to take*

*opportunities and don't miss out on any of these. Eventually this motivates the employees to get behind these goals and work hard for it! (CEO AO, p. 31).*

Firstly the CEO motivates people by providing them with aspiring but feasible targets for the organisation and shows that he is willing to invest and work hard to achieve this. He says that the employees notice his devotion to gaining the ultimate market share and that the way he communicates these goals and fights for it results in the employees being motivated to achieve the same goals. Secondly, he ensures that people do not feel left alone in their tasks:

*'With the people on the work floor the communication of vision takes a more indirect form by asking questions like 'how are you doing in your work?' If an employee notifies him that the workload is too heavy or too hard then this is a signal for the CEO and sometimes the managers to look at how they can improve this situation; the vision is high-low' (Employee 1 AO, p. 39).*

Employee 1 exemplifies that the CEO keeps a close eye on whether the employees are capable of living up to his expectations. His regular round through the organisation, as shown before, is aimed at establishing a good overview of which employees are in need of assistance and how he might be able to help in that regard. Employee 1 believes that the way he communicates with people during these rounds, helps in creating more commitment and motivation among the employees. The CEO does not fulfill the *networking* role to a high level, the organisation has management-layers which are arguably a network, but there are no direct networks set up for employee to employee conversation, with the exception of national and international networks:

*'I recognize this to some extent, because a part of the organisation is in the Netherlands but I have about 10 other companies abroad. So this gives us two networks in which people communicate and collaborate in their work' (CEO AO, p. 33);*

He says that he recognizes this [the networker role of responsible leadership] to some extent. He states that the only true networks that have been set up are the ones that focus on either national or international business. Within the organisation people work in a structure and have supervisors who carry a load of responsibility but there is no apparent evidence of clear networking in which employees get more autonomy or decision making power. Employee 1

states that the CEO takes the leading role during change, which is shaped more like an authoritarian role than a guiding role:

*'For me personally change was very difficult. (..) The role the CEO played in this was that he continuously communicated support and very clearly said that the change had to take place. This brought up a certain level of authority, he explained that we simply had to undergo this change and that we didn't have any other choice' (p. 40).*

The CEO appears to fulfill the role of change agent to some degree; he communicated constant support the employee 1 which helped him through the change process. Yet, the main role of the CEO seems to contain an authoritarian element in which he made sure everyone was aware of the fact that this change had to happen.

*'The vision changes every other time. Firstly you want to survive, that is phase 1. You know your product is good and you want to reach your set market share goals. During this time people work extremely hard and barely manages to stay standing; making them slightly more dissatisfied. Phase 1 is followed by a phase where we focus on- and invest in the employees so that the organisation fits the growth' (CEO AO, p. 33).*

The CEO states that he communicates the different phases of change [organisational growth] and therefore convincing employees that it is time to change track again; respectfully changing from the focus on growth and profit to focusing on internal stability and 'freezing' the change as defined by Lewin (1947). This method of strategizing is arguably a responsible way of changing; ensuring the well-being of employees. Yet, the data does not provide any evidence on direct guidance or coaching throughout the change process and therefore it is argued that based on the theory by Pless (2007) that the CEO does not fit the role of change agent. The CEO indicated that the role of *corporate citizen* is not a goal of the organisation, he believes that this is not a responsibility that one may assign to him as his responsibility lies with shareholders, which is seamlessly in line with Friedman (1970) who states that a businessmen's responsibility is to make money.

*'No I don't think corporate citizenship is our responsibility. It's a bit two-sided, I have shareholders who just look at the numbers, it is the way it is whereas I look more at the market and what we can achieve that will strengthen our position for the future' (CEO AO, p. 35).*

The CEO states that corporate citizenship is not their responsibility and that it is not on their agenda to focus on fulfilling this role within society. He states that recognizes two responsibilities; shareholders and organisational growth and fortification. This focus strongly supports the argument that the CEO looks at CSR instrumentally and that the CEO does not fulfill the role of corporate citizen. The CEO arguably may be defined as a *steward*, a protector of values and integrity. Two values have become apparent from the data.

*'Since we've grown to a medium sized company we've encountered a lot of governmental regulations. In our organisation, everything is transparent and complete, there is no fiddling with accounts and that works perfectly. (...) I'm completely transparent in business; I don't want any (CEO AO, p. 34).*

Firstly, the CEO's values consist of complete transparency with regard to the books and no fraud whatsoever, firm growth resulted in heavier regulations with regard to the bookkeeping procedures. He states that he does not wish to encounter any trouble with governmental agencies and that therefore he expects his entire organisation to be clean [no fraud, double books]. This transparency is a value on organisational level that the CEO protects and maintains within his role as a steward. The second value that has become apparent from the data focuses on an internal aspect of the steward.

*'Respect is very important within our organisation. As soon as you feel that your worth as an individual is questioned by others, the CEO takes measures and resolves the issue with whoever is involved (Employee 1 AO, p. 41).*

Employee 1 shows here that the leading internal value in the organisation is mutual respect between everyone in the organisation. The CEO does not accept any disrespect to anyone and will attempt to resolve any issues he is notified of. Based on the two arguments presented above it is argued that the CEO fulfills the role of steward both on organisational and on individual level.

In sum, the CEO of the AO is a leader with strong focus on the organisation's growth and survival, working along the lines of an instrumental responsible leader who does not shy away from responsible business as long as it does not hurt the organisation. This implies that the CEO works in line with theorists like Friedman and Siegel in Waldman and Siegel; the main responsibility of the CEO is profit and growth. Everything the CEO does is aimed at

contributing the company's interests, aiming at gaining the highest possible market share from an already dominating market position.

### 4.3 Case study III: Islam

#### 4.3.1 Depth of Devotion

The CEO of the IO was born in the Netherlands but has parents of Turkish descent.

*'I was born and raised in the Netherlands but my parents are Turkish, and we are all Muslim. I'm a mix of the two cultures, I have a Dutch side in for example sobriety and structure but also a Turkish side which has religious values such as respect for elders and personal space' (CEO IO).*

This led to her being raised as a mix of two cultures; the 'sober' Dutch culture and the norms and values of a Turkish Muslim family. Her individual character is a mix of the two cultures; she states that her Dutch side contains elements such as Dutch sobriety and structure. These characteristics refer to the Dutch people being generally straightforward and structured / on-time whereas other cultures have this less. Her Turkish values are values that she has been raised with; having respect for others and elders but also respecting someone's personal space. Her mix of cultures has religious elements in it, but may not be referred to as heavily devoted; she is a Muslim, but states that she is not as fully devoted as others.

*'I'll have a drink sometimes at parties and I don't wear a headscarf' (CEO IO).*

She has grown up a Muslim but does not follow all aspects of the faith. She states that she will have a drink [alcoholic] at parties which contradicts the Islamic faith and she does not wear a headscarf which is expected of women in the Islamic religion when their environment is one of strong religion and devotion. Her religion is the reason why her organisation [brokerage consulting which focuses on mostly immigrants who struggle with the Dutch language] became a success she says.

*'Our organisation works so well because I'm so very well informed on the norms and values by which a lot of our Muslim clients live their life' (CEO IO).*

She states that her Islamic religion helps her in understanding her clients' needs and preferences. She states that because she knows the religion so well, she knows what her clients that follow the same Islamic faith want and need. She recognizes many different levels of devotion within the Islam and states that others are way more devoted than she is personally but that her norms and values are predominantly derived from the Islam due to her personal upbringing by her Turkish parents.

#### 4.3.2 CSR

The IO has no direct strategy addressed to CSR practices but the foundation of the organisation is arguably built around a socially responsible market-gap: the organisation has its roots in providing brokerage consulting to people in an environment where there are a lot of immigrants who struggle with the language.

*'Of course it was started from a business perspective, but I also found that I had the background and skills to help those people; it was two-sided. This assistance is more than just purchasing or renting a home and helping with the contracts, it also includes 'after-service' which contains elements like assisting them with setting up their utility bill etcetera' (CEO IO).*

The CEO started this business not merely because these people are potential clients and therefore profit, but also because the CEO felt that she wanted and had the position to help those people. Nowadays the clients of the organisation are as diverse as imaginable within the city of The Hague; all individuals who require help during a time of acquiring a rental or privately owned house is fit to become a client of the organisation. The consultancy/ brokering contract that is signed by clients and the organisation includes a service post-purchase, which appears to be quite unusual in the brokerage industry. This 'after-service' [e.g. assistance with utility contracts] implies that the CEO goes beyond societal expectations with regard to the service they provide. Internally the CEO had trouble clearly defining CSR-practices, yet there is evidence of some CSR-related decision making in the CEO's statements.

*'With regard to people I really want everyone to see us as one team, I don't want to be called a boss. I really want people to work here long-term so that we can all grow and*

*develop ourselves within a stable environment; we are a very people-focused organisation with people who love the organisation' (CEO IO).*

The CEO has built a team which she believes will stay with the organisation in the long-term. She states that she wants her employees to be happy in the team and that they feel appreciated and respected. She says that she doesn't want to be called a boss, which implies that she wants people to really feel like they are all part of the big thing; the team that is the organisation. Having long-term employees serves two main goals; (1) a team that has worked together for a long time will consist of people that feel happy in their job, and (2) it helps people develop individually by staying in the office for a long time and therefore continuously learning from others and themselves. The development of individual employees resides in another aspect which has a relationship to CSR; freedom to act.

*'Our employees are really free to choose how and when they want to do their work (within reason). If they want to work a bit less long on a certain day then I urge them to just go home, but it works the other way around as well; if they are needed an hour longer they should want to give up that hour themselves' (CEO IO).*

The freedom to act shows in two ways; (1) the freedom to choose to go home earlier when necessary and (2) the freedom to choose their own work-style. The prior form of freedom is in line with the previously named happiness in work, people get the freedom to make these decisions because they are given a certain amount of autonomy: the organisation is one team. The latter form of freedom, the freedom to work in your own way, is merely limited by performance; as long as the employees reach their targets they are free to work however they deem fit. The last element of CSR-practices focusing on people is the positive encouragement by the CEO.

*'I am someone who sees quality in everyone, wherever that quality may lie. I always make sure to notify people when they are doing well, pat them on the shoulder, and I think it's really important to encourage people to use their qualities; I always want to help them find and use their strengths. When people are doing less well, or lack certain qualities, I usually keep it to myself because I don't want to discourage them' (CEO IO).*

The CEO states that she believes in the importance of positive encouragement; she believes that everybody has strong points and that she should constantly confirm people's

accomplishments. She firmly believes that positive encourage results in mere positive results and that negative discouragement should never be done since it brings people's self-confidence down. This strong belief shows that the CEO inherently believes that her employees should be taken proper care of and that their self-confidence and their personal development are a very important goal within the organisation. This belief suggests a strong responsible focus on the well-being of employees and therefore a heavy focus on Elkington's *people*.

*'With regard to examples of non-employee related practices we do stuff like recycling our posters and completely digitalizing the organisation, and for example sponsoring the local police force during a charity event' (CEO IO).*

External CSR has no high priority within the organisation. The CEO states that they are completely digitalized and that their posters [advertisement] now consist of completely reusable poster frames instead of the paper posters and paper documentation they used in the past. This shows that, wherever possible as a service organisation, they try to keep the environment in mind. This implies that Elkington's *planet* has no high priority since it the organisation's impact on the environment is very scarce, yet there is attention given were possible. The last example provided by the CEO is a contribution to society; sponsoring the police corps.

Lastly, the CEO and Employee 1 state that Turkish entrepreneurs evoke a lot of negative preconceptions in society.

*'We have a very different mentality than other Turkish entrepreneurs. Being a Turkish entrepreneur has a lot of negative preconceptions, like for example answering e-mails late. This is definitely not the case with our CEO' (Employee 1 IO).*

The statement by employee 1 shows that the CEO tries to get rid of the negative preconceptions that surround Turkish entrepreneurs. Employee 1 states that they have a very different mentality than other Turkish entrepreneurs. Getting rid of these negative preconceptions of Turkish entrepreneurs arguably points at CSR; contributing to the Turkish business environment in the Netherlands in a positive way.

Based on the arguments of this subsection it is argued that the CEO presently does not use CSR instrumentally and does not give it a lot of direct priority. The CEO's view on CSR is of inclusive nature with a low volume of practices, leading to the argument that the CEO fulfils the ethical responsibilities as outlined by Carroll (1991). Founding the organisation arguably consisted of a combination of instrumental and inclusive motives; helping people who require aid and building a profit organisation around it. Based on these arguments it is finally stated that the CEO strives for rich survival due to her strong focus on the well-being of employees and her selective focus on alternative CSR practices.

#### 4.3.3 Leadership

The leadership style of the CEO revolves around the fact that she does not want to be seen as a boss but rather as a colleague and part of the team.

*'I don't want to be seen as the boss, I don't like that word. In our organisation we are all part of the team. The only way I want people to look up to me is based on my competencies' (CEO IO).*

*'It's colleague, not boss, we don't use that word' (Employee 1 IO).*

The CEO states that she does not want an authority position based on the mere fact of being the CEO of the organisation. She rather wants people [employees] to look up to her because of her skills and competencies and states to never misuse this position. In the conversation with Employee 1 [8 years of service] it became clearer that the organisation works as a team and does not work within a certain hierarchy. The respondent corrected the researcher when asking a question about the type of leader/boss by stating that she referred to the CEO as her colleague rather than her boss.

*'When I was hired as an intern eight years ago the CEO let me join her in a lot of her business meetings and consults so that I could learn step by step. She was always ready and open to answer my questions' (Employee 1 IO).*

Employee 1 states that when she was hired, the CEO provided her with a lot of guidance by taking her with her. She states that by being given this opportunity, she could learn step by step and therefore develop her skills. The further states that the CEO was always ready and open to answer her questions. This implies that the CEO did not shy away from spending her

own time on the development of her employee. As argued before, the CEO focuses merely on positive encouragement. This statement of employee 1 exemplifies and strengthens the point of the CEO. It also shows that the CEO aims at facilitating individual growth and intellectual stimulation). These aspects of the CEO strongly suggest a transformational leadership style, whereas a transactional leader would reward good behavior and punish bad behavior [read; underperformance, mistakes].

*'I do random quality controls in order to maintain a high quality of service. Yet I never blame people for mistakes or keep them personally responsible. When underperformance or mistakes occur we look for solutions together' (CEO IO).*

The CEO states that she conducts quality control at random moments in time, aimed at maintaining a high quality of service and never aimed at assigning personal blame or responsibility. This suggests that the CEO does fit the transactional leader paradigm, where mistakes or underperformance would not go unpunished. The CEO rather helps in finding a solution or would rather solve the problem herself if that is what is necessary; she never keeps people personally accountable.

*'An example is when one of the ladies recently got a new company car and by her own fault damaged the car. The first thing I said to her on the phone was not to worry and that it wouldn't cost her money, I think it is very important to know that they will not be held responsible' (CEO IO).*

The example shows that the CEO indeed does not fit the transactional leader due to her view on accountability. Damage to a company car is arguably easily assigned to personal responsibility, yet the CEO chooses to never do this. As stated before, negative discouragement is never conducted in order to maintain a healthy focus on individual development and encouragement. Based on these arguments it is argued that the CEO is a transformational leader.

#### *4.3.4 Responsible Leadership*

The CEO of the IO is arguably defined as an *integrator* within the framework of Pless, Maak & Waldman (2012) which is characterized by running a responsible business of which profit is the likely outcome. As argued before, founding the organisation fits the integrator

paradigm seamlessly; the organisation was founded on both a responsible and profitable aspect. Yet, responsibility is not the one main goal of the organisation as typically defines integrators.

*'Being responsible obviously is a goal, but I'm still an entrepreneur' (CEO IO).*

This statement shows that while acting responsibly, running a profitable organisation remains a high-priority goal. Regardless of this argument does the CEO fit the integrator paradigm best. The degree of stakeholder inclusion and scope of responsibility of the CEO as defined by Miska, Hilbe & Mayer (2014) arguably lead to the converging views; the amount of stakeholders included is scarce but the ones involved receive attention with a high priority. This is assumed based on the arguments made earlier in the case study regarding the focus on employees and the focus on environment regardless of the low environmental impact of the organisation.

Within the responsible leader role-set of Pless (2007) the CEO fulfils several but not all roles. The visionary role of the CEO is shaped by the competencies and skills of the CEO, which is followed by her employees.

*'Yes I would consider myself a visionary in that sense. I set targets for the future and because my employees highly value and trust my professional opinion they will follow me in those targets' (CEO IO).*

The visionary role of the CEO shows to exist through the 'value and trust' her employees place in her. This implies that whenever she communicates a strategy or future plan, these plans and this vision is followed by her employees. Earlier quotes have shown that the CEO helps and assists her employees whenever problems are encountered, which strengthens the quote above; the employees value her skills and therefore welcome her help.

The *storyteller*<sup>7</sup> role of the CEO is interpreted by her as the credibility of her target-setting. By communicating her vision and by using her professional knowledge, she believes that she succeeds in creating unity and joint effort in the team.

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<sup>7</sup> No direct quote present aside the word; credibility

*'Within the team nobody shies away from small tasks, we all do our duty in cleaning up and for example, we all get our own coffee and are always willing to get coffee for others who have clients' (CEO IO).*

This quote shows that servant leadership is present with the CEO; nobody, including herself, shies away from small tasks. This implies that she is willing to perform the smaller tasks as well. Yet, there is no evidence of this being a leadership strategy as defined in servant leadership so arguably it is present without direct motives.

*'She would do role-playing games with me, so that I could practice my skills in a simulated environment' (Employee 2 IO).*

The role-playing games as described by Employee 2 shows that the CEO is willing to show her employees how to handle certain tasks and situations. Although this type of guidance is not a direct form of servant leadership, it shows that the CEO is willing to show her newly hired employee how she would handle certain situations. She is willing to invest time in showing the employees the tricks of the trade, showing that she is willing to 'serve' her employees in this way. Lastly, the change agent role has appeared in small form due to the absence of big changes.

*'The biggest change was digitalizing the entire organisation. This brought up some trouble for the employees. In this time I scheduled a weekly meeting in which we addressed the progress in adapting to this new way of working' (CEO IO).*

The CEO shows that, while small in size and impact, she led and guided the process of change by continuously evaluating the adaptation of the employees to the change. No other big changes have occurred during the organisation, which leads to a relatively weak argument with regard to the change agent role. In a different context, the new employee was asked in which way the CEO supported her during her new instalment in the position. This new instalment is arguably a time of personal change and therefore the results are used to strengthen the analysis on the change agent role.

*'The CEO offers a lot of guidance and discipline, she is always open to questions whenever a new thing is difficult for me. She is really trustworthy and sweet, always happy to help' (Employee 2 IO).*

This observation of the CEO of an employee whose professional life recently changed heavily by taking a job at the IO shows that the CEO was willing to provide support in a time of uncertainty. She was a sweet and supportive CEO who was always ready to assist whenever needed. Based on the two arguments presented above it is argued that the CEO fulfils the role of change agent whenever employees experience a time of uncertainty and change. The role of networker does not apply due to the smaller size of the organisation, it is arguable that the team-atmosphere set up by the CEO is a network but the choice has been made not to use this as it lacks volume. The *citizen* role appeared to not be present within the organisation and has therefore gained no more attention. In sum, the CEO of the IO is a fairly responsible leader. The organisation's size and type of business do not allow for full commitment to the responsible leader roles. She fulfils most of the roles to some extent which arguably implies that she is a responsible leader.

#### 4.4 Comparison of the three cases

##### *4.4.1 Depth of devotion*

Three different levels of depth of devotion are recognized. The Christian CEO's devotion to his religion is visible in all aspects of life, both in private and professional atmospheres and can be seen in all decisions the CEO makes; both small and big decisions are made with the Christian religion in mind. The non-religious CEO is, as expected, on the opposite side of the spectrum. The CEO stated that religion plays no part in his life whatsoever. His decision making process is done with personal norms and values in mind; he personally judges what decisions he deems right and wrong. The Islamic CEO is in the middle of the spectrum of depth of devotion; she is a Muslim but is not as devoted as some other Muslims. Her religion presides mostly in her private life, yet she finds that her religion helps in her work with some of her client groups. Her inherent knowledge of the variety of Islamic norms and values assist her in understanding what her clients generally prefer and how she can provide the most optimal accustomed service to her clients.

##### *4.4.2 CSR*

The data shows that in all three case studies, the focus on CSR resides mostly in the *people* aspect as defined by Elkington (1997). Besides the focus on people, data has shown that the AO and IO conduct some small charitable causes besides their positive people management

but the volume of these projects is rather small. The CO however emphasises their focus on societal contribution and environmental preservation; the CO focuses on fulfilling their role in both society and the environment as optimal as possible whereas the other two organisations put less emphasis on these roles.

With regard to the responsibilities as defined by Carroll (1991) all three organisations succeed their economic and legal responsibilities, which implies that they all fulfil their ethical responsibilities and/or their philanthropic responsibilities. The latter is present only with the CO; the CEO of the CO arguably succeeds societal expectations and recognizes his responsibility to contribution to society and the environment to his fullest potential. The IO and AO rather remain within their ethical responsibilities with regard to the complete CSR picture. It may be argued that with regard to *people* all three organisations fulfil their philanthropic responsibilities and with regard to *planet* and *profit* only the CO reaches the philanthropic level.

The motives of CSR differ between the three organisations on a similar level as the depth of devotion of the CEO's. The CO, the most devote, merely has inclusive responsibility motives; CSR is a goal on itself rather than a way of achieving the organisation's goals. The AO, who follows no religion, sees CSR as a possibility only when it fits the organisation's strategy and always [within the data] sees indirect profitable results of his CSR practices such as productivity or client management in the charitable causes. This implies that the CEO's motives for CSR are considered instrumental motives. The IO's organisation is built around a two-way split of both profit and responsibility. She raised the organisation because she wanted to help a certain client group and found that by doing so she could run a profitable organisation. This two-way split has shown to be apparent in present time as well, which arguably implies that her motives are a combination of instrumental and inclusive motives.

#### 4.4.3 Leadership

All three CEO's predominantly showed signs and aspects of transformational leadership. All three CEO's focus on the well-being of employees by trying to stimulate individual intellect, provide vision and guidance, and all three CEO's are characterised by their charisma. The CEO of the AO is the only CEO that showed signs of transactional leadership in the form of his bonus-structure, whereas the CEO's of the CO and IO showed no evident signs of transactional leadership. All CEO's have shown to be able to show authority or to be

calculative, yet neither of the three uses this position as a means to power or a form of transactional leadership.

#### *4.4.4 Responsible Leadership*

Within the responsible leadership theory as shown in this thesis, two main characterisations are used; Figure 2: Responsible Leadership Views (Miska, Hilbe & Mayer, 2014. p. 351) & Figure 3: Matrix of Responsible Leadership Orientation (Pless, Maak & Waldman, 2012. p. 56). Within the theory of the responsible leadership views, the Christian CEO is the only one who fits the stakeholder views whereas the remaining two CEO's fit the converging views (the position of the AO between agent- and converging views is highly debatable). This is due to his high commitment to CSR causes and to stakeholder needs. Within the Matrix of Responsible Leadership Orientation the CO fits the idealist orientation, the AO fits the opportunity seeker and the IO fits the integrator. This shows that the commitment to stakeholders and CSR in general decreases from the CO to the IO and from the IO to the AO.

The results of the responsible leader role-set show that the religious CEO's (CO and IO) may be considered responsible leaders and that the AO may not, based on the data and the premise of the theory shown in Figure 4: The roles model of responsible leadership (Pless 2007, p. 439, adapted from Maak and Pless, 2006). Without revising the subsections as a whole, it may be said that the CO fulfils the role-set to a higher level than the IO with regard to prioritizing CSR and also due to the organisation's size and impact on stakeholders.

## 5. Conclusion & Discussion

### 5.1 Conclusion

This research examined whether religion affects responsible leadership behavior amongst entrepreneurial leaders by examining three different case studies that cover three different backgrounds with regard to religion. The research question presented in this thesis is: ‘How does religion affect the type of responsibility in leadership among entrepreneurial leaders?’ To answer this research question, the case studies have been examined based on four topics; (1) Depth of devotion, (2) CSR, (3) Leadership and (4) Responsible leadership.

#### *5.1.1 Depth of devotion - CSR*

The research indicates that there is a relation between depth of devotion and commitment to CSR. The CEO of the CO who proves to hold the highest depth of devotion simultaneously is the individual with the strongest commitment to CSR. He believes CSR to be a goal of the organisation that succeeds the goals of the organisation. The CEO of the IO, whose religion is present yet less impactful compared to the CEO of the CO, follows with regard to the commitment to CSR. Lastly, the CEO of the AO, in whose’ case religion is absent, has the lowest commitment to CSR of the three case studies. The data shows that religion impacts one’s motives for CSR, showing that depth of devotion positively impacts the leaders’ strive for rich survival as defined by Achterbergh & Vriens (2009) by keeping inclusive motives rather than instrumental motives as religious presence grows. Furthermore the data shows that depth of devotion has a positive impact on the amount of responsibilities the CEO’s take as defined by Carroll (1991); an increased depth of devotion leads to a wider set of responsibilities. The data shows that within the spectrum of Elkington’s (1997) triple-bottom-line the focus on *people* is present throughout all three case studies. Yet, as the depth of devotion grows amongst the CEO’s it appears that the focus on *planet* and *profit* shapes towards a more responsible focus, whereas the non-religious CEO has little to no focus on the latter two aspects at all.

#### *5.1.2 Depth of devotion - Leadership*

With regard to leadership forms as defined in the theoretical framework based on theories by e.g. Bass (1990) no significant impact of religion of any kind has been found. Therefore it is

argued that based on the data, religion does not affect the type of leadership among entrepreneurial leaders.

### *5.1.3 Depth of devotion – Responsible leadership*

The impact of religion on responsible leadership corresponds with the impact of religion on CSR as a whole. The results show that the most religious CEO, of CO, fits the highest position of the framework by Miska, Hilbe & Meyer (2014) whereas the CEO's of the IO and AO fit the middle position. The data shows that one's religion leads to a higher commitment to CSR and a higher commitment to responsible leadership. Within the framework of Pless, Maak & Waldman (2012) it becomes clear that one's depth of devotion corresponds with one's responsibility position in the framework; the responsibility of the position declines as the depth of devotion of the CEO's decline. Based on the results it is argued that religion has a direct relationship with responsible leadership.

Within the responsible leader role set by Pless (2007) it becomes clear that as one's depth of devotion increases, one's commitment to amount of roles and one's commitment to the roles itself increases. The data shows that the CEO of the CO fulfils (nearly) all roles of the responsible role set and fulfils them to his fullest potential, whereas the CEO of the IO has lower prioritization to the roles and that the CEO of the AO is not considered to fulfil the roles altogether. This leads to final argument, answering the research question, that the CEO's with religion are considered to be responsible leaders and the CEO without religion is not. Furthermore, it is also stated that with increasing focus on religion [depth of devotion] one's commitment to CSR and responsible leadership increases correspondingly. So religion positively affects the type of responsible leadership among entrepreneurial leaders.

## 5.2 Implications

### *5.2.1 Theoretical implications*

Religion presides in countless forms in all areas of the business world and as of yet lacks recognition in existing theoretical frameworks. This thesis shows that within responsible leadership, religion plays an impactful role in (1) assessing whether and why people are responsible and, (2) in what way religion enhances responsible leadership capabilities among entrepreneurial leaders. The results and conclusion show that religion as a variable provides an additional lens to CSR, sustainability and responsible leadership studies. Religion and

responsibility appear to go hand-in-hand, implying that religion may positively enhance organisations' and leaders' commitment to CSR-related practices and activities.

### *5.2.2 Managerial implications*

Managerial implications with regard to religion in business are difficult to define, due to the inherent subjective and context-dependent nature of religion. Religion presides in many different forms and in many different levels as well as may be completely absent, within a small select region or market. Acknowledging and recognizing an individual's religion in business may assist managers in their decision-making process, knowing that their partner, competitor, employee or leader makes decisions based on the premises of their religion. This thesis creates awareness to the existence and impact of religion within business. Although the results are not generalizable and therefore not directly actionable for the general reader public, it may provide the reader with a new insight as to what role religion might play in their direct business environment and how they might change their decisions to fit this environment and value and respect their employees. The presence of religion might change the dynamic of interpersonal communication and -actions. The theoretical framework on religion and the results of this thesis show that there are differences both between- and in religions, which leads to potential different actions fitting best in various situations.

## 5.3 Discussion

This thesis has examined the way religion affects responsible leadership among entrepreneurial leaders. The outcomes of the data represent the desired outcome of the research question; a viable effect of religion has been found and presented in the prior subsections. This thesis was not aimed to generalize to the population of leaders, due to the inherent subjectivity of the variable religion. It's outcomes are based on context-dependent situations where the research subjects are human, subjected to change and personality-based decision making in their professional and private life. The results of this thesis provide a fresh way of examining religion in business, yet hold no strong actionable results; every individual is different. Although no hypotheses were presented, the outcomes were surprising; the research objects proved to consist of a very linear curve with regard to depth of devotion and type of responsible leadership types. This allowed for a straight-forward analysis which may lack depth to the objective reader. The researcher believes that within the method of a triple

case-study research, any results would have been possible.

During the data gathering process, the researcher found many hurdles with regard to finding organisations willing to participate and actually gathering the planned data when the organisations in the end were found. The nature of a triple case-study research inherently requires more time per organisation than an individual-based research. This proved to give a lot of resistance both inside and outside the researcher's personal network. The CEO's of the organisation shortened the interview times, did not meet their agreements with regard to the type of interviews and were slow and dreadful in their response time. Some respondents proved to be incapable of answering the questions to rather complex and theoretical notions such as servant leadership and corporate citizenship. This led to a higher amount of personal interpretation by the researcher than previously planned, which may have altered the research outcomes. The shortened interview times proved to be, although unplanned, no direct restraint on the researcher's interview method. Yet, the types of interviews among all 11 respondents are not equally divided. In the AO, two interviews have been conducted through e-mail, where face-to-face interviews were planned and agreed on. Similarly, in the case study of the IO three electronic face-to-face interviews [Skype] had been replaced by three interviews via telephone who did not allow for recording and transcribing. This, in turn, may also have altered the results of the research due to unpredicted hurdles. Yet, ultimately actionable and sufficient data has been gathered to provide results which may cause for fresh thinking.

#### *5.4 Suggestions for further research*

A similar research has potential to provide actionable answers when the researcher possesses over a higher amount of time and resources. This would allow for multiple organisations per religion and for more in-depth interviews without being subjected to the hurdles presented in the previous subsection. A similar research on a bigger scale presents the possibility to show potential differences or similarities between companies with the same religious background as well as between companies with and without religion in general.

The results of this thesis show that religion indeed has an impact on the responsibility of organisations and leaders, yet the presence of religion is not empirically defined in the results in this thesis. Quantitative research on the impact of religion on leadership and particularly

CSR may show that religion indeed has a significant impact on leadership decision making and CSR as is assumed based on the results of this thesis.

Lastly, researchers with ties in religious studies, anthropology, sociology or psychology allow for a more in-depth examination of what aspects of different religions have an impact on leadership and CSR. This thesis provided a subsection on religion which served the purpose of gaining a better understanding of what religion may mean for a leader's behavior. Cross-studies can elaborate on- and strengthen or weaken the assumptions made in this thesis by including the previously stated academic fields in their study.

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## Appendix

### Appendix I – Interview questions; the entrepreneurial leader (religious)

#### Details respondent:

Name:

Organisation:

Christianity – Islam

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#### Explanation of topics:

- **CSR:** Ensure that both the respondent and the interviewer are on a similar level with regard to understanding what CSR is and how CSR can be recognized in strategies and behavior
  - **Goal Thesis:** Ensure that the respondent is aware of the goal of this thesis; to look at whether a religious background in any way affects the CSR behavior of the leader.
- 

#### Introduction:

Q<sub>1</sub>: In what way does religion affect your day to day behavior?

Q<sub>2</sub>: Does religion have an effect on your norms and values / on the way you live your life?

Q<sub>1-2b</sub>: Can you give me some examples of how religion plays a part?

Q<sub>3</sub>: What is your role within the company?

#### Corporate Social Responsibility:

Q<sub>4a</sub>: What kind of role does CSR play in your company?

Q<sub>4b</sub>: Could you give some examples of what that looks like?

Q<sub>5c</sub>: Can you tell me why CSR plays a big/medium/small role in your company?

Q<sub>5a</sub>: In what way does CSR affect your day to day job activities/ life?

Q<sub>5b</sub>: Could you give some examples of what that looks like?

Q<sub>5c</sub>: How do you deal with this notion of CSR in your work?

Q<sub>6</sub>: What stakeholder parties (**explained in notion of CSR**) are directly included in your organisations practices/ strategies?

Q<sub>6b</sub>: Why are these parties are included? And give some examples?

## **Leadership**

Q<sub>7</sub>: What type of leader do you see yourself as?

Q<sub>7b</sub>: Why? Can you give some examples that illustrate this?

Q<sub>8</sub>: How does CSR affect your leadership?

Q<sub>8b</sub>: Would you consider yourself a responsible leader? Why? Examples?

*In my research I defined a set of roles that illustrate responsible leadership behavior. I would like to briefly name these roles and then ask you whether this is a role you fulfil, and if so how?*

Q<sub>9a</sub>: Would you consider yourself a Visionary? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9b</sub>: Would you consider yourself a Networker? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9c</sub>: Would you consider yourself a Change Agent? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9d</sub>: Would you consider yourself a Storyteller? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9e</sub>: Would you consider yourself a Servant? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9f</sub>: Would you consider yourself a Steward? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9g</sub>: Would you consider yourself a Citizen? Why? Examples?

## **Religion**

Q<sub>10</sub>: In what way does religion affect your view on CSR?

Q<sub>10b</sub>: How does this show in your day to day life?

Q<sub>11</sub>: In what way does religion affect your way of leading the company?

Q<sub>11b</sub>: How does this show in your day to day life?

Q<sub>12</sub>: Do you believe that the presence or absence of religion has a direct effect on how responsible people behave?

Q<sub>12b</sub>: If so, why? If not, why not?

## **Appendix II – Interview questions; Employee of religious leader**

### **Details respondent:**

Name:

Organisation:

Christianity – Islam

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### **Explanation of topics:**

- **CSR:** Ensure that both the respondent and the interviewer are on a similar level with regard to understanding what CSR is and how CSR can be recognized in strategies and behavior
  - **Goal Thesis:** Ensure that the respondent is aware of the goal of this thesis; to look at whether a religious background in any way affects the CSR behavior of the leader.
- 

### **Introduction:**

Q<sub>1</sub>: In what way does religion affect [name leader]'s day to day behavior?

Q<sub>2</sub>: Does religion have an effect on [name leader]'s norms and values / on the way you live your life?

Q<sub>1-2b</sub>: Can you give me some examples of how religion plays a part?

Q<sub>3</sub>: What is your role within the company? And can you define [name leader]'s role?

### **Corporate Social Responsibility:**

Q<sub>4a</sub>: What kind of role does CSR play in your company?

Q<sub>4b</sub>: Could you give some examples of what that looks like?

Q<sub>5c</sub>: Can you tell me why CSR plays a big/medium/small role in your company?

Q<sub>5a</sub>: In what way does CSR affect [name leader]'s day to day job activities/ life?

Q<sub>5b</sub>: Could you give some examples of what that looks like?

Q<sub>5c</sub>: How does [name leader]'s deal with this notion of CSR in [his/her] work?

Q<sub>6</sub>: What stakeholder parties (**explained in notion of CSR**) are directly included in your organisations practices/ strategies?

Q<sub>6b</sub>: Why are these parties are included? And give some examples?

## **Leadership**

Q<sub>7</sub>: What type of leader do you see [name leader] as?

Q<sub>7b</sub>: Why? Can you give some examples that illustrate this?

Q<sub>8</sub>: How does CSR affect [name leader]'s leadership?

Q<sub>8b</sub>: Would you consider [name leader] a responsible leader? Why? Examples?

*In my research I defined a set of roles that illustrate responsible leadership behavior. I would like to briefly name these roles and then ask you whether this is a role you fulfil, and if so how?*

Q<sub>9a</sub>: Would you consider [name leader] a Visionary? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9b</sub>: Would you consider [name leader] a Networker? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9c</sub>: Would you consider [name leader] a Change Agent? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9d</sub>: Would you consider [name leader] a Storyteller? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9e</sub>: Would you consider [name leader] a Servant? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9f</sub>: Would you consider [name leader] a Steward? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9g</sub>: Would you consider [name leader] a Citizen? Why? Examples?

## **Religion**

Q10: In what way does religion affect [name leader]'s view on CSR?

Q10b: How does this show in [his/her] day to day life?

Q11: In what way does religion affect [name leader]'s way of leading the company?

Q11b: How does this show in [his/her] day to day life?

Q12: Do you believe that the presence or absence of religion has a direct effect on how responsible people behave?

Q12b: If so, why? If not, why not?

## **Appendix III – Interview questions; the entrepreneurial leader (non-religious)**

### **Details respondent:**

Name:

Organisation:

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### **Explanation of topics:**

- **CSR:** Ensure that both the respondent and the interviewer are on a similar level with regard to understanding what CSR is and how CSR can be recognized in strategies and behavior
  - **Goal Thesis:** Ensure that the respondent is aware of the goal of this thesis; to look at whether a religious background in any way affects the CSR behavior of the leader.
- 

### **Introduction:**

Q<sub>1</sub>: Is there anything that shapes you in your day to day life, something that has an influence on your norms and values or your life philosophy?

*Note that the respondent is aware of the focus on religion and that therefore the context of this question allows for more easy understanding. If the answer is 'nothing', then pursue interview looking for more general 'why' questions.*

Q<sub>2</sub>: Does this [answer Q<sub>1</sub>] have an effect on your norms and values / on the way you live your life?

Q<sub>1-2b</sub>: Can you give me some examples of how [this] plays a part?

Q<sub>3</sub>: What is your role within the company?

### **Corporate Social Responsibility:**

Q<sub>4a</sub>: What kind of role does CSR play in your company?

Q<sub>4b</sub>: Could you give some examples of what that looks like?

Q<sub>5c</sub>: Can you tell me why CSR plays a big/medium/small role in your company?

Q<sub>5a</sub>: In what way does CSR affect your day to day job activities/ life?

Q<sub>5b</sub>: Could you give some examples of what that looks like?

Q<sub>5c</sub>: How do you deal with this notion of CSR in your work?

Q<sub>6</sub>: What stakeholder parties (**explained in notion of CSR**) are directly included in your organisations practices/ strategies?

Q<sub>6b</sub>: Why are these parties are included? And give some examples?

## **Leadership**

Q<sub>7</sub>: What type of leader do you see yourself as?

Q<sub>7b</sub>: Why? Can you give some examples that illustrate this?

Q<sub>8</sub>: How does CSR affect your leadership?

Q<sub>8b</sub>: Would you consider yourself a responsible leader? Why? Examples?

*In my research I defined a set of roles that illustrate responsible leadership behavior. I would like to briefly name these roles and then ask you whether this is a role you fulfil, and if so how?*

Q<sub>9a</sub>: Would you consider yourself a Visionary? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9b</sub>: Would you consider yourself a Networker? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9c</sub>: Would you consider yourself a Change Agent? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9d</sub>: Would you consider yourself a Storyteller? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9e</sub>: Would you consider yourself a Servant? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9f</sub>: Would you consider yourself a Steward? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9g</sub>: Would you consider yourself a Citizen? Why? Examples?

## **Religion**

Q<sub>10</sub>: In what way does [Q<sub>1</sub>] affect your view on CSR?

Q<sub>10b</sub>: How does this show in your day to day life?

Q<sub>11</sub>: In what way does [Q<sub>1</sub>] affect your way of leading the company?

Q<sub>11b</sub>: How does this show in your day to day life?

Q<sub>12</sub>: Do you believe that the presence or absence of religion has a direct effect on how responsible people behave? If so, why? If not, why not?

## Appendix IV – Interview questions; Employee of non-religious leader

### Details respondent:

Name:

Organisation:

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### Explanation of topics:

- **CSR:** Ensure that both the respondent and the interviewer are on a similar level with regard to understanding what CSR is and how CSR can be recognized in strategies and behavior
  - **Goal Thesis:** Ensure that the respondent is aware of the goal of this thesis; to look at whether a religious background in any way affects the CSR behavior of the leader.
- 

### Introduction:

Q<sub>1</sub>: Is there anything that shapes [name leader] in [his/her] day to day life, something that has an influence on [his/her] norms and values or [his/her] life philosophy?

*Note that the respondent is aware of the focus on religion and that therefore the context of this question allows for more easy understanding. If the answer is 'nothing', then pursue interview looking for more general 'why' questions.*

Q<sub>2</sub>: Does this [answer Q<sub>1</sub>] have an effect on [name leader]'s norms and values / on the way you live your life?

Q<sub>1-2b</sub>: Can you give me some examples of how [Q<sub>1</sub>] plays a part?

Q<sub>3</sub>: What is [name leader]'s role within the company?

### Corporate Social Responsibility:

Q<sub>4a</sub>: What kind of role does CSR play in your company?

Q<sub>4b</sub>: Could you give some examples of what that looks like?

Q<sub>5c</sub>: Can you tell me why CSR plays a big/medium/small role in your company?

Q<sub>5a</sub>: In what way does CSR affect [name leader]'s day to day job activities/ life?

Q<sub>5b</sub>: Could you give some examples of what that looks like?

Q<sub>5c</sub>: How does [name leader] deal with this notion of CSR in your work?

Q<sub>6</sub>: What stakeholder parties (**explained in notion of CSR**) are directly included in your organisations practices/ strategies?

Q<sub>6b</sub>: Why are these parties are included? And give some examples?

## **Leadership**

Q<sub>7</sub>: What type of leader do you see [name leader] as?

Q<sub>7b</sub>: Why? Can you give some examples that illustrate this?

Q<sub>8</sub>: How does CSR affect [name leader]'s leadership?

Q<sub>8b</sub>: Would you consider [name leader] a responsible leader? Why? Examples?

*In my research I defined a set of roles that illustrate responsible leadership behavior. I would like to briefly name these roles and then ask you whether this is a role you fulfil, and if so how?*

Q<sub>9a</sub>: Would you consider [name leader] a Visionary? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9b</sub>: Would you consider [name leader] a Networker? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9c</sub>: Would you consider [name leader] a Change Agent? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9d</sub>: Would you consider [name leader] a Storyteller? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9e</sub>: Would you consider [name leader] a Servant? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9f</sub>: Would you consider [name leader] a Steward? Why? Examples?

Q<sub>9g</sub>: Would you consider [name leader] a Citizen? Why? Examples?

## **Religion**

Q<sub>10</sub>: In what way does [Q<sub>1</sub>] affect [name leader]'s view on CSR?

Q<sub>10b</sub>: How does this show in [name leader]'s day to day life?

Q<sub>11</sub>: In what way does [Q<sub>1</sub>] affect [name leader]'s way of leading the company?

Q<sub>11b</sub>: How does this show in [name leader]'s day to day life?

Q<sub>12</sub>: Do you believe that the presence or absence of religion has a direct effect on how responsible people behave? If so, why? If not, why not?