

Original Paper

CSR of Platform Enterprises in the Era of Digitalization

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Abstract

The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has a long history and has always been a topic of controversy. Scholars have continuously researched it without pause. During the traditional phase dominated by manufacturing industries, scholars debated whether companies should assume social responsibility and what specific responsibilities they should fulfill. The theories of shareholder orientation and stakeholder theory emerged in this context. In the present era of digitalization, which has reshaped traditional business models and significantly impacted people's work and lives, platform enterprises have not only contributed to economic development but have also brought forth prominent social issues. These issues include allegations of monopolistic behavior, leakage of user information, and infringement of consumer rights. To varying degrees, these challenges expose the lack of social responsibility in platform enterprises and the absence of effective legislation and regulation. This paper explores the legal and regulatory dilemmas faced by platform enterprises in fulfilling social responsibility in the digital age, and discuss the innovation and governance of social responsibility from individual, corporate, and societal perspectives.

Keywords

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Digital Era, Platform Enterprises

1. Introduction

The development of digital intelligence information technology such as mobile internet, big data, artificial intelligence, and blockchain in the new wave of digital revolution has reshaped the economic landscape and empowered traditional industries. In the era of digitalization, the high penetration and socialization of digital technologies provide the technical foundation for a new round of economic and social transformation. Humanity is transitioning from the traditional industrial economy to a platform-driven economy and a digital society powered by information technology (Feng Hua & Chen Yaqi, 2016). The rapid application of emerging technology paradigms like big data, cloud computing, and blockchain has fuelled the growth of the platform economy. New business models and innovative approaches have successfully integrated resources, driving high-quality economic development. Continuous technological and business innovations are transforming industries and even disrupting existing ones (Zhao Peng, 2018). Simultaneously, platform enterprises have emerged in various sectors such as social media, e-commerce, ride-sharing, and lifestyle services within the context of the platform economy. These high-tech service ecosystems have accelerated the development of the platform economy. However, they have also brought attention to environmental, labour, privacy, and other issues related to corporate responsibility. The social responsibilities that platform enterprises

must bear have become increasingly significant. Globally, more and more countries are demanding that companies take on greater Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) (Afsharipour & Rana, 2013). For instance, as early as 2009, the Indian government publicly called for companies to take on more social responsibility in India, and in 2010, it first announced mandatory CSR requirements for companies. Subsequently, this measure was amended to an “obey or explain” obligation and was incorporated into the Companies Act in 2011 (Dharmapala et al., 2018). The European Union’s “Artificial Intelligence Act”, which was officially voted on and approved by the European Parliament on March 13, 2024, also specifically emphasizes that providers, deployers, importers, distributors, or other third parties of artificial intelligence systems all need to fulfill their compliance obligations under their respective roles. It is evident that CSR has become an issue that cannot be ignored.

China has long established regulations regarding CSR. In the “Corporation Law of the People’s Republic of China” (hereinafter referred to as the “Corporation Law”), which will take effect on July 1, 2024, Article 20 clearly states that companies engaged in business activities should fully consider the interests of stakeholders such as company employees, consumers, and the protection of ecological environment and other social public interests, and bear social responsibilities. The state encourages companies to participate in social welfare activities and publish social responsibility reports. Similarly, Article 86 of the “Civil Code of the People’s Republic of China” (hereinafter referred to as the “Civil Code”) states that “A for-profit legal person shall, when engaging in operational activities, observe commercial ethics, maintain the security of transactions, subject itself to the supervision of the government and the public, and assume social responsibilities”. However, while these provisions mention “CSR”, they lack specific criteria and legal consequences. The lack of clear guidelines has led to two extreme interpretations: Should companies always bear significant social responsibility, or can they avoid it altogether? Furthermore, these regulations do not specifically address the social responsibility of platform enterprises, a novel form of business in the digital age. Whether platform enterprises should bear the same social responsibilities as traditional companies remains unaddressed. In summary, both the “Company Law” and the “Civil Code” fail to provide specific rules regarding the heterogeneous nature of platform enterprises’ social responsibility.

In light of this, the current paper utilizes a method of literature analysis to inductively extend theories of CSR in the context of the digital intelligence era. It offers an exhaustive discourse on the transformations induced by digital intelligence within enterprises and the resultant societal implications, the dilemmas encountered by CSR within the framework of traditional theories, and the innovative approaches to CSR in the digital intelligence era. The objective is to render the research pertaining to the governance of platform enterprises’ social responsibility more systematic, thereby establishing a foundational basis for future empirical studies by scholars on the governance of platform enterprises’ social responsibility. This, in turn, is intended to bolster further investigations into CSR in the digital era.

2. Enterprise Transformation and Social Issues in the Era of Digitalization

2.1 Reshaping Industries in the Era of Digitalization

The definition of digitalization primarily stems from the perspective of technological revolutions (such as the Industrial Revolution) (Chen Dongmei et al., 2020). Human society has experienced three significant paradigm shifts: The first Industrial Revolution introduced steam engine technology, mechanizing production methods. Traditional agricultural societies evolved into industrial economies with factories powered by mechanical systems. The second Industrial Revolution, represented by technologies like generators and internal combustion engines, laid the groundwork for large-scale assembly-line production. Humanity transitioned from the “Steam Age” to the “Electric Age”. Since the late 20th century, especially in the 21st century, a new wave of technological transformation driven by computer science, mobile internet, big data, blockchain, and artificial intelligence has propelled humanity into the “Digital Society” or “Intelligent Society”. In the digital era, traditional industries can easily access user information in the big data environment, significantly reducing information asymmetry between companies and users. Additionally, highly intelligent labor enhances the potential output of human capital, reshaping the workforce and enabling large-scale social production.

The composition of the new digital economy and intelligent economy in the current digital age includes two modules: Narrowly define and broadly defined. Narrowly defined, it encompasses digital information technology and the infrastructure industry for information operations, as well as e-commerce (including B2B, B2C, and C2C models). Broadly defined covers the value created by the penetration of digital information technology into traditional industries, digitizing market transactions and production processes (Barefoot et al., 2019).

From a profit perspective, digital industries share the same legal attributes as traditional entities. They are profit-oriented legal entities established under the law, possessing legal personality, profit orientation, sociality, and corporate qualifications. However, their profit models differ. The core application of digital information technology involves algorithm-based reconstruction of market transactions and innovative business models, ultimately forming a new economic landscape (Yang Zhen & Chen Jin, 2020). Notably: Digital technologies have given rise to new forms of the platform economy and sharing economy. Traditional firms now use digital information technology to make supply decisions, identify consumer preferences through big data analysis, and digitize production and transaction processes (He Daan & Xu Yifan, 2020).

2.2 Platform Enterprises in the Digital Era

In the era of digitalization, enterprises use digital information technology to shift from physical space to network space, relying on the Internet, big data, cloud computing and other technologies for survival and development. They use their virtuality to break the limitations of time and space, and realize the freedom of transactions and services in the virtual network they build, thus the “platform” appears. Roche and others (Rochet et al., 2003) believe that in the bilateral market, platform enterprises are enterprises that provide trading platforms and services for buyers and sellers, and gain benefits when the buyer and seller reach a transaction. Cennamo and Stantalo (Cennamo & Santalo, 2013) believe that platform enterprises are the providers and operators of the platform. In order to maintain the orderly transaction of the platform business ecosystem, they will formulate corresponding rules. This article takes the definition of the “Guidelines on Anti-Monopoly Law in the Field of Platform Economy” by the State Council Anti-Monopoly Committee as the standard. The platform refers to the commercial organization form that creates value together through network information technology, allowing

mutually dependent bilateral or multilateral subjects to interact under the rules provided by a specific carrier.

Platform enterprises can be divided into two major categories: matching and connecting. The function of the matching platform enterprise is to provide information intermediary or transaction intermediary services, that is, to provide transaction information for buyers and sellers through the platform, so that both parties can quickly find the counterpart that matches their transaction needs, such as Amazon (Gawer et al., 2014). The function of the connecting platform enterprise is to provide technical connection channels, communication channels between buyers and sellers, ensure transaction safety through technical and transaction rule arrangements, and provide services that facilitate transactions, such as building infrastructure based on the Internet and offline, such as Apple and Microsoft (Cui Wei, 2021). However, as a platform for enterprise development, its development also depends on many production factors in traditional social production and network guarantees provided by the government to continue. For example, platform enterprises engaged in e-commerce business need to rely on developed industrial production and a large amount of cheap labor during their development process. Shared economy platforms such as online car-hailing and hitchhiking also need to absorb the means of production in the traditional oil industry (Zhang Linghan, 2022). Therefore, there is a relationship of mutual prosperity and loss between platform enterprises in the digital age and traditional enterprises. There are differences between the two, but they are interdependent in operation and are not completely separated.

In addition, cross-network externality is also one of the characteristics of platform enterprises, that is, the utility obtained by the buyer on the platform depends on the number of sellers joining the platform. Under the effect of positive externality, a network scale is formed (Armstrong & Mar, 2006). But whether it is a matching platform enterprise or a connecting platform enterprise, in this virtual network space, transactions between the two users will increase the asymmetry of information, resulting in adverse selection problems, leading to platform enterprises and bilateral users have the opportunity to implement social responsibility loss and pseudo-social responsibility behavior. The occurrence of alienation behaviors such as corporate social responsibility loss under the effect of cross-network effects will show negative externalities, causing the phenomenon of social responsibility loss to be widely spread in society, causing serious adverse effects on society (Xiao Hongjun & Li Ping, 2019).

2.3 Social Problems under Digitalization

The new round of technological revolution under digitalization has reshaped the entire economic form, and has also produced a large number of social problems in the process of deeply empowering traditional industries. It has brought a series of challenges to the entire social individuals, social organizations (micro-enterprises) and social operations, mainly including individuals, enterprises and the entire society.

At the individual level, the privacy of individuals and consumer rights are being challenged comprehensively. The development of artificial intelligence is essentially based on the collection of data from micro-individuals in the economic society driven by algorithms and data, and a series of processes such as autonomous decision-making and autonomous analysis are carried out through big data analysis and machine learning, deep learning and other digital technologies. Data collection needs to meet three basic conditions: large sample size, diverse and heterogeneous content, and dynamic real-time (Yang Zhen & Chen Jin, 2020). Therefore, in such a scenario with high Internet coverage and usage rate, due to the openness of the Internet and big data mining technology, the corresponding data

of social individuals and social users may be exposed to the public view of the Internet, and the individual characteristics, consumption traces, social hobbies, income distribution and other individual privacy information of individuals in the Internet are fully “monitored” by big data technology, and individual privacy data protection has become a prominent social problem faced by the development of artificial intelligence in the digital age. In addition, platform enterprises also control a large amount of data, and then allocate the total price between buyers and sellers in a reasonable way, thereby promoting bilateral users to generate demand for platform services and reach transactions to obtain benefits (Xiao Hongjun & Yang Zhen, 2020). Due to the bilateral nature of platform enterprises, platform sellers will make false propaganda, unite some “consumers” to disclose untrue and inaccurate information, and even obstruct consumers from maintaining their legitimate rights and interests by means of threats and inducements, stepping on the edge of the law and deceiving other buyers to reach transactions. When big data becomes a core production factor, platform enterprises use their own advantages to monopolize data and lock in technology, gradually forming an oligopoly pattern. Consumers are forced to make a “one or the other” decision regarding platforms.

At the enterprise level, new “digital responsibility issues” have emerged, including big data price discrimination, low-price competition, uncontrolled smart devices, and digital pollution. In the era of digital intelligence, the digital responsibility at the corporate level has become more complex and diversified (Jiang Yufeng et al., 2023). Beyond the responsibility issues caused by the “algorithm” itself, there are also safety and reliability issues for enterprises that combine traditional and new AI products or operate within a big data environment. Existing laws do not impose strict constraints on digital corporate behavior, and corporations have not fully recognized the reasonable expectations and soft constraints of stakeholders. Social issues at the corporate level can be divided into innovation issues in technological development, safety issues with digital products, and environmental issues related to sustainable development. In technological development, the update and iteration speed of digital technology is extremely fast, and competition between different corporations has sharply increased. The large profits brought by new business models and the low cost of replacing employees encourage corporations to frequently change their workforce to maintain continuous innovation capabilities. Moreover, in order to obtain a monopolistic position in the industry, corporations strictly keep data and technology confidential, making it difficult to contribute to the overall development of digital intelligence. In terms of safety responsibility, the safety and control of digital technology is an important barrier to protect user property and even life safety. In the face of interests, it is difficult for corporations to maximize the satisfaction of different stakeholders’ reasonable demands and expectations. Whether AI systems can treat all individuals fairly and without discrimination places high ethical management requirements on digital corporations. In terms of environmental responsibility, the development of digital technology is closely related to carbon emissions. Without strict constraints and under the temptation of huge benefits, the production, operation, and waste disposal of AI products, the sustainable treatment of electronic waste, and the use of recyclable and reusable materials as much as possible are difficult to regulate, and the moral responsibility of digital corporations is difficult to pursue.

At the social level, social inequality and social contradictions are gradually intensifying. In the digital age, information and data have become unique production factors that are different from labor, capital, and land. From the perspective of resource base, the acquisition and storage of data have become the core resources of digital enterprises, and are even called the most important “oil resources” in the 21st

century (Yang Zhen & Chen Jin, 2020). Precisely because the ability to obtain, mine and integrate data has become so important, the key to maintaining its competitive position in the digital age for enterprises is to master data. But the reality is that because the ability to construct algorithms in the digital age is still controlled by a small group of people and a small number of digital enterprises and even the government, they have the monopoly authority of data accordingly, and the social public can only be in a passive position. Therefore, the pervasive penetration of digital technology in economic relations, social relations, and even state governance has constructed digital barriers that prevent a portion of the population from accessing basic infrastructure and public services. The disparities in the use of digital technology have begun to directly affect the realization of individual basic rights, leading to imbalances in the distribution of opportunities, resources, discourse, and other aspects. This, in turn, triggers substantial inequality, threatening the fundamental values of the community (Wang Ye, 2023). In addition, behind artificial intelligence is algorithm modeling and algorithm decision-making driving, but in the process of algorithm design, the opportunistic tendency and profit maximization driving of algorithm developers and artificial intelligence enterprises may produce corresponding social bias and algorithm discrimination problems, such as racial discrimination, gender discrimination, income class discrimination, etc. in the process of algorithm design, which will aggravate social inequality (Yang Zhen & Chen Jin, 2020).

3. The Dilemma of Csr for Platform-Based Enterprises in the Era of Digital Intelligence

3.1 Traditional Theories of CSR

In order to discuss CSR in the era of digital intelligence, it is necessary to define the concept of corporate social responsibility. The concept of CSR has developed over the past few decades, and as the power and scale of enterprises worldwide increase with the trend of globalization, the CSR is receiving increasing attention (Rühmkorf, 2015). There are two different perspectives on corporate social responsibility in the literature: shareholder-oriented perspective and stakeholder-oriented perspective. The shareholder-oriented view of CSR proposed by Friedman in 1970 indicates that the most important duty of a company is to its shareholders, and the company should not divert corporate resources from business activities that create value for shareholders to corporate social responsibility activities that do not bring direct benefits to shareholders (Friedman, 2007). Therefore, this shareholder-oriented perspective on corporate social responsibility indicates that enterprises do not need to participate in corporate social responsibility.

However, as time passes, the shareholder-oriented view of corporate social responsibility proposed by Friedman (Friedman, 2007) gradually fades away and is gradually replaced by the stakeholder-oriented corporate view, which is Friedman's most famous viewpoint (Freeman, 2010). Freeman suggested that companies are not only responsible to shareholders, but also have responsibilities to stakeholders (i.e., individuals and communities affected by their business operations). Since then, this stakeholder-oriented CSR perspective has become the more mainstream CSR theory in theory and practice. Another theoretical basis for corporate social responsibility is the corporate social contract theory, which is closely related to stakeholder theory. The essence of social contract theory is that it considers a company as a "contract network" composed of material capital providers (shareholders), human capital providers (management, employees), and other stakeholders. Each stakeholder invests various elements in the company to obtain cooperative benefits that individual entities cannot obtain, and the company is a combination of various elements and the connection of stakeholder interests. The

operation of the company is determined by the contract agreement between the company and society, and the social contract theory is the basis for the company to assume social responsibility (Werhane et al., 2005). The company fulfills the contractual obligations agreed in the complex contract relationship with its stakeholders, that is, it fulfills the company's social responsibility.

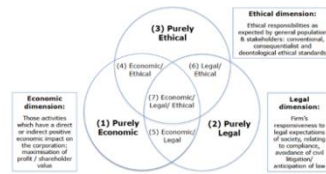


Figure 1. The Three—Domain CSR Model Proposed by Schwartz and Carroll (2003)

There exists a subtle interplay between CSR and the law. According to the three-domain CSR model proposed by Schwartz and Carroll (see Figure 1), the CSR of a company will have impacts on three levels: moral, economic, and legal (Schwartz et al., 2003). The core of implementing corporate social responsibility lies in the specific scope of stakeholders and whether it can be stipulated by rigid laws. In a broad interpretation, “stakeholder” has been used to denote a wide range of interests, which contradicts the company’s goal of “shareholder primacy”. Therefore, when defining the scope of stakeholders, it is always necessary to maintain the independence of the corporate personality and not to view it as a tool for implementing social policies and public interests just because the company has to be responsible to stakeholders (Zheng Chenrong, 2022). As for whether CSR behavior can be stipulated by rigid laws, from a legal perspective, the voluntariness of CSR means that it usually does not need to comply with the law. However, according to the views of Schwartz and Carroll mentioned earlier, companies will formulate and implement their CSR policies and strategies based on the legal expectations of society, and link their CSR activities with legal compliance. This means that companies will formulate corporate social responsibility strategies to avoid litigation and anticipated legal requirements (Zerk, 2006). Therefore, consideration of legal factors and issues may play an important role in shaping the company’s corporate social responsibility policies and strategies. That is to say, the company’s social responsibility-related behaviors may have legal consequences, and like any other aspect of corporate activities, they must comply with laws and regulations, so the company’s social responsibility activities and results will inevitably be affected by its legal environment.

3.2 Real Challenges of CSR for Platform-Based Enterprises in the Era of Digital Intelligence

With the acceleration of the digitalization process, the development of platform-based enterprises is becoming more and more rapid, and the fate of corporate stakeholders is increasingly subject to significant impacts from modern companies. The category of stakeholders changes with the attributes of the company, therefore, the aforementioned stakeholder theory of corporate social responsibility is no longer applicable to platform-based enterprises.

Firstly, compared to traditional enterprises, platform-based enterprises have a higher degree of closure. Platform-based enterprises have the function of organizing transactions and have a certain control over both parties of the transaction and the transactions they carry out (Chen Xiaomin, 2019). This means that the ability of platform-based enterprises to control service prices, control the flow of operators within the platform, and control the sales channels of operators within the platform far exceeds that of traditional enterprises (Zheng Chenrong, 2022). In the platform market, due to the widespread presence

of the lock-in effect, the cost of switching digital products or services is high (Zhang Jiangli, 2020). That is to say, when users are accustomed to the products and services of a platform, if they want to switch to using similar products from another platform, they must pay a high switching cost. Therefore, platform enterprises are more likely to become a closed online space. In addition, when users register on the platform, they need to decide whether to accept the agreement provided by the platform-based enterprise. Once agreed, the user's behavior on the platform will be constrained by the platform rules and must obey the platform control (Liu Quan, 2020). However, due to the disparity in status between the two parties, it is bound to develop into a relationship of management and being managed, and can even be packaged as "flexible employment" to evade obligations and responsibilities under labor law. Therefore, the constantly changing and improving organizational methods have a strong uncertainty, making the government unable to timely and accurately predict the legitimacy of the platform enterprise's operation, can only carry out ex-post evaluation, and thus cannot achieve real-time supervision.

Furthermore, compared to traditional enterprises, the relevance between platform-based enterprises and stakeholders is more pronounced, the conflict between shareholder interests and stakeholder interests is more intense, and the agency cost of the enterprise is higher. The reason why platform-based enterprises can provide a stable trading environment for buyers and sellers is precisely because they hold a large amount of information, such as user authentication information, contact information, bank accounts, internet preferences, etc. Especially for large digital platform giants, with hundreds of millions of users, the platform itself has become a huge social organization centered on users, forming an environment where information is highly concentrated (Zheng Chenrong, 2022). The absence of external supervision, coupled with the expansion of its market attribute power, the disparity in power between users and the platform leads to users being unable to protect their personal information, and some applications of information by platform-based enterprises have clearly deviated from user interests. Shareholders, based on the protection of the limited liability system of company law, have the right to pass high-risk corporate resolutions through the company's highest authority, the shareholders' meeting, with the amount of capital contribution as the limit, in order to seek huge benefits after the company's success. In platform-based enterprises, high risk is transferred from shareholders to stakeholders, so the near-zero tort cost and investment risk can bring several times the profit, and the exploitation of personal information rights will eventually become a norm.

With the development of the digital economy era, the social responsibility of traditional enterprises can no longer timely apply to the market attributes of current platform-based enterprises. The absence of external supervision will inevitably lead platform-based enterprises towards the abyss of disregarding moral risks and abusing economic power. Therefore, it is necessary to expand and legalize the theory of corporate social responsibility in the era of digital intelligence.

4. Expansion and Innovation of CSR for Platform-Based Enterprises in the Era of Digital Intelligence

4.1 Individual Level: The Responsibility of Protecting User Rights

The privacy and security of users must be effectively safeguarded. As a societal issue, platform enterprises lack clear boundaries in the collection of user information, and there is a risk of leakage of user's driving records, consumption records, search records, daily conversations, etc. During the development stage of digital technology, many enterprises have designed a large number of algorithms to obtain users' private data, and recommend information and promote products to users based on historical browsing records. Therefore, the first issue that platform enterprises face in undertaking social responsibilities is that they should be responsible for the security, anonymity, confidentiality, and integrity of user data. They not only need to protect users' privacy, but also have the obligation to prevent consumers' private data from being sold and stolen.

In the process of using digital technology, enterprises need to consider that intelligent recommendations should not make users form information cocoons, and it is forbidden to use artificial intelligence to conduct "social scoring" and "manipulating human behavior", which can lead to new discrimination among digital residents. If algorithms deeply mine users' individual information, consumption data, etc., they not only excessively collect users' information, but also bring unprecedented complex challenges to consumer privacy, as well as produce related emotional stress, network fraud, and financial security and other chain effects. In the evaluation and improvement stage of digital technology, due to the transparency of digital technology is appreciated by users, and it helps to build trust in digital services. In order for users to understand the entire decision-making process, the design and decision-making process of the artificial intelligence system should be easier for users to understand (Janssen et al., 2012). In the inspection and improvement stage of digital technology and data, it is clear that enterprises have mechanisms to protect user data, and the ethical responsibilities that enterprises need to bear, to avoid the illegal use of consumers' personal information, and to increase the risk of potential crimes and data leakage (Udo et al., 2018).

4.2 Corporate Level: The Responsibility of Safety and Innovation in Technological Development

The safety and control of digital technology are crucial to the safety of consumers' lives and property. Ensuring the safety and reliability of artificial intelligence products and services is not only a requirement for the sustainable development of enterprises but also an unavoidable moral responsibility for enterprises. In the creation of digital technology and data collection stage, the development of new technology should conform to the ethical norms of science and technology, pursue ethical digital practices, and develop responsible artificial intelligence products. Enterprises that purchase digital services and digital products should also take ethical norms and values as the criteria for selection and conduct corresponding due diligence. Similarly, enterprises also need to provide informed consent for the collection and use of user data, ensure network security and data security, and enhance the self-regulation responsibility of enterprises. In the operation and decision-making stage, the digital technology and data of enterprises avoid causing harm to stakeholders, maximize the satisfaction of different stakeholders' rational demands and higher expectations, which is becoming more and more important for the ethical management of digital enterprises.

In addition, in the digital age, issues such as infringement of intellectual property rights, replacement of traditional job positions, elimination of traditional enterprises by the market, and large-scale unemployment cannot be ignored. Enterprises should maintain continuous innovation capabilities when

developing and using new digital technologies, explore new business models, provide new digital products and services, respect and treat individual participants in the digital world equally, respect intellectual property rights, provide more jobs and employment opportunities, which are crucial for the good operation and sustainable development of the digital economy.

4.3 Societal Level: The Responsibility of Regulation and Popularization of Digital Technology

The iterative innovation of digital technology is advancing by leaps and bounds, with artificial intelligence, big data, and the metaverse being emerging digital technologies. Compared with the rich scenario applications of digital technology products and services, legal regulations and related policy constraints are relatively lagging, thus leading to new algorithmic issues such as big data price discrimination and precision recommendation. The future development of corporate digital technology will still face new issues of responsibility absence, which requires enterprises to have strict self-regulation responsibilities and tolerant and prudent self-discipline responsibilities.

In addition, there are huge differences in the reception, possession, and application levels of information technology among different groups, which ultimately leads to a large amount of information gap. Apart from the appearance of technological predicaments in daily life, the digital divide will continue to profoundly affect the distribution and redistribution of social resources, reshape the political, economic, cultural, and generational patterns of society, and the wealth gap and class differentiation caused by technology gap, information gap, and knowledge gap will deepen with the development of the economy and society, forming new structural inequality issues (Yang Zhengwei & Cao Shuli, 2021). Therefore, enterprises have the responsibility of popularizing digital technology education, which is of great significance for enhancing the overall cognition of digital technology by the public and accepting digital technology products and services.

The popularization education of digital technology requires the joint efforts of enterprises and the government. It is necessary to pay attention to the digital divide from the national level, formulate relevant policies and systems, and enterprises should guide the behavior at all levels of the enterprise by forming a kind of digital culture and norms within the enterprise under the guidance of relevant policy systems and legal constraints of the government.

5. Conclusion

The social responsibility of platform-based enterprises is still an emerging field. In the digital economy era, platform-based enterprises have greatly promoted economic growth, social progress, and the improvement of human life quality, and the issue of social responsibility of platform-based enterprises has also emerged. Further, the essential goal of platforming corporate social responsibility governance includes not only effectively avoiding the lack and alienation of social responsibility at various levels within the platform, but also effectively incubating and catalysing the common social problems faced by various subjects within the platform to participate in the platform business ecosystem and even the social ecosystem. The platform business ecosystem is embedded into the social ecosystem to participate in the solution of social problems. The traditional corporate social responsibility theory, which are predicated on the norms of an industrial society, fail to adequately address the unique challenges posed by platform-based enterprises in their assumption of social responsibilities. The market characteristics of these platform-based enterprises, in conjunction with their profit-oriented nature, engender a degree of opacity that complicates regulatory efforts. Concurrently, the substantial agency costs incurred in the interactions between these enterprises and their stakeholders intensify the

moral hazards associated with the misuse of economic privileges. Consequently, the question of how platform-based enterprises can leverage the extensive economic and societal resources within their business ecosystems to better facilitate the discharge of social responsibilities by organizational members remains an open area of inquiry. The transformation of these business ecosystems into ecosystems of social responsibility presents numerous opportunities for practical research. The path forward should involve a tripartite construction involving individuals, enterprises, and society at large, supplemented by governmental oversight, to enhance the applicability of CSR theories in the contemporary era.

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