

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AMONG UiTM SARAWAK BRANCH

Ahmad Shahir Abd Aziz¹, Rumaizah binti Che Md Nor², Siti Sahmsiah Sahmat³

¹ Faculty of Plantation and Agrotechnology, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Cawangan Sarawak, Sarawak, Malaysia; Email: ahmadshahir@uitm.edu.my

² Faculty of Computer & Mathematical Sciences, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Cawangan Sarawak, Sarawak, Malaysia; Email: rumaizah@uitm.edu.my

³ Faculty of Plantation and Agrotechnology, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Cawangan Sarawak, Sarawak, Malaysia; Email: sitis274@uitm.edu.my

Article history

Received date : 13-12-2019
Revised date : 14-12-2020
Accepted date : 28-5-2020
Published date : 30-6-2020

To cite this document:

Abd Aziz, A. S., Che Md Nor, R., & Sahmat, S. S. (2020). Students' Perception and The Effectiveness of Corporate Social Responsibility Among UiTM Sarawak Branch. *Jurnal Penyelidikan Sains Sosial (JOSSR)*, 3(7), 45 - 55.

Abstract: *Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is now captured the global interest in most of institution, public as well as private sectors. Hence, higher learning education has taken this opportunity to contribute into social activities and build strategies to strengthen their relationship with social through their education programs. The aims of this paper are to determine if perceptions of students on the CSR programs run by the university is differ according to sociodemographic variable such as gender and academic level background and to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs towards the student's attitude, team work and leaderships. Data collected from 92 students from various courses in UiTM Sarawak Branch and processed by using SPSS software. The result suggests that students have high perception towards CSR Program. It means that they are very like joining the program and feel that the program gave them a lot of benefits and experience. Finding of this study also shows that the sociodemographic does not influence students' perceptions towards CSR program. This study reveals that CSR programs gives a high effectiveness towards students' attitude, team work and leadership. These programs have teach them to have a good manner, work in a team and how to be a good leader successfully. Correlation analysis also has been done for this study and found that there is a significant moderate positive relationship between perception and effectiveness of CSR programs among UiTM students. It means that if student highly agreed with CSR programs, the programs also will be more effective.*

Keywords: *corporate social responsibility, students, perception, sociodemographic, effectiveness*

Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a business model adopted by the company that helps them to be socially accountable to the stakeholder and public which go beyond legal impositions (Godfrey et al. 2009). During the last decades, the social responsibilities of one institutions is one of the concerns among public and privates as well as academic research. By integrating the CSR programs, helps one organization to be responsible of the impact with society surrounding them. In addition, this program can improve the employees' skill and increase opportunities in building the community and the organization.

As major focus given to CSR in more organization, yet little attention on the roles and responsibilities of how universities can play their roles and contribute to the development of community and social welfare. Nowadays, more universities try to integrate the social responsibility in their mission and vision to strengthen their relationship with the society on all aspect including economic, social and environments (Elkington, 1997).

The presence of stakeholder with new theories and concept stated that universities should react more like entrepreneurial in the current economy and situation to gain more profit for establishment and development of universities. Researchers and scholar tried to incorporate the social responsibilities in numerous ways. Universities believe that they should engage with the community through various programs to develop the networks, enlarging their sources or references and indirectly helps the students to become more responsibility toward their surroundings. In addition, universities have to take this opportunity to involve themselves with CSR program in order to achieve their sustainability and create customer loyalty not just focus on profit making only. For those institution who fails to show their responsibilities towards the social and environment may lose the trust will create a resistance from society on their product or services.

Universities tried to trained students with high competency and good characters by promoting outcome based education that go beyond their knowledge in the classroom. In line with Malaysian Education Blueprint (2015-2025) to focuses on forming holistic, entrepreneurial and balanced graduates in order to enhance graduate employability, hence, UiTM Cawangan Sarawak has taken this outreach opportunity to contribute towards the welfare of society at the same time accommodate students with the skills required to become a good citizen. As Sullivan (2003) mentioned that, universities are not only education services channels but also act as a platform to grooming students with responsibilities to the nations.

This study aims to investigate the perception of students on the CSR program that has been conduct by the university and investigate to what extend the effectiveness of the program towards student's attitude, team work and leaderships. Since UiTM Cawangan Sarawak have involved in many CSR program with community, thus the results later can become a significant direction for UiTM Cawangan Sarawak to involve in CSR program among students.

Anderson et al (2019) mention that gender, religion and volunteerism appear to influences some CSR orientation dimension among youth in higher education and helps the CSR research by identifying factors that contribute to shaping student's orientation towards CSR program in the future. One of the efforts taken by UiTM Cawangan Sarawak to contribute towards this responsibility is CSR programs at Pulau Seduku, Lingga that are located at Sri Aman division.

As for previous year, one of the CSR project are an event of break fasting with an orphanage association in Sarawak. Thus, this paper encompasses the perception of students in UiTM Sarawak Branch towards CSR program and effectiveness of the CSR program towards their attitude, team work and leadership.

A questions were distributed to a group of students with different level of education and program taken in the university who involved in CSR program. In this line of thought, the main objective is to observe the student's perceptions from different gender and level of education regarding the CSR Program. This study also conducted in order to reveal the effectiveness of the CSR program towards students' attitude, team work and leadership. The relationship between perception of the students towards CSR program and the effectiveness also has been considered for this study.

Literature review

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Corporate social responsibility can be generally described on how individuals or companies planning to improve their relationship with the community. They can demonstrate CSR in lots of different ways such as through donations, employee volunteering, carry on environmentally safe processes and more (Rusel, 2018). As indicated by Ali & Ali (2016), the concept of corporate social responsibility is gaining popularity in the 1970's when business scholars, consumer advocates, human right associations, environmental activists, and media representatives started asking about social responsibility of corporations. According to Muir (2015), Corporate Social Responsibility is about an organisation taking responsibility for the impacts of its decisions and activities on all aspect of society of the community and the environment. While, volunteering offers vital help to people in need, worthwhile causes, and the community, but benefits can be even greater for the individuals or the companies who conducting it (Segal & Robinson, 2019). In addition, Corporate Social Responsibility is management concept where companies integrate social and environmental concern in their business operations and interactions with their stakeholders. CSR is usually understood as being the way through which a company achieves a balance of economic, environmental and social imperatives (UNIDO, 2019). As stated by Schooley (2019), CSR is an evolving business practice that incorporates sustainable development into a company's business model. It has a positive impact on social, economic and environmental factors. CSR can positively impact the business by improving company image, building brand and motivating business owner. The practice of CSR or Corporate Social Responsibility as a paradigm for firms and businesses to follow has evolved from its early days as a slogan that was considered trendy by some firms following it to the next day realities of the 21st century where it is no longer just fashionable but a business necessity to be socially responsible (Juneja, 2015).

Benefits of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

The CSR program undoubtedly will give a lot of benefits to the individuals and communities. As stated by Muir in 2015, CSR have ability to give positive impact in the community. Keeping social responsibility front of mind encourages businesses to act ethically and to consider the social and environmental impacts. Organisations also can avoid or mitigate detrimental impacts of their business on the community. In some cases, organisations will find ways to make changes in their services or value chain that actually delivers benefits for the community.

Besides, the program also can support public value outcomes. A sound, robust corporate social responsibility framework and organisational mind-set can genuinely help organisations deliver public value outcomes by focusing on how their services can give and make a difference towards the community development. Corporate social responsibility gives an opportunity to organizations to work towards the betterment of the society and make it a better place to live. Corporate social responsibility goes a long way in creating a positive word of mouth for the organization on the whole. As mentioned by Juneja in 2015, people developed a positive feeling for a brand which takes the initiative of educating poor children, planting more trees for a greener environment, bringing electricity to a village, providing employment to people. So in other words, community will remember the individuals or organizations who took the initiative to conduct the CSR program.

Benefits of CSR to Students and Community

CSR can allow the individuals and organizations to connect with the community and make it a better place. Even helping out with the smallest tasks can make a real difference to live of people, animals, and organizations in need. In addition, the best ways to make new friends and strengthen existing relationships is to commit to a joint activity together. Volunteering is a great way to meet new people, especially in a new area. It also can strengthen your ties to the community and broadens your support network, exposing you to people (WCSU, 2018). Moreover, the program also can develop the social and relationship skills with others. As mentioned by Segal & Robinson in 2019, volunteering gives the opportunity to repetition and develops the social skills as individuals will frequently meet with a group of people with common benefits and interests. According to Smith, Holmes, Haski-Levenhal, Cnaan, Handy, & Brudney (2010), young people volunteer for different motives and benefits than older people.

The students as an example will gain a lot of benefits and experience through CSR program. According to Eley in 2003, a major motivator for young people to join CSR program is the opportunity to gain work-related experience, skills and qualifications that can help them in their educations and careers. Besides, Astin and Sax's (1998) found that volunteering can enhance student's academic development, personal skills development and sense of civic responsibility. Furthermore, the student's employability after graduation can be improved through the CSR program as their will build their relationship and networking with the communities. As stated by John (2017), community service is an essential way for students to explore their interests, show what they believe in, and define a possible career path. Active participant in community service can helped to boost self-confidence and also made an impression on employers or students when entered the job market (Stenger, 2013). Another benefit of CSR is the ability of the program to enhanced student's problem-solving skills, improved their ability to work within a team and enabled them to plan more effectively (Stenger, 2013). By engaging in volunteer work, students have an opportunity to learn experientially. They discover where their passions lie while undertaking 'feel good' projects that truly make a difference. These experiences allow them to make more informed choices about university and their career, while instilling a lifelong interest in giving back.

According to Segal & Robinson (2019), the attitude of volunteering helps counteract the effects of stress, anger, and anxiety on individuals. The social contact part of serving and working with others can have a deep effect on the general psychological well-being. So, the individuals will

able to do their routine jobs happily as they already do something good for the benefits of community.

Acceptance of CSR Programme among Students and Community

Numbers of studies have stressed the significance of higher academic institutions in teaching and training ethical and responsible actions to students across disciplines. As stated by Smith, Holmes, Haski-Levenhal, Cnaan, Handy, & Brudney (2010), there is a high level volunteerism among student across the several sampled universities in five countries. The finding could be seen as positive for educational institutions and governments that seek to encourage volunteerism among students and young people (Haski-Leventhal, Meijs, & Hustinx, 2009). Volunteering looks great to employers and shows an employer that student cares about their community. According to Khan (2008), as attractive as it may seem, service learning isn't the most actual way of encouragement students to become civic-minded. When volunteering becomes mandatory, students can misplace the motivation that sparks pure voluntary service. Having students volunteer their time is barely a new idea. According to Ali & Ali (2016) and Jabbour (2010) argues that universities can bring significant environmental effect in the society, by teaching and training students to behave responsibly. Nejati et al. (2010) noted that universities should promote environmental awareness among their employees and students. From this, the culture of be a responsible individuals can be develop among young generations.

Method and Materials

This study involved 92 students who are participated in CSR programs for the semester of March to July 2019. The response rate for this study was 82.61%. These programs were jointly organized by various students' societies of UiTM Sarawak Branch such as Agrovarsity, Nursing Students Association of Sarawak (NUSAS), Persatuan Diploma Kesihatan Persekitaran (KEEPERS) and Persatuan Sains and Matematik (PRISMATICS). These students were chosen as respondent since they involved actively in CSR program. The students gave their response through a survey form that consists three sections which are Section A, Section B and Section C. Section A is created to ask the demographic profile of the respondents while Section B consists of 9-item of perception of the students toward CSR program. Section C measures the effectiveness of CSR programs towards three elements which are attitude, team work and leadership. The 5-point Likert scale was used to measure the level of perception and effectiveness to indicate the respondents' answers, ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree to measure both variables.

The collected data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software in order to produce output for descriptive statistics, mean score, t-test and correlation analysis.

Results and Discussions

Demographic Data

Table 1: Demographic Profile

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	17	22.4
Female	59	77.6
Age		
18 – 20	49	64.47
21 – 23	19	25
24 – 26	8	10.53
Race		
Malay	29	38.2
Non-Malay	47	61.8
Level of Education		
Diploma	25	32.9
Degree	51	67.1
Program		
HS110	17	22.4
HS113	8	10.5
AC220	17	22.4
AM228	1	1.3
AS222	15	19.7
AT220	10	13.2
BM232	6	7.9
BM240	2	2.6
Participated in CSR Program		
Yes	57	75
No	19	25

As shown in Table 1, most of the respondents are female students (77.6%) who aged between 18 to 20 years old (64.47%). Across 76 respondents, 47 respondents are non-Malays (61.8%) while the other 38.2% are Malays. Of those respondents, more degree students are involved in this study compared diploma students with 51 students (67.1%) and 25 (32.9%), respectively. Most of them are students from Diploma in Health Science and Bachelor (Hons) in Accountancy. Through their demographic profile, we found that most of them had experienced in participating CSR program (75%).

Reliability Analysis

Table 2: Results of Reliability Analysis

Variable	No. of Item	Cronbach's Alpha
Perception towards CSR Program	9	0.822
Effectiveness of Attending CSR Program	7	0.913
Effectiveness toward CSR Program on Students' Attitude	5	0.921
Effectiveness toward CSR Program on Students' Team Work	4	0.888
Effectiveness toward CSR Program on Students' Leadership	5	0.903

Reliability test refers to the consistency in measuring the instrument that we used in study. Cronbach Alpha value is the most commonly used internal consistency measure. According to Hinton et al., (2004), there were four levels of reliability which are excellent reliability (0.90 and above), high reliability (0.70 – 0.90), moderate reliability (0.50 – 0.70) and low reliability (0.50 and below). Results in Table 2 reveals that the reliability for variable Perception towards CSR Program and Effectiveness toward CSR Program on Students' Team Work are high with value of Cronbach's Alpha is 0.822 and 0.888, respectively. While the other variables have excellent reliability with value of Cronbach's Alpha is more than 0.9. This means that all the items used in this study provide consist and stable results.

Students' Perception Towards CSR Program

Table 3: Classification for level of perception

Mean Score	Level of Perception
1.00 – 2.33	Low
2.34 – 3.67	Moderate
3.68 – 5.00	High

In order to interpret the students' perception towards CSR program, the 5 likert-scale items used in Section B has been simplified into three levels by using formula $(5-1) \div 3 = 1.33$. The classification of three levels are as tabulated in Table 3.

Table 4: Mean score for level of perception

Variable	Mean	Level of Effectiveness
Perception	4.56	High

Based on the respondents' feedback on perception, the mean score of students' perception is shown in Table 4. The mean score 4.56 for perception reveals that students strongly agreed that the CSR program gave them a lot of benefits, experience and opportunity for them to join CSR program. They also feel happy and enjoy joining the program and would like to ask their to join them for other CSR programs.

Assessing Whether There is a Significant Different in Students' Perception Towards CSR Program According Gender and Education Level

Table 5: Means of students' perception by gender and education level and results of Independent t-test

		N	Mean	Levene's Test (Equality of Variances)	Independent t-test (Equality of Means)	Conclusion
Gender	Male	17	4.4183	0.004	0.261	No significant different
	Female	59	4.6008			
Education Level	Diploma	25	4.5956	0.415	0.645	No significant different
	Degree	51	4.5425			

Table 5 above displays the mean and results of Independent t-test for students' perception toward CSR program according to gender and education level. For both gender (male and female) and education level (diploma and degree), there are slightly different in the mean of students' perception.

So, a further analysis has been conducted in order to assess whether there are significant different between gender and education level in students' perception toward CSR program. Levene's test has been done before we proceed to assess the difference between gender (male and female) and education level (diploma and degree). Levene's test is used to test the equality of variances. For gender, the variances are not equal since the p-value is less than 0.05 while the variances are equal for education level (p-value > 0.05). Results of Independent t-test in Table 5 for both gender and education level reveal that there are no significant different between male and female students (p-value > 0.05) and diploma and degree students (p-value > 0.05). This means that sociodemographic does not influence students' perceptions towards CSR program.

The Effectiveness of the CSR Program Towards Students' Attitude, Team Work and Leadership

Table 6: Classification for level of effectiveness

Mean Score	Level of Effectiveness
1.00 – 2.33	Low
2.34 – 3.67	Moderate
3.68 – 5.00	High

The 5-likert scale questions from Section C also have been categorized into three levels in order to measure the effectiveness of CSR programs among students towards attitude, team work and leadership. The levels of effectiveness are displayed in Table 6.

Table 7: Mean score for level of effectiveness

Variable	Mean	Level of Effectiveness
Attitude	4.61	High
Team work	4.45	High
Leadership	4.43	High

Table 7 shows that the effectiveness of CSR programs among UiTM students towards attitude, team work and leadership are at high level. Mean score of 4.61 for effectiveness towards attitude reveals that students can improve their discipline and activeness when involving in any programs and also let them think wisely for decision making. The students' effectiveness of CSR programs towards team work with mean score of 4.45 means that the students strongly agreed that they have been given an opportunity to work in a team. Highly effectiveness towards team work means the students can discuss among members in a team and tolerate to each other in order to make a decision. The high level of effectiveness towards leadership with mean score of 4.43 suggests that students can be a good leader in handling programs. They can lead the programs very well and accept others' opinion even though they are leader. CSR programs is very effective towards leadership since students must think the consequences of their decision. It means that they need to know bad or good effect of their decision.

Relationship Between Perception of students and the Effectiveness towards CSR Programs

Table 8: Correlation between perception and effectiveness toward CSR Programs

		Effectiveness towards CSR Program
Perception towards CSR Program	Pearson Correlation Value (p - value)	0.609 (0.000)

Table 8 presents the correlation between perception and effectiveness of students toward CSR programs. The result shows that there is a significant moderate positive relationship between perception and effectiveness of students toward CSR programs. It means that if student highly agreed with CSR programs, the effectiveness of the programs also will high.

References

- Ali, I., & Ali, M. (2016). University Students' Perceptions of Social Responsibility Initiatives by Universities in Pakistan . *Journal of Sustainable Development; Vol. 9, No. 5; ,* 130 - 140.
- Astin, A. W., and Sax, L. J. (1998). "How undergraduates are affected by service participation." *Journal of College Student Development*, 39(3), 251-263.
- Elkington, J., 1997. *Cannibals with Forks: The Triple Bottom Line of 21st Century Business.* Oxford: Capstone.
- Galvao, A., Mendes, L., Marques, C., & Mascarenhas, C. (2019). Factors influencing students' corporate social responsibility orientation in higher education. *Journal of cleaner production*, 215, 290-304.
- Godfrey, P.C., Merrill, C.B., & Hansen, J.M. (2009). The relationship between corporate social responsibility and shareholder value: An empirical test of the risk management hypothesis. *Strategic Management Journal*, 30(4), 425-445
- Haski-Leventhal, D., Meijs, L., & Hustinx, L. (2009). The third party model: Enhancing volunteering through governments, corporations and educational institutes. *Journal of Social Policy*, 39(1), 139-158
- Hinton, P. R., Brownlow, C., McMurray, I. & Cozens, B. 2004. *SPSS explained*, East Sussex, England, Routledge Inc.
- John. (2017, September 2017). *Esperance Anglican Community School*. Retrieved September 2019, 20, from Esperance Anglican Community School Wen Site: <https://www.eacs.wa.edu.au/2017/09/top-5-benefits-of-community-service-activities/>
- Jabbour, C. J. C. (2010). Greening of business schools: a systematic view. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, 11(1), 49-60. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/14676371011010048>
- Jeannes, S & Lawrence, R. (2019). Volunteering and its surprising benefits. <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/healthy-living/volunteering-and-its-surprising-benefits.htm>
- Juneja, P. (2015). *Management Study Guide*. Retrieved September 2019, 20, from Management Study Guide Website.
- Khan, N. A. (2008, October 2008). *Chicago Tribune*. Retrieved October 2019, 2019, from Chicago Tribune Website: <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-2008-10-02-0810020498-story.html>
- Muir, S. (2015, July 24). *Cube Group*. Retrieved September 20, 2019, from Cube Group Website: <https://cubegroup.com.au/top-5-benefits-of-corporate-social-responsibility/>
- Nejati, M., Salamzadeh, Y., & Sharafi, F. F. (2010). Environmental sustainability: a study of world leading universities. *Proceedings of International Conference on Environmental Research and Technology, Malaysia*: 175-178.
- Russell, K. (2018, June 6). Why CSR: Four Benefits of Corporate Social Responsibility Organizations that promote corporate social responsibility (CSR) are reaping the benefits of their good deeds, including increased brand awareness and employee satisfaction .
- Segal, J., & Robinson, L. (2019, June). *Help Guide*. Retrieved September 20, 2019, from Help Guide Website: <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/healthy-living/volunteering-and-its-surprising-benefits.htm>
- Schooley ,S., (2019). What Is Corporate Social Responsibility? <https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/4679-corporate-social-responsibility.html>

- Smith, K., Holmes, K., Haski-Leventhal, D., Cnaan, R. A., Handy, F., & Brudney, J. L. (2010). Motivations and Benefits of Student Volunteering: Comparing Regular, Occasional, and Non-Volunteers in Five Countries.
- Sullivan, W. M., 2003. The University as Citizen: Institutional Identity and Social Responsibility. A Special Report.
- United Nations Industrial Development Organization (2019). What is CSR? <https://www.unido.org/our-focus/advancing-economic-competitiveness/competitive-trade-capacities-and-corporate-responsibility/corporate-social-responsibility-market-integration/what-CSR>
- Western Connecticut State University. (2018) Benefits of Community Service. <https://www.wcsu.edu/community-engagement/benefits-of-volunteering/>