

Corporate Social Responsibility In Higher Education: A study of some private universities in Vietnam

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Abstract: *Corporate social responsibility (CSR) in education is a crucial topic of dedicated researchers in many countries. However, it's the new and luxury topic in Viet Nam. In this article, the authors explore CSR in higher education, especially the private universities in HCMC, Vietnam. The paper emphasizes on what goals, roles, responsibilities of the private universities towards society and how they impact on their members in a system like stakeholders, subordinates, students, and employers are. The research results bring practical values that there are positive relationships between CSR of the private universities and CSR of these four members.*

Keywords: *corporate ethics, education, social responsibility, private universities*

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I. Introduction

According to Guadamillas et al, 2010, corporate social responsibility (CSR) has nowadays a special significance applied in many different fields. In education, namely private universities must demonstrate exact concern and evidence of long-term enhancement of CSR. CSR of universities is like an organ in a body, it creates a good reputation for educational quality that evaluated by students, employers, subordinates, stakeholders, etc. Stated as Korschun et al., 2011, CSR is a value that organizations can leverage to reinforce relationships among organizational members along the organizational structural system. They commit to improve societal well-being through business activities and positive contributions towards members in an organization. Therefore, CSR certainly influences relationships among all members. In this paper, we study CSR of top ten private universities in HCMC, Viet Nam to see how these universities are evaluated by stakeholders, subordinates, students and employers. In particular, we find out what CSR of the universities have done for their members and for meeting their expectations as well as their social responsibilities. In fact, in a system, although the members have their own goals or standards, and those goals or standards are considered their social responsibilities, their goals or standards must have a close relationship to achieve good general results. The paper gives us a new window to study CSR of private universities compared with CSR of their related members.

This paper is structured as follows: First part of the paper presents the review of CSR in theory and conceptual model of the CSR in this paper. The second part refers to the findings of qualitative research methods, such as interviews by questionnaire with in-depth questions, secondary data analysis and to the findings of quantitative research methods, such as Descriptives, Cronbach Alpha, CFA and SEM. Last part presents general conclusion, limitation and further research.

LITERATURE REVIEWS AND RESEARCH MODEL

CSR DEFINITIONS

CSR of private universities is a commitment to an ethical conduct for contributing to economic development, improving the quality of academic, spiritual and material life for related members.

The definition of CSR is both complex and complicated. It is complex because of the nature and context of the problems. CSR is a form of business self-regulation (Sheehy 2015). Previously, this term was understood as an internal policy of an organization or a business ethics strategy, but this is no longer accurate because of the development of many international laws and regulations. A whole range of organizations have used their ability to take this term out of being just an initiative or ideal of some individuals or even a certain business line. The CSR was later regarded as a self-regulating enterprise, which was acknowledged as true in the last years, but later the term evolved. A new light when it is not only voluntary decisions under the level of an individual organization, but also a core policy of any organization even at the regional level. It's remarkable that Carroll (1979) eschewed a concise definition in favor of a three-dimensional model, which consisted of social responsibility categories, social issues, and philosophies of social responsiveness. Carroll (1979) expanded CSR from traditional economic and legal responsibilities to ethical and charitable responsibilities in response to rising concerns about ethical issues in businesses. He also showed how several competing perspectives (economic responsibility, public responsibility, social responsiveness) could be incorporated into this framework.

CSR is often associated with CSP (corporate social performance). CSP is known as the theory of Miles (1987). When Miles conducted research in the insurance industry, he recommended concepts from strategic management and organization theory to elicit a detailed midrange theory to explain corporate responsiveness. The two features of responsiveness are the firm's external affairs strategy and external affairs design. He called it a function of business exposure because CSP showed the firm's actions and outcomes.

In Vietnam higher education, CSR shows in the following actions: reporting, publicizing and explaining to the state agencies and other members about universities' performance of actions and outcomes in accordance with the regulation. Their performance is considered as a commitment towards their members, but the commitment has never been scientifically evaluated. Hence, people are still confused about the CSR's value of private universities in Vietnam. In this view, the main aim of the paper is to see how well the private universities' CSR is committed to their members, then we will recommend a more suitable CSR for private universities.

CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF THE PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES CSR

The CSR model of private universities in this paper is only limited by the evaluation of stakeholders, subordinates, students and employers because these factors certainly govern the foundation of social responsibility of the private universities. The study tested whether four members evaluated the core values that they received from the CSR of private universities and whether they evaluated its social performance positively or negatively.

The Conceptualization of the Research Model: CSR of private universities in Viet Nam: Based on the aim of the study, we build hypothesis and the research model as follows.

Hypothesis

H1: There is a positive relationship between the university goals and the stakeholder expectations.

H2: There is a positive relationship between the university goals and the subordinate expectations.

H3: There is a positive relationship between the university goals and the student expectations.

H4: There is a positive relationship between the university goals and the employer expectations.

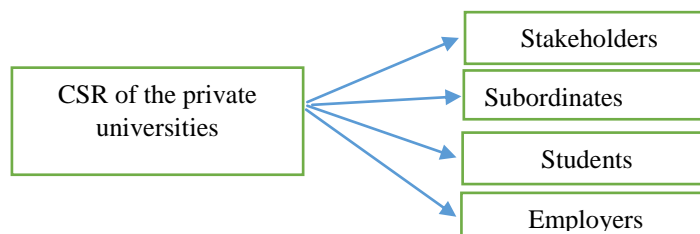


Figure 1: Authors' own conceptualization

CSR of the private universities is evaluated by three main aims: becoming multidisciplinary universities with internationally recognized education, educating the young generation of Vietnam to become global citizens, providing the highest quality in education and research.

Stakeholders concentrate on how their university performs in its profits, achieving its main aims and following the regulation.

Subordinates think that the university create for them a good teaching and research environment, an income good enough for living, and a fair judgement.

Students think that the university create for them a good learning and research environment, an opportunity to find the right career, and both good skills and qualifications when graduating.

Employers think that that new graduated students from the private university to meet the requirements of qualifications, skills and ethics, and become reliable partners with the university.

II. Research Methodology

Sample and procedure

The sample of top 10 private universities for this study was randomly derived from a survey of dean2020.edu.vn in HCMC. Data on such constructs as CSR, vision, mission and strategy of private universities in competitive environment were collated via the questionnaires delivered to 100 stakeholders, 100 students, 100 teachers, and 100 employers at 10 private universities in HCMC, Viet Nam. Data collection was conducted between March 2018 and November 2018. The questionnaire was divided into the following sections:

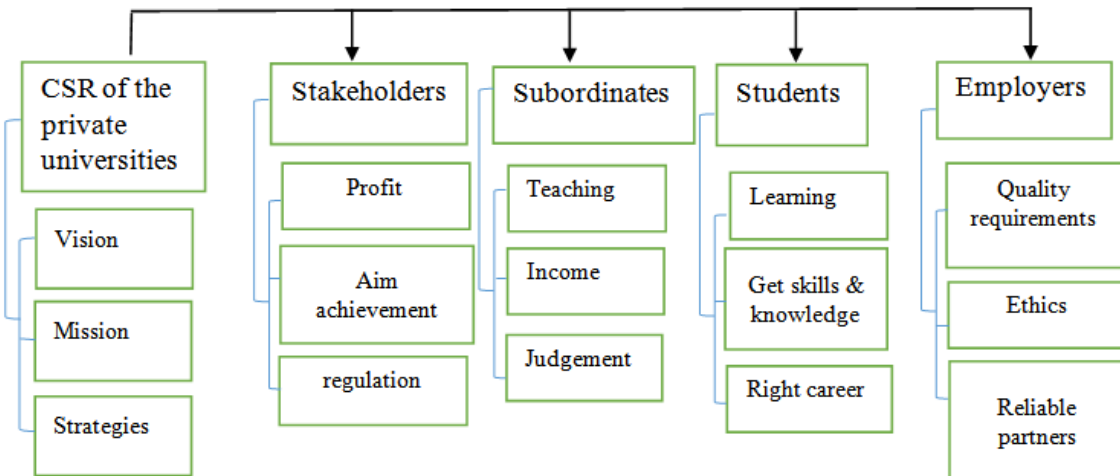


Figure 2: Authours' research aims

Questionnaire

Items	Samples	Questions
CSRS1	Stakeholders	You think you founded the University for profit.
CSRS2		The goal of your University are always working effectively.
CSRS3		You make a request to force your University operate in accordance with the regulation and social needs.
CSRU1	Heads of the universities	You think you can create your university to be a multidisciplinary university with internationally recognized education.
CSRU2		You think you can educate the young generation of Vietnam to become global citizens.
CSRU3		You think can provide the highest quality in education and research for your students.
CSRSUB1	Subordinates (teachers)	Your University creates for you a good teaching and research environment.
CSRSUB2		You have an income good enough for living in teaching career at your university.
CSRSUB3		You think your university judges fairly with what you perform.
CSRST1	Students	Your University creates for you a good environment for leaning and doing research.
CSRST2		You think that you will have the opportunity to find the right career.
CSRST3		You think you University will help you master the skills and qualifications when you graduate.
CSRE1	Employers	You think that new graduates from the private university meet the requirements of qualifications, skills and ethics.
CSRE2		You receive the private university request form to declare the numbers of working criteria, position and employment that you need per year.
CSRE3		You think the private university is always a reliable partner.

Figure 3: Authours' questionnaire

Instruments

Stated as Smith (1983), the quantitative approach utilized in this study does not allow for an analysis of the most profound level of the constructs, it, as a “journey of the facts”, so we start investigating how respondents’ perception about the private universities.

The questions included 20 items was used to measure CSR’s the private universities. The questionnaire was first examined and edited by numerous educators. We analyzed the exploratory factor analysis (CFA) to measure four factors. Each CSR has four questions. The 20 statements of the questionnaire were measured with a five-point Likert-type scoring system applied to a scale anchored by “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5). Cronbach alpha coefficients of 0,93 is higher than 0,70 that recommended by Nunnally’s (1967).

III. Findings And Discussion

Findings

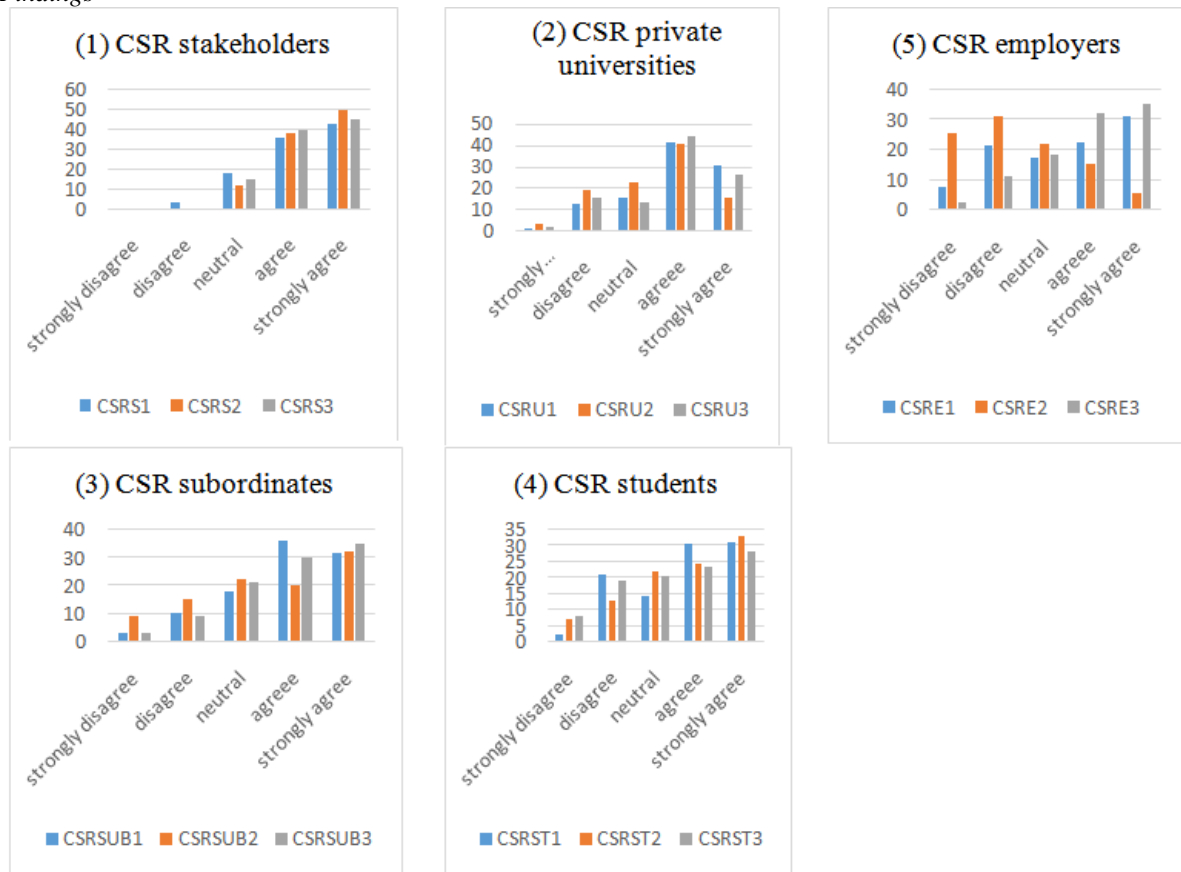


Figure 4: The results of frequencies

The results show that firstly, the stakeholders agree and strongly agree that their goals are sustainable development with 88.5%, work following the regulation with 85.3%, and must be profitable with 78.2%. Secondly, the heads of the private universities agree and strongly agree that they must build them to be multidisciplinary universities with internationally recognized education with 71.8%, then provide the highest quality in education and research with 70.1%, and educate the young generation of Vietnam to become global citizens with 55.7%. Thirdly, the subordinates at these universities agree and strongly agree that they create a good teaching and research environment with 68.1%, an income good enough for living 55.7%, and a fair judgement with 52.5%. Next, the students agree and strongly agree that the university create for them a good learning and research environment with 62.1%, an opportunity to find the right career with 57.6%, and both good skills and qualifications when graduating with 52%. Finally, the employers agree and strongly agree that they become reliable partners with the university with 67.7%, new graduated students from the private university to meet the requirements of qualifications, skills and ethics with 33.8%, and 21% they agree and strongly agree they receive the private university request form to declare the numbers of working criteria, position and employment that they need per year.

Coefficients ^a							
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	-.622	.213		-2.173	0.12		
1 CSRS	.243	.033	.343	5.387	.000	.823	1.033
CSRSUB	.241	.035	.243	5.439	.000	.890	1.083

CSRST	.214	.034	.296	6.127	.000	.854	1.074
CSRE	.213	.035	.297	6.235	.000	.913	1.093

a. Dependent Variable: CSRU

Figure 5: The results of coefficients

The findings show that Sig. value of the independent variables are all less than 0.05, so these independent variables have significant to explain for the dependent variable, so none of them are excluded. VIF is less than 2, so there are no problems with multicollinearity.

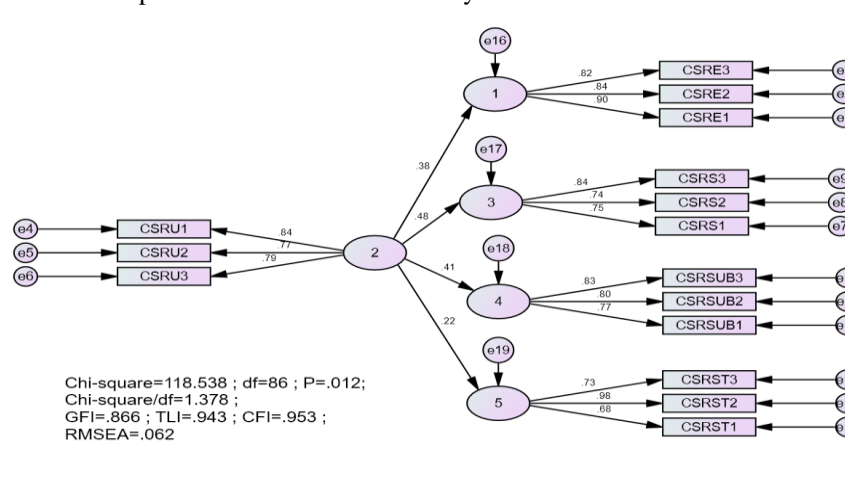


Figure 6: The results of SEM

		Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
1	<--- 2	.418	.126	3.311	***	
3	<--- 2	.448	.116	3.860	***	
4	<--- 2	.346	.102	3.383	***	
5	<--- 2	.178	.095	3.882	***	
CSRE1	<--- 1	.321	.097	3.343	***	
CSRE2	<--- 1	.469	.096	3.049	***	
CSRE3	<--- 1	.402	.103	5.695	***	
CSRU1	<--- 2	.425	.126	5.654	***	
CSRU2	<--- 2	.445	.122	7.753	***	
CSRU3	<--- 2	.435	.126	7.942	***	
CSRS1	<--- 3	.523	.102	6.654	***	
CSRS2	<--- 3	.699	.150	6.680	***	
CSRS3	<--- 3	.489	.172	7.017	***	
CSRSUB1	<--- 4	.327	.112	6.523	***	
CSRSUB2	<--- 4	.357	.147	7.353	***	
CSRSUB3	<--- 4	.383	.187	7.481	***	
CSRST1	<--- 5	.253	.165	6.521	***	
CSRST2	<--- 5	.289	.196	6.748	***	
CSRST3	<--- 5	.261	.150	6.828	***	

Figure 6: The results of SEM

The Estimate stated that if CSR of private university increased by 1, CSR of stakeholders increased to 0.448, CSR of subordinates increased to 0.346, CSR of students increased to 0.78, and CSR of employers increased to 0.418. Also, Sig. in P is less than 0.05, so all hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H4 have effects on CSR of the private universities.

IV. Conclusion

In theoretical, the results of the measured model in this study contribute to motivate researchers in the field of behavioral sciences and CSR. The research hypotheses presented in this study are accepted and have significances for CSR of the relevant subjects. Theoretical model of CSR of private universities can complement the theoretical system in the performance of private universities.

In practical, the research results provide important information in reviewing CSR for private universities to improve their performance. Firstly, stakeholders need to understand the role of CSR when establishing the private university. When implementing CSR, stakeholders on the one hand must increase financial performance and on the other hand must increase the values of responsibility for education. Secondly, the results show that employers have an important supporting role for universities on appropriate training model. Finally, the results also present the central role of teachers and students in promoting educational values.

V. Limitation And Further Research

The study was conducted at top 10 universities ranked in Ho Chi Minh City. The research results showed a positive relationship between the private university's CSR and the related members' CSR in a system. The limitation of this study is the use of convenient sampling methods. Therefore, to generalize research issues on the impact of the private university's CSR on related members' CSR, the next research needs to expand into other universities at other cities in Viet Nam.

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