

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) of one Milling Company in Batangas City, Philippines

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Abstract - *This research study primarily aimed to assess the CSR practices of a Milling Company in Batangas City, Philippines. Specifically, the study intended to determine the different CSR activities practiced by the company towards consumers, employees, community and environment; to identify the problems encountered by the employees with their involvement in the CSR practices of the company; and to propose plan of actions to address the problems encountered by the employees. The researchers adopted descriptive method in order to collect the necessary information facts, and opinion needed to be able to assess the Corporate Social Responsibility practiced by the company. The responses of the employees revealed that they disagree and strongly disagree in the listed problems encountered in their involvement in the company's CSR. This means that they are not experiencing severe problems. However, there are still problems that they are most likely to experience which were identified in this study. Other future researchers can conduct follow-up studies assessing the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) of the company under study or of its other branch to further validate the findings of the study.*

Keywords: *Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), consumers, employees, community, environment*

INTRODUCTION

Though the primary purpose of business is to earn profit, the welfare of the public should never be taken for granted. Aside from profit maximization, corporate social responsibility has been used by companies as an integral strategy to attract investors. Smith [1] defines corporate social responsibility as a business system that enables the production and distribution of wealth for the betterment of its stakeholders through the implementation and integration of ethical systems and sustainable management practices.

It is said that business is as old as the human civilization; conversely, corporate social responsibility is an evolving term that does not have a standard definition. Yet with the understanding that businesses play a key role in job creation in society and in addressing stakeholder expectations, corporate social responsibility is generally understood to be the private sector's way of integrating compliance with economic, environmental and social imperatives with the imperatives of their own business activities [2].

The company aspires to be a dominant market leader in the flour and bakery ingredients industry, and related value-added categories and the most preferred business partner in the market that will contribute to

company's goal of becoming the number one food company in the Philippines.

Just like any other manufacturing companies, it aims to serve its consumers in the finest possible way while it earns its target profit and protects its employees. As a large manufacturing company, it has this dominant goal of contributing to the wellness of its stakeholders economically, environmentally and socially. There is a visible manifestation of CSR in the corporate governance policies and practices of the company.

However, manufacturing companies tend to disregard the negative effects of being totally committed to comply with their CSR objectives, especially to the internal stakeholders like employees. Employees, as an essential factor in the business operations, are believed to be an important asset, since the company's success depends mostly on their performance and enthusiasm to involve themselves into the company's mission.

The researchers focused on this topic for the reason that corporate social responsibility has been introduced and exposed to many known companies already. However, some companies neglect to consider the effects that CSR may bring about. This study is aimed

at gaining a better understanding of how CSR contributes in a business' development and how the customers, employees, community and the environment are being affected. Accepting the fact that the primary goal of businesses nowadays is the maximization of profit, this research aimed at knowing if the company still considers being socially responsible. The researchers hope that with this study, the students especially the business students as well as the company under study and its stakeholders would learn the importance of corporate social responsibility in running a business and what CSR may contribute to the success of the company. The readers as well as the researchers may apply the knowledge that they can gain from this study when they plan to establish their own business.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aims to assess the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices of a milling company in Batangas City, Philippines. Specifically, the study aims to determine the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, civil status and tenure in the company; to determine the different CSR activities practiced by the company towards consumers, employees, community and environment; and to identify the problems encountered by the employees with their involvement in the CSR practices of the company; and to propose plan of action to address the problems encountered by the employees.

METHODS

Research Design

The researchers used the descriptive method of research in order to collect the necessary information, facts, and opinion needed to be able to assess the Corporate Social Responsibility practiced by a milling company in Batangas City, Philippines.

In descriptive method of research, events are recorded, described, interpreted, analyzed and compared [3]. It frequently uses data collection procedures that heavily emphasize asking respondents structured questions about they think, feel and do rather than observing what they do. Thus, descriptive research designs are viewed as survey research methods for collecting quantitative data from large groups of people through the question/answer process [4].

Participants of the Study

To obtain the needed information to answer the existing problem, the researchers focus only on the

employees of the company under study. The participants of the study are the thirty (100%) employees of the said company. The researchers involve the employees of the said corporation because they have the capacity and knowledge to answer the question posed in this study. Furthermore, the employees are in the position to provide relevant information that the researchers need.

Instrument

The researchers used self-made questionnaires as the primary data gathering instrument in assessing the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) of the company. The questionnaire is chosen due to its feasibility, convenience, and speed in terms of gathering information necessary in the accomplishment of this study. The major tool used by the researchers for gathering pertinent to this research was the checklist questionnaire. In order to arrive at a reliable and understandable instrument, the researchers did much reading after which the questionnaire was drawn-up. Aside from this, they studied some of the previous investigations relative to this study.

The first draft of the questionnaire was submitted to the adviser for checking. After the questionnaire is checked, the researchers went to an expert outside school premises who has knowledge of the topic, for consultation and revisions. Then, the revised questionnaire was submitted to the adviser and panelist for approval. The questionnaire was divided into two parts: the personal profile and the main problem, which are divided in several parts. Included in the second part are the questions to answer the problems stated on this study.

The researcher used a questionnaire wherein the CSR part questions were answered in the scale of 1-4. One (1) as no adherence to corporate social responsibility, two (2) as least extent, three (3) as great extent, and four (4) as very great extent. On the second part of question proper in which the problems encountered by employees related to their involvement was assessed, a measure with the scale of 1-4 was used; one (1) as strongly disagree, two (2) as disagree, three (3) as agree, and four (4) as strongly agree.

Procedure

The following steps were undertaken in gathering the data. In order to obtain the necessary data, the researcher used a structured survey questionnaire. Modifications were incorporated through the help of experts in the field. After the questionnaire was

modified, the researchers prepared letters of request to ask permission from the participants to allow the researcher to distribute the questionnaire and for them to answer such questions. With the permission granted, the researchers reproduced the questionnaires.

The survey was conducted in the company where Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is being practiced. The participants were given an assurance that the information gathered would be kept confidential. The researchers then collected personally the distributed questionnaire and proceeded to make a tally of responses to each question. The results were then tabulated, presented, analyzed and interpreted. Later the findings and recommendations of the study were formulated.

Data Analysis

The data derived from the questionnaire were analyzed, tabulated and interpreted by the researchers using the following statistical tools:

Percentage method was used in presenting the personal profile of the employees. This method was used to determine the quantitative relations to the whole response. The process of gathering the percentage was dividing the frequency by the total number of responses.

Weighted mean was used to measure the general response of the employees of the company on how CSR activities are being practiced and the problems encountered related to the involvement in the CSR. This is a procedure for combining the means of two or more groups of different sizes and dividing them by the total number of responses.

The scale used is as follows: 3.50 – 4.00: Very Great Extent (VGE)/Strongly Agree (SA); 2.50 – 3.49: Great Extent (GE)/Agree (A); 1.50 – 2.49: Moderate Extent (ME)/Disagree (D); 1.00 – 1.49: No extent (NE)/Strongly Disagree (SD).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows Frequency Distribution of the Personal Profile of Employees. With regard to the gender of the participants, fifteen (15) out of thirty (30), equivalent to 50% are males and fifteen (15) out of thirty (30) equivalent to 50% are females. The result on gender indicates that the number of males and females working in the company are the same. It implies that the company gives same opportunity to both genders. This shows gender equality in work.

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of the Personal Profile of Employees

Age	Frequency	%
20 – 25	11	36.7
26 – 30	7	23.3
31 – 35	5	16.7
36 – 40	1	3.3
41 - 45	2	6.7
46 – 50	3	10.0
51 and above	1	3.3
Total	30	100
Gender		
Male	15	50.0
Female	15	50.0
Total	30	100
Civil Status		
Single	18	60.0
Married	11	36.7
Widowed/Widower	0	0
Separated	1	3.3
Total	30	100
Tenure in the Company		
Less than 1 year	3	10.0
1 – 2 years	10	33.3
3 – 4 years	8	26.7
5 – 6 years	4	13.3
More than 6 years	5	16.7
Total	30	100

According to Lam [5], when it comes to gender equality in the workplace, the research on its economic benefits is clear: Equality can boost profits and enhance reputation. And then there’s also the fact that it’s fairer.

For the age of the participants, eleven (11) out of thirty (30) are 20 to 25 years old, equivalent to 36.7%; seven (7) are 26 to 30 years old, equivalent to 23.3%; five (5) are 31 to 35 years old, equivalent to 16.7 %; one (1), equivalent to 3.3% is 36 to 40 years old; two (2) are 41 to 45 years old, equivalent to 6.7%; three (3) are 46-50 years old, equivalent to 10%; and one (1), equivalent to 3.3% is 51 years old and above. Most of the participants are under the bracket of 20-25 years old. This means that the company is handled by the young individuals because they can be more efficient in work and can handle heavier workload.

Garthwaite [6] cited that young people often have an abundance of energy and a natural thirst for knowledge, which can rub off on colleagues. Young people often have an abundance of energy and a natural thirst for knowledge, which can rub off on colleagues. They will be enthusiastic about their first ‘real’ job, with a strong eagerness to learn and develop their career. Young people tend to push themselves, wanting

to make a lasting impression and prove what they can do. Their sheer determination to complete their work can inspire colleagues around them.

For the civil status, eighteen (18) out of thirty (30), equivalent to 60% are single, eleven (11) are married, equivalent to 36.7%; and one (1), equivalent to 3.3% is separated. The result can be interpreted that almost half or majority of the employees are single because they have lesser responsibility at home than married people have.

The study of Zitek [7] said that some anecdotal evidence suggests that people expect single individuals to be able and willing to work longer hours than married people, because the single people may have fewer obligations outside of work.

For the tenure in the company of the participants, three (3) out of thirty (30), equivalent to 10% are in service for less than one (1) year; ten (10), equivalent to 33.3% are in service for more than one (1) year but less than two (2) years; eight (8), equivalent to 26.7% are in service for more than three (3) years but less than four (4) years; four (4), equivalent to 13.3% are in service for more than five (5) but less than six (6) years; and five (5), equivalent to 16.7% are in service for more than six (6) years. This shows that most of the employees are newly employed. The reason for this may be job hopping.

According to Smith [8], while job hopping has a negative connotation; this is more about a resource providing value to a company, and then realizing there is nothing more to learn in that environment. In order to keep their skills fresh, it is necessary for employees to remain current in a highly competitive market. Job hopping is more common with employees that are less tenured and feel confident in their skills to be able to move on without burning a bridge and can add value immediately in a new opportunity.

Increasingly, corporations are motivated to become more socially responsible because their most important stakeholders expect them to understand and address the social and community issues that are relevant to them. Understanding what causes are important to employees is usually the first priority because of the many interrelated business benefits that can be derived from increased employee engagement [9].

Table 2 illustrates that concerning CSR activities practiced by the company towards consumers, understanding customer needs and taking necessary measure to satisfy these needs, ranks 1st and has the highest weighted mean of 3.73 and a verbal interpretation of very great extent.

Table 2. CSR Activities Practiced towards Consumers

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. Providing full information about the products including their adverse effects or risks.	3.60	VGE	4
2. Understanding customer needs and taking necessary measure to satisfy these needs.	3.73	VGE	1
3. Giving maximum possible customers satisfaction by providing quality goods and services.	3.57	VGE	5
4. Supplying good at a reasonable price.	3.67	VGE	2.5
5. Implementing actions on customer complaints.	3.67	VGE	2.5
Composite Mean	3.64	VGE	

Supplying good at a reasonable price and implementing actions on customer complaints both rank 2nd with the weighted mean of 3.67 and a verbal interpretation of very great extent. Providing full information about the products including their adverse effects or risks and Giving maximum possible customers satisfaction by providing quality goods and services ranks 4th and 5th with the corresponding weighted mean of 3.60 and 3.57 respectively; all with the verbal interpretation of very great extent.

The data on Table 2 reveal that understanding customer needs and taking necessary measure to satisfy these needs is highly prioritized by the company because good customer service provides an experience that will maintain and attract customers and will entail positive feedback from them. The finding is in line with the study of Zekiri [10] wherein she discussed that satisfied customers form the foundation of any successful business because customer satisfaction leads to repeat purchases, brand loyalty, and positive word of mouth.

While according to Alander [11], the best way to stand out from the competition is to provide added value for the customers by offering superior service, but also, the reputation of the company is important.

Bogun [12] wrote that by practicing excellent customer services on a consistent basis, it will be able to help the business grow in a way that provides maximum exposure, visibility, and popularity around the products and services provided for the clients. Customers who have done business with the company and feel that they have received the best possible

service tend to spread the news which allows the business to reap the rewards of referral business.

Table 3. CSR Activities Practiced towards Employees

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. Improvement of compensation and benefits packages for employees.	3.57	VGE	5
2. Training of employees for continuous improvement and development of skills.	3.67	VGE	1.5
3. Giving employees equal opportunities to progress in the organization and giving them recognition and rewards in exchange for work performance.	3.60	VGE	3.5
4. Providing employees, a healthy and safe working environment.	3.60	VGE	3.5
5. Implementing actions on employee complaints.	3.67	VGE	1.5
Composite Mean	3.62	VGE	

In Table 3, training of employees for continuous improvement and development of skills and implementing actions on employee complaints both ranked 1st among the CSR activities practiced by the company towards employees, which have the weighted mean of 3.67. Giving employees equal opportunities to progress in the organization and giving them recognition and rewards in exchange for work performance, together with Providing employees a healthy and safe working environment ranked 2nd among these activities having the weighted mean of 3.60. Improvement of compensation and benefits packages for employees ranked 3rd among all activities, having the weighted mean of 3.57. All the activities have the verbal interpretation of very great extent.

It can be gathered from Table 3 that the company is most concerned with training employees for continuous improvement and development of skills. The reason for this is that the company does not just settle for what is. They undergo training to get along with the changes of technology and to help improve the productivity of the company.

The study of Azara Shaheen [13] supports the idea that organization having much better skilled and creative employees can easily avoid wasteful investment to improve efficiency and performance of organization. Training is the most important part of

human resource management function on the effective use of human resource-es.

Table 4. CSR Activities Practiced towards Community

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. Active participation in sociocivic and charitable activities, adopt-a-community and adopt-a-school programs, scholarship grants, volunteer work to those affected by calamities, etc.	3.77	VGE	1
2. Empowering communities by building various forms of capacities, skills, human and social capital.	3.60	VGE	3
3. Supporting local/regional/national events, projects or organizations.	3.50	VGE	5
4. Providing career opportunities to the community.	3.63	VGE	2
5. Helping in the overall development of locality.	3.53	VGE	4
Composite Mean	3.61	VGE	

Table 4 shows the CSR Activities Practiced by the company towards Community. As presented in the table the CSR practices of the company towards community are to a very great extent as shown by the composite mean of 3.61. All of the practices afore mentioned to a very great extent such as active participation in sociocivic and charitable activities, adopt-a-community and adopt-a-school programs, scholarship grants, volunteer work to those affected by calamities, etc ranks 1st among CSR activities which have the weighted mean of 3.77; providing career opportunities to the community ranked 2nd with a weighted mean of 3.63. Empowering communities by building various forms of capacities, skills, human and social capital ranked 3rd which have the weighted mean of 3.60. Supporting local/regional/national events, projects or organizations; providing career opportunities to the community and helping in the overall development of locality ranks 4th and 5th with the corresponding weighted mean of 3.53 and 3.50. These are the CSR practices of the company that are apparent towards community. Building a strong relation with the community is important to the company as these give a good public image which will attract more customers and therefore increase sales.

It can be gathered in Table 4 that the company is most active in participating in sociocivic and charitable

activities, adopt-a-community and adopt-a-school programs, scholarship grants, volunteer work to those affected by calamities, etc. Because reaching out to the community is one of the priorities. The company might have thought that improving reputation to people, even non-consumers, will enhance their goodwill in a way of helping them.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a commitment to improve community well-being through discretionary business practices and contributions of corporate resources. However, it is not charity but it is a core business strategy of an organization [14].

Table 5. CSR Activities Practiced towards Environment

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. Undertaking initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility.	3.60	VGE	4
2. Establishment of programs for the protection and preservation of environment (e.g. tree planting activities, recycling of waste materials, segregation of hazardous, infectious, biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste materials, etc.).	3.60	VGE	4
3. Using of renewable resources and limiting energy consumption.	3.67	VGE	2
4. Encouraging the development of environment friendly technologies.	3.60	VGE	4
5. Maintaining its establishments and manufacturing products in compliance with applicable environment, health and safety (EHS) regulations and other requirements to which it subscribes.	3.70	VGE	1
Composite Mean	3.63	VGE	

Table 5 exhibits the CSR activities practiced by the company towards environment. The composite mean of all the activities brought to the environment is 3.63 with the verbal interpretation of to a very great extent. Very great extent signifies that the benefits gained by the environment out of the activities practiced by the company are highly affective. All items, maintaining its establishments and manufacturing products in compliance with applicable environment, health and safety (EHS) regulations and other requirements to

which it subscribes ranks 1st which have a weighted mean of 3.70 jointly using of renewable resources and limiting energy consumption ranked 2nd among these activities having the weighted mean of 3.67. Meanwhile, it's a triple tie between undertaking initiatives, encouraging the development of environment friendly technologies and establishment of programs for the protection and preservation of environment with a weighted mean of 3.60.

The company cares about compliance to regulations concerning the environment because the company believes that it can help build good image and can help them stand in a competitive environment. As what Pradhan [15] of the Ramboll Group said, today's sophisticated global marketplace, companies are increasingly recognizing the need to develop strategic environment, health and safety (EHS) management programs as part of their overall business plan. Improved EHS management can improve compliance with government regulations, reduce liabilities and create economic value and competitive advantage.

When it comes to engaging employees successfully in the company's ethical programs, close alignment between CSR strategy, corporate identity and internal communication is critical. When looking at employees identifying with the company, it means the extent to which they derive elements of their own identity from being a "member" of the company or organization. In the CSR context, it denotes the degree to which they can commit to the organization's goals and values. If employees identify with the ethical goals of a company and its programs, they are more willing to collaborate with CSR programs [16].

Table 6 reveals that lack of leadership in some programs of the company ranked 1st in the problems encountered by the employees with the weighted mean of 1.60 and with the verbal interpretation of Disagree. Lack of information dissemination among the employees ranked 2nd among these problems with the weighted mean and verbal interpretation of 1.57 and Disagree, respectively. Too much work load for the employees ranked 3rd having the weighted mean of 1.53 and verbal interpretation of Disagree. Lack of consultation from the employees in implementing CSR program ranked 4th with the weighted mean of 1.47 and verbal interpretation of Strongly Disagree.

Unclear designation of responsibilities regarding CSR together with the employees work with limited resources ranked 5th both have the weighted mean of 1.43 and verbal interpretation of Strongly Disagree.

Table 6. Problems Encountered by Employees in their Involvement to CSR Practices

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. Lack of information dissemination among the employees.	1.57	D	2
2. Lack of leadership in some programs of the company.	1.60	D	1
3. Unclear designation of responsibilities regarding CSR.	1.43	SD	5.5
4. Inability to create core competencies and value chain.	1.33	SD	10
5. Employees work with limited resources.	1.43	SD	5.5
6. Lack of interest of the employees in participating and contributing to CSR activities of the company.	1.40	SD	7.5
7. Lack of time provided for CSR activities.	1.40	SD	7.5
8. Affects the efficiency in work of the employees.	1.37	SD	9
9. Lack of consultation from the employees in implementing CSR program.	1.47	SD	4
10. Too much work load for the employees.	1.53	D	3
Composite Mean	1.45	SD	

While, lack of interest of the employees in participating and contributing to CSR activities of the company together with the lack of time provided for CSR activities ranked 6th both with the weighted mean of 1.40 and verbal interpretation of Strongly Disagree. The problem which says that employees' involvement in CSR affects the efficiency in their work ranked 7th having the weighted mean of 1.37 and verbal interpretation of Strongly Disagree. Among all these problems, inability to create core competencies and value chain ranked 8th with the weighted mean of 1.33 and verbal interpretation of Strongly Disagree.

It can be perceived in Table 6 that the company is most likely to experience the problem of having the

lack of leadership in some programs of the company. According to an article, a business does not need to be the category dominant player to avoid failure. That being said, it is the leadership's responsibility to understand the competitive landscape and navigate it successfully. If a company isn't consistently winning, it's not what the competition is doing, but rather poor leadership that creates the inability to compete [17].

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Most of the employees of SMMI are in the range of 20 – 25 years old, are single and in 1 – 2 years of service in the company and equally distributed as to gender. The company is engaged in different Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices that benefits its customers, employees, the community and the environment such as understanding customer needs and taking necessary measure to satisfy these needs, training of employees for continuous improvement and development of skills, implementing actions on employee complaints, active participation in socio-civic, charitable activities and the like and compliance with applicable regulations concerning the environment. The employees of SMMI are not experiencing serious problems when it comes to their involvement in the company's CSR while lack of leadership is a concern in some programs of the company. Plan of Action is proposed to improve the leadership, the information dissemination and to efficiently manage the workload of the employees.

It is important that the company promulgate its CSR activities in order to inform its stakeholders about their CSR engagement and thereby gain benefits. The management of SMMI may consider giving incentives to the employees that are socially responsible to encourage their good work and so that other employees would imitate them in order to gain the same benefits.

Table 7. Proposed Plan of Action to Address the Problems Encountered by Employees

Key result area	Strategies	Responsible persons
1. Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue conducting training and seminar for the employees to gain enough/sufficient knowledge about the activities in the company 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Top Management Human Resource Department Employees
2. Information Dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide bulletin board where announcements for every CSR activity will be posted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Resource Department Employees
3. Workload	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire more employees; Make a schedule containing their shift list; Monitor the manpower and their duties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Resource Department Manager

The company may still consider the need of strong directional leadership and control need to be exercised by executives or leaders of the organization. The company may consider doing the strategies proposed in the plan of action to lessen the probability that problems about leadership, information dissemination and workload could happen. Future researchers may conduct same study using other variables in assessing CSR of different companies.

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