



International Journal of Economic Research

ISSN : 0972-9380

available at <http://www.serialsjournals.com>

© Serials Publications Pvt. Ltd.

Volume 14 • Number 14 (Part-II) • 2017

Managing Standards in Corporate Social Responsibility Online* A Case Study of a Malaysian Higher Learning Institution

Nurul Ain Mohd Hasan

Communication Department, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang, Malaysia

E-mail: namb@upm.edu.my

Abstract: The purpose of this study is to explore the current standards of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives through the lens of a public university's official corporate website with the aim to see which areas of CSR are addressed when measured against a set of existing and accepted best practice standards for developing nations. A case study approach was utilised to investigate a local Malaysian public university using a qualitative content analysis method. The data suggests that managing the university's corporate website is incomprehensive particularly in the areas of human rights and anti-corruption areas. The main focus was on community driven area. This study provides a platform for further investigation to explore the current practice of CSR initiatives in Malaysian higher education institutions.

Keywords: CSR Communication; Reputation Management; Stakeholder Engagement

I. INTRODUCTION

Contributing an international perspective, the focus of this study offers a starting point to a shift in thinking of corporate social responsibility (CSR) by recognising dynamic roles of CSR in the digital platform particularly through the lens of higher learning management system. The growing global interest in CSR by public sectors stems from the current expectation to show transparency, accountability and legitimacy given that their licences to operate come from public funds (Nejati, Shafaei, Salamzadeh & Daraei, 2011). In the context of Malaysia, the pressure to stay afloat in the competitive economy due to globalization pushes public universities to seek diverse sources of revenue (Othman & Othman, 2014). What the public wants is transparency at the their fingertips. As of 2015, the usage of the internet showed that 71 percent of Malaysians are depending on the internet for their source of information (Department of Statistics Malaysia, last modified 2016), which makes engaging in a space most widely used by the public, the digital platform, more important and challenging.

In the education sector, managing CSR is not new because studies have shown that a public university's CSR is often embedded in their policies and daily activities (Ahmad, 2012). At most, CSR is seen as solely about community services and embedded in the courses taught in classes, often providing students with a minimal understanding of CSR (Ahmad, 2012). However, some researches in Malaysia have shown that CSR initiatives lack the understanding of clear-cut execution of the initiatives, awareness and outcomes (Ismail, 2009; Ismail, Amat Johar & Mohd Rasdi, 2014; Ismail, Alias & Mohd Rasdi, 2015). Given the vast number of users of digital technology in Malaysia, the CSR initiatives and outcomes need to be made transparent to cover a wide range of affected community and beyond. Exploring specific areas in CSR that are managed in universities is therefore timely in order to sustain the legitimacy of practicing CSR in the digital era, particularly to answer a key question of what it means to be socially responsible (Lantos, 2001). Ahmad (2012) emphasised the lack of knowledge of what CSR is in the education arena and the dilemma of many educators and administrators about what defines CSR. Creating awareness about CSR collectively helps bring together both internal public (the lecturers, administrators, students) and external publics (the communities around and beyond campus and potential stakeholders).

The Malaysian government emphasises on visibility through its strong ties with ASEAN and the Trans-Pacific partnership as a way to promote diversified economy and foreign investment (Thestar, 2015). In Malaysian institutions, visibility can be seen through its online platforms, mainly corporate websites and the social media. The social media users in Malaysia have reached 9.24 million since 2014, and the number is expected to increase to 12.66 million users by 2018 (Greenfield, 2016). Apart from corporate websites, most universities in Malaysia are reaching future and existing publics through the social media. Research in public relations have focused on the importance of internet usage particularly in the areas of engagement and relationship maintenance (McCorkindale, 2010), and some studies have found a connection between interactivity and multimedia-oriented websites as having a significant correlation with relationship building and reputational management (McCorkindale, 2010). While many studies have analysed the use of corporate websites as a reputation management tool for education sectors particularly in the areas of CSR (Nejati, Shafaei, Salamzadeh & Daraei, 2011), few have analysed on the quality of messages communicated about the varieties of CSR areas. This paper explores how CSR is communicated in a public university's corporate website, particularly when measured against a set of existing local and global CSR best practice guideline. The idea is to explore what areas in CSR that are covered and what areas are lacking.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

(A) Dialogue and CSR Initiatives Online

Community engagement in organisations, particularly in public and non-profit organisations has changed a great deal in the past several years because of the increased usage of the Internet. Pan and Xu (Pan and Xu, 2009) stated that companies view communicating online as a basic requirement for sustainable reputation management. The use the Internet has impacted how corporate social responsibility (CSR) is practised and with the social media, CSR initiatives have shifted its focus to one that gives a platform for potential dialogue between an organisation and its publics. The idea is to ensure that communication flows both ways. The common trend in communicating CSR initiatives online is through the use of corporate websites and the general norm is to report CSR by posting annual reports on corporate websites for the publics to

read (Nejati, Shafaei, Salamzadeh and Daraei, 2011). This practice, while useful to investors and stakeholders, becomes less valuable when the awareness and outcomes of CSR initiatives are not met.

(B) The Evolution of CSR

Many researchers agreed that CSR simply does not have a distinct, consistent definition (Atan et. al., 2010; Carroll, 2008; Ismail, 2011). The idea of CSR begins with Bowen's work in the 1950s and since then, the thinking has evolved (Bowen, 1953; Carroll, 2008; Heald, 1988, Othman & Othman, 2014). Carroll (1979) and other researchers since have defined CSR as organisations' responsibilities beyond economic values. For instance, Carroll (1979) suggested that companies have four key responsibilities in CSR: economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic responsibilities. The literature surrounding empirical connections between CSR and economic viability is, at best, inconclusive (Quazi & Richardson, 2012). Carroll (2004) later revised his earlier pyramid to incorporate CSR best practice guidelines suited to global stakeholders in which, he emphasised that when organisations operate in a global setting, CSR is then defined in accordance with the global codes developed by international organisation, social groups, business groups and the firms themselves (Kolk, Tulder & Welter, 1999). A more recent development in empirical research in global CSR has focused on determining the outcomes of CSR disclosures and reporting particularly in the digital platform (Haji, 2013; Nejati, Shafaei, Salamzadeh & Daraei, 2011; Baraclough & Morrow, 2008).

Within the Malaysian context, empirical research into CSR reporting in Malaysia has increased since the late 1980s (Amran, 2006, Abu Bakar and Ameer, 2011, Arshad *et al.*, 2010, Homayoun *et al.*, 2011, Tee, 2008). However, Ismail (2011) perceived the state of CSR in Malaysia as still "in its infancy" (p. 374). Several scholars have even argued that at the start of globalization in the late 1980s, Malaysian companies' common practices of disclosing CSR would be largely in the forms of storytelling or description and appeared less committed to providing thorough evaluative disclosure of CSR performance (Amran and Susella, 2007, Thompson and Zakaria, 2004). Jamil, Alwi and Mohamed (Jamil *et al.*, 2003) argued that although CSR literature in Malaysia had improved since its inception in the 1980s, "there is still a dearth of longitudinal empirical study in Malaysia" (Jamil *et al.*, 2003, p. 141).

Since the past decade, and particularly when Bursa Malaysia (2008) has made it mandatory for public listed companies to report on CSR initiatives, there is a significant increase in the literature on CSR reporting of both public listed companies and government-linked companies (Baraclough & Morrow, 2008; Esa, Ghazali, 2012; Haji, 2013; Gomez & Preciado, 2013). The current studies of CSR reporting in Malaysia have indicated a great shift in thinking since Chapple and Moon (2005)'s study which had suggested Malaysia as one of the most under-researched countries for CSR. Nevertheless, the literature still suggests that quality of reporting in Malaysia particularly in regard to the companies' tendencies to selectively report what is required rather than comprehensively covering all areas of CSR, requires more research (Haji, 2013). In particular, University Social Responsibility (USR) is currently widely researched but has barely touched the surface in the Malaysian context (Chen, Nasongkhla & Donalson, 2015).

Practicing ethics and CSR in a multi-racial country such as Malaysia can be viewed as a means for harmonious representation of business and society (Ahmad and Ramayah, 2012), an act of harmony that was particularly important for large companies that were already at risk of reputational damage. Ethical collaboration for sustainable management particularly in an education sector for developing nations is

done through the management of educational cognitive, labor, and environmental impact based on interactive dialogue with its communities at stake (Chen, Nasongkhla & Donaldson, 2015). Incidentally, ethical behavior contributes to economic development while improving the quality of lives of the people and the planet (Gomez & Preciado, 2013). What these scholars suggested was that large companies, especially in a developing nation, simply could not afford to work in a vacuum.

(C) CSR as Dialogue and Engagement of processes and outcomes in the Education Sector

The nature of CSR engagement and dialogue comes from a new strand of research in the management literature that argues for authenticities in CSR initiatives. Current literature suggests that being proactive and engaging in CSR provide organisations an added advantage such as better access to public authorities which often makes contract dealings and public funding easily attained (Bartlett and Devin, 2011). However, one of the flaws of gaining such privilege is the questionable intention of doing CSR, whether or not it is for the good of the community or merely self-interest. Therefore, a main issue in CSR is on the quality of communicating CSR, in terms of the comprehensiveness and transparency when providing information to various groups of stakeholders. Bartlett and Devin (2011) stated that organisations (be it private or public) must incorporate stakeholders into the CSR process and provide a platform for dialogue. This is particularly important in order for CSR to manifest itself clearly and objectively. Arguments for open communication in CSR for building and sustaining reputation do not stop at corporate and financial sectors, but have grown in its importance in universities as well (Mehta, 2011). Below are some of the elements of global best practices literature collated and compiled as an instrument to guide the analysis.

For the past few years, the focus in CSR initiatives has shifted at a fast pace to one that emphasises on exploring how the practice has impacted universities (Vasilescu *et al.*, 2010, Christensen *et al.*, 2009). According to (Dahan and Senol, 2012) many higher education institutions are adopting a business-like method in order to compete and survive in the fast changing environment.. For instance, United Nations have carried out a survey in 2007 to identify few initiatives and declarations in order to integrate CSR initiatives into the university framework to implement public policies. The Declaration of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) is a chance for higher education institutions to promote training and awareness for a sustainable future. CSR initiatives being part of sustainable development play a role in managing sustainable reputation. In addition, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (1992) declaration towards promoting education, public awareness, and training in social responsibility has generated a need for studies about CSR in the European countries (Leitão and Silva, 2007).

For instance, Nejati, Shafaei, Salamzadeh, and Dareai (2011) conducted a research on CSR and the top 10 world universities websites. The team of researchers conducted a content analysis of corporate websites for 10 top universities in the world as ranked by Times Higher Education in 2009. They analysed the practice of CSR by focusing on organizational governance, human rights, labor practices, environmental practices, fair operating practices, consumer (students) issues, and community involvement and development dimensions. The findings indicated that what these world-leading universities have in common is that their corporate websites provide the public with extensive as well as comprehensive CSR initiatives. The sample may not represent Malaysian universities in terms of the ranking however a large number of public and private universities in Malaysia have been recently ranked globally as one of the best universities in Asia

(QS Top Universities, 2017). The reputational standing is globally recognised similarly indicates the need to study the quality of communicating CSR based on global standards.

Focusing universities' standards in CSR, often used as university social responsibility (USR), is a growing trend among researchers, globally. For instance, Dahan and Senol (2012) conducted a research on CSR in Istanbul Bilgi University. This particular research focused on factors influencing CSR performances of the university. Dahan and Senol (2012) employed a qualitative study by adopting semi-structured interview with the informants. In addition, they studied the university's published documents, undergraduate handbooks, its corporate websites, and unpublished reports. The findings showed that CSR initiatives were unable to reach required international standards within the context of developing nations without the support from the management of the university. Furthermore, the findings also indicated that Bilgi University carried out CSR in very minimal ways.

In the context of Malaysian CSR for university, Ahmad (2012) has indicated the need for further research on how much efforts are put in by the education institutions in providing information and creating awareness to the public, because, the results in her study showed that most respondents were aware of CSR but did not know what CSR actually entails and CSR information was merely communicated on the surface. Clearly, more research in Malaysia is required to explore what exactly have Malaysian educational sector contributed in terms of creating a platform for awareness and, if any, possible dialogue. The study suggests that further research should explore how CSR is made transparent in universities. In particular, the comprehensiveness of communicating CSR areas act as an important role in showcasing a Malaysian university's efforts in meeting accepted standards for developing nations.

Considering the tremendous interest of online communication for CSR initiatives and outcomes in the education sector, especially when international standing and credibility are at stake, therefore how a university's corporate website utilises online platform to communicate CSR initiatives is timely. The purpose of this paper was to analyse the use of the corporate website as a tool for CSR communication in terms of how comprehensive CSR is communicated in this outlet and which CSR areas are more likely to be communicated. In particular, this research aimed at exploring the comprehensiveness of communicating CSR in a public higher learning institution when measured against a set of clear-cut CSR global best practices.

(D) The global csr instrument relevant for public sectors

There are five main global best-practice guidelines relevant for the Malaysian public universities context. These guidelines for developing nations cover a wider spectrum of CSR best practices (for both private and public sectors) which include the United Nation Global Compact, The GRI, OECD, Principles for Global Corporate Responsibility and Social Accountability 8000 (Bursa, 2008) as well as Carroll's (2004) revised pyramid global CSR and performance. Carroll (2004) drew attention to eight major transnational issues: 1) Bribery and sensitive payment; 2) Employment issues; 3) Marketing practices; 4) Impact on the economy and development of host countries; 5) Effects on the natural governments; and 6) Relations with home countries. These issues have particularly been addressed by Bursa Malaysia's (2008) for public listed companies. In the context of the public education sector, these issues are integrated with the existing international standards for developing nations into an instrument for analysis. The UN Global Compact

and the OECD guidelines are two of the most widely accepted global best-practice guidelines and local best-practice guidelines such as the Silver Book, the Securities Commission Malaysian and Bursa Malaysia particularly subscribe to the principles from these two global sources (Atan and Mohamed, 2010, Haw, 2010).

Some of the most common CSR best-practice guidelines are mainly used for publicly listed companies in Malaysia such as: a) the Silver Book, which derives its guidelines from these international organizations (Atan *et al.*, 2010); b) the Securities Commission Malaysia, which is a self-funding statutory body that reports to the Ministry of Finance and has a responsibility to investigate and enforce corporate practices in Malaysia (Securities Commission Malaysia, n.d.); and c) Bursa Malaysia's CSR framework. The role of Bursa Malaysia in CSR reporting is to ensure that the publicly listed companies under the KLSE are transparent in their reporting and comply with the regulatory standards set forth by Bursa Malaysia (Bursa Malaysia, 2011). In addition, the government's 2010 budget announcement promoted better transparency in CSR reporting by publicly listed companies (Haw, 2010). For example, as stated in the introductory chapter, a way for better transparency in CSR was seen in the government's allocation of MYR100, 000, 000 for government and corporate CSR projects (Malaysia, 2010)

Chen, Nasongkhla & Donaldson (Chen *et al.*, 2015) emphasized on the practice of CSR in education sectors as having specific and relevant global standards requirements. They highlighted some USR studies that meet requirements of the global standards from the perspectives of the education sector, which are aligned with the principles set forth by UN Global Compact and OECD. Furthermore, Dima, Vasilache, Ghinea and Agoston (Dima *et al.*, 2013) proposed a list of standards of CSR practices for education sectors, which are 1) alumni-oriented projects; 2) inter-university cooperation; 3) university cooperation's with high schools; 4) community orientation; 5) community orientation for international; and 6) socio-cultural and ecological projects. Furthermore, Nejati, Shafaei, Salamzadeh and Daraei (2011) claimed that top ten world leading universities have taken USR seriously and are communicating CSR initiatives thoroughly based on global standards on their corporate websites. UPM, being the top 50 leading universities, has to meet with these requirements in order to sustain as a world leading university.

When it comes to public and governmental institutions, there is not a clear set of guideline such as Bursa Malaysia's (2008) set of principles catered for MNCs. Malaysia is a member of the OECD and the UN Global Compact. Therefore, the four main International standards as mentioned above are CSR standards endorsed by the government (OECD, 2009). This means that these particular standards are relevant and can be used to measure a public university's CSR initiatives.

While there are an increasing number of studies on CSR in Malaysian organizations, both public listed local and internationally based organizations, the effectiveness of Malaysian organizations in implementing a set of guideline remains unexplored in Malaysia particularly in the education sector. Various studies have explored CSR of higher learning institutions from different perspectives such as the awareness of students on CSR in Malaysian universities (Ahmad, 2012), the levels of CSR practices in universities (Tetrevova & Sabolova, 2010) and more importantly, Nejati, Shafaei, Salamzadeh and Daraei (2011) have provided information on the core areas of CSR as communicated by top ten universities in the world. It is important in order to see where public universities stand when it comes to communicating various areas of CSR.

III. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Drawing from the above guidelines and literature of CSR concepts, a collated best-practice CSR instrument was developed and used to interpret levels and types of CSR reporting in Malaysian MNCs against the global best-practice CSR tenets. Below is a list of best-practice CSR principles, collated from the literature and combined as a guide for interpreting the breadth and depth of CSR as communicated in UPM's corporate website. For this paper, the areas of CSR explored were collated based on existing universally accepted and established CSR best practices and standards as available in the literature.

(A) Human Rights

Within the human rights area, three specific items were used to identify CSR best-practice initiatives in the selected university's corporate websites. These areas are: 1) respecting the right to practice religion, 2) employees' awareness of human rights violations in company policy and, 3) adherence to local values, customs, norms and government policies. The human rights items were collated based on the requirements set forth by Bursa Malaysia and the securities commission of Malaysia. As a way to respect the human rights of the employees, every large organizations (mainly public listed companies) in Malaysia is required to show sensitivity to religion and the local values, norms and government policies (Bursa Malaysia, 2008), which include allowing employees of various faiths to perform their daily prayer routines as well as being sensitive towards various ethnic cultures and values. When analyzing human rights in the context of this study, I analyzed companies' information sharing based on these elements of human rights in the university's corporate websites.

(B) Labor Rights

The labor rights items illustrate an organization's initiatives in communicating employees' rights in accordance with the international labor standards (ILO) and/or local Malaysian employment standards. Within the labor rights section, 11 labor rights best-practice areas were used to analyze corporate websites. The areas covered under the labor rights category are: sensitivity to local practices and norms in dealing with discrimination which includes race, ethnicity and gender; employment rights; educational opportunities for employees and families of employees; training for employees; occupational health and safety aspects; and equal rights and opportunities for employees.

(C) Environmental Stewardship

Environmental stewardship items covered the university's initiatives towards global standards compliance, green living, compliance with local environmental regulations and its efforts for environmentally efficient technology. These items were collated based on the requirements of organizations, both public and private, in developing nations particularly those that were listed by the UN Global Compact, OECD, and Bursa Malaysia, the securities commission of Malaysia.

(D) Fighting Corruption and Bribery

Anti-corruption and bribery items were only added to the UN Global Compact in June 2004 (Jenkins, 2005). As part of Bursa Malaysia's efforts to monitor the integrity of organizations' ethical practices in

Malaysian business relate to the practice of corporate governance (Abdul Wahab and How, 2007, Salleh, 2009). The items covered under fighting corruption and bribery is company's initiatives in educating and informing its employees about corporate corruption and bribery. These items, therefore explore the university's initiatives in this area of CSR as communicated in corporate websites.

(E) Community Driven

Companies' initiatives to report community work and philanthropic activities are in line with the Malaysian government's policy for nation building (Abdullah, 2010). Specific items are charitable donations or philanthropy and monetary contribution to the community; governmental sponsorships, and affected publics and community sponsorships. The list of CSR areas used as the instrument to guide the analysis is shown below in Table I.

Table I
Best-Practice Instrument to Measure CSR as communicated in the corporate website

Human Rights
Respecting the right to practise religion
Employees' awareness of human rights violations in the company's policy Adhere to local values, customs, norms and government policies
Labor Rights
Sensitivity to local practices and norms in dealing with discrimination (race, ethnicity and gender)
Equal rights and opportunities for employees
Educational opportunities for employees and/or family Provide training for employees
Occupational Health & Safety
Environmental Stewardship
Global standards compliance
Communicates green living Compliance with local environmental regulations
Communicates company's efforts for environmentally efficient technology
Fighting Corruption & Bribery
Efforts are communicated to the employees about corruption and bribery in the forms of education and information
Communicate efforts and strategies to monitor embezzlement of public funds, fraud and corruption
Community Driven
Charity or philanthropy and monetary contribution to community Governmental sponsorships
Affected publics and community sponsorships

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

(A) Research Procedure

A qualitative content analysis of corporate website of a research-based public university was conducted as a case study. The method is grounded in the interpretive epistemological and ontological assumptions, whereby the numbers in the data do not have statistical validity, but they guide the reader clearly through the patterns in the interpretive decisions made by the researcher. The selected case study was Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) mainly because QS University Ranking in Asia recently ranked UPM as the top 50 best universities in Asia (Symonds, 2016). UPM is a research-based university. The university values

sustainability through RDEC (research, development, commercial, and entrepreneurship) and focuses its ties with the industry and community (UPM, n. d.). Selecting UPM as a case study for this research is most relevant given that, world leading universities are gearing towards global standards in sustainable development and reputation management (Nejati, Shafaei, Salamzadeh and Daraei, 2011).

The analysis of the official corporate website was done between 4 July 2016 and 5 August 2016 to explore how comprehensive CSR is being communicated and where it is communicated the most in UPM's corporate website. The collated CSR best practice instrument was used as a codebook for measurement. The analysis was based on the set of CSR international and local best practices instrument to measure textual instances detected. To identify instances, my content analysis is based on the interpretive paradigm. The interpretation of what is deemed to be valid is based on Charmaz's (Charmaz, 2009) interpretive notions in which construction of realities are created together between researcher and the subject. Meanings are therefore subjective and are continuously interpreted. This process gives a deeper sense of meaning to a data.

The choices of instances were therefore based on the researcher's own experiences as a member of the university coupled with the collated reviews of the literature on existing global best practices and standards which guided the analysis. Insights from the study assist in addressing critical issues such as responsive engagement and dialogue with affected stakeholders about universities' CSR initiatives. The instances were explored throughout the corporate website, analysing each main section of the website. Mainly, there were seven sections explored. These sections on its main page were: 1) About Us; 2) Research; 3) Academic; 4) Linkages; 5) Campus Life; 6) International; 7) Services. The content analysis conducted using Atlas.ti qualitative research data analysis software to gain manageable and systematic gathering of data from text. This software allows me to key in a quotation that links with the code. I went through each sub-section from the main page, and for each text that was interpreted as having a similar understanding as the items in the instrument was coded with an item from the instrument. The table below shows the quotations found on the website and where these CSR instances were more likely communicated on the website.

V. DATA ANALYSIS

The findings presented are a case study showcasing data of one Malaysian public university. Therefore, the purpose of presenting these findings is to provide some views of the current possible standards that Malaysian universities practice when communicating CSR on corporate websites. Table 2 below gives an overview of the analysis for UPM as a case study, to gain some insights into how a public university pays attention to the various globally recognised standards in CSR, through the management of CSR as communicated in corporate websites from the period of July to August 2016. The findings suggest the obvious when it comes to CSR, in which the area of CSR best practices that were often covered in UPM's corporate website was in the area of community driven. The university has a tendency of relaying information on community driven initiatives at a section of the corporate website that specifies on community activities and services the university provides to the publics. Some of the instances found were: "strategic and symbiotic relationships with the community and larger society [Linkage section: Community: 276:276]"; "Social services to the community [Services section: 312:312]; "Training on agriculture to community [332:332]".

The more likelihood of a local university to communicate its focus on community driven activities may stem from the deep-rooted sense of responsibilities of the institution as educators for the community. The finding is in line with past research notion that also suggested that Malaysian organisations are more inclined to focus on reporting community activities and philanthropies (Mehta, 2011). Within the community driven area, there were not any instances related to governmental, public and community sponsorships which indicated that the university may not find these relevant to communicate in corporate websites. Further investigation, such as interviewing the management of the university on the specific activities that are executed in relation to what are mentioned on their corporate website will give a clearer view.

Labor rights as an area of CSR received much attention as well. The university is more likely to communicate about labor rights in the forms of occupational safety and health issues. For instance, an extensive list of safety measures in the workplace and on campus, a guide to healthy living through proper diet and exercise as well as a mention of security watch and a closed-circuit television (CCTV) on campus was found under the services section of the corporate website. This shows an impressive effort on the university to create transparency in communicating to its staff about one specific item in labor rights CSR area. However, other items in the labor rights, such as communicating on areas pertaining to sensitivity to local practices and norms in dealing with discrimination, equal rights and opportunities for employees were not touched. There was a mention on mobility programmes and exchange programmes for the staff members, which indicates the university's effort to communicate about employee's training opportunities.

Environmental stewardship area in CSR lacks attention in corporate website. Instances to communicate on green living and efforts for environmentally efficient technology were found in the 'about us' section of the website. Instances of environmental stewardship were found embedded within the corporate logo description, "water droplet symbolises the commitment of the university in preserving the environment [67:67]". This gives an impression that the university instils great care for the environment as shown on how it is described in its identity. More so, the university emphasises on efforts for environmentally efficient technology in instances such as, "sustainable research and development [52:52]"; "strengthening UPM as a Centre of Excellence in Agriculture [58:58]".

What seems to be more alarming is to find out that the university did not cover much of the green campus living on its corporate website, given that, over the past few years now, UPM has gained much publicity on campus about its campaign on its "Green Campus" concept (Green@UPM, n.d.). For instance, a programme, named "*Green@UPM*" was implemented in UPM, in order to be aligned with the university's vision as a reputable international university. Hence, as stated in its media newsletters and publications, UPM is committed to provide services and to develop principles of sustainable development obligated in raising the quality and continuity of life (Green@UPM, n. d.). Initiatives such as this were communicated in other platforms which do not have a link to the corporate website. Someone who is not aware of such policy would not be aware of the university's initiatives for green living by merely surfing its corporate website. This is a potential indication of the institution's drawback in making its corporate website a one-stop hub for information for all publics.

The corporate website did not mention any information on the areas of human rights, and barely touches on the university's efforts on fighting corruption and bribery. Considering that these two areas are largely emphasised in the more commonly accepted global CSR standards for developing nations, such as the UN Global Compact and the OECD (Gariga and Melé, 2004, OECD, 2009), these two areas of CSR

are not paid much attention to. It is interesting to note that, if we compare this institution with other large Malaysian organisations, these two areas have often been less reported on corporate publications. Previous research has shown that Malaysian organisations are less likely to report on human rights and anti-corruption and bribery categories of CSR (Mohd Hasan, 2015). What is required is further investigation on why these areas of CSR gain less attention or marginalised. As shown in Table 2, the closest indication of anti-corruption and bribery in the corporate website was found with a vague acknowledgement of “enhancement of quality in governance [61:61]”. However, this is not a clear instance, which indicates the university’s lack of attention on these issues.

Table II
CSR Areas

<i>CSR Areas</i>	<i>Results from UPM’s Corporate Website</i>	
	<i>Specific Items</i>	<i>Quoted Instances</i>
Human Rights	Respecting the right to practise religion	None
	Employees’ awareness of human rights violations in the company’s policy	None
	Adhere to local values, customs, norms and government policies	None
Labour Rights	Sensitivity to local practices and norms in dealing with discrimination (race, ethnicity and gender)	None None
	Equal rights and opportunities for employees	
	Educational opportunities for employees and/or family	MOU and MOA i.e. through mobility programmes, staff exchange, research collaborations [533:533; 540:540].
	Provide training for the employees	Establish industrial training unit to coordinate industrial training matters for employee [134:134].
	Occupational Health & Safety	“Staff (and students) should be aware of safety and risk management [656: 657] 2. CCTV system for safety and security around campus [660:661] 3. Carry out daily chores of being health conscious and practising a healthy lifestyle by a balanced diet and physical exercise [666:668] 4. Communicates steps to ensure UPM community adhere to various safety measures i.e. “provision of

contd. table II

<i>CSR Areas</i>		<i>Results from UPM's Corporate Website</i>
	<i>Specific Items</i>	<i>Quoted Instances</i>
Environmental Stewardship	Communicates green living	<p>an adequate number of designated parking spaces for staff members" & security patrol [671:673]</p> <p>5. Provide an extensive list of safety measures to protect employees from danger in the workplace [687:741].</p> <p>Describing logo: "water droplet symbolises the commitment of the university in preserving the environment". [67:67]</p> <p>None</p>
	Compliance with local environmental regulations Communicates company's efforts for environmentally efficient technology	<p>1. Creating value through a strong and "sustainable RDCE" [52:52]</p> <p>2. Strengthening UPM as a Centre of Excellence in Agriculture [58:58].</p> <p>None</p>
Community Driven	Charity or philanthropy and monetary contribution to community	<p>A vague acknowledgment - "Enhancing the quality of Governance" [61:61].</p> <p>1. "Boosting industry and community networking services [55:55]</p> <p>2. maintains "strategic and symbiotic relationships with the community and larger society" [276: 276]</p> <p>3. Offer social services to the community [312:312]</p> <p>4. Offer community services including experts' advice to the agricultural community [316:316]</p> <p>5. Training on agriculture to community [332: 332]</p> <p>6. Entrepreneur mentoring to community [345:345]</p> <p>7. Provide student training grounds to inspire them to</p>

contd. table II

<i>CSR Areas</i>	<i>Results from UPM's Corporate Website</i>	
	<i>Specific Items</i>	<i>Quoted Instances</i>
	Governmental sponsorships	do community services through "Bakti Siswa" programme [352:352; 360:360]. Provide students with educational opportunities for international exposure [360:360].
	Affected publics and community sponsorships	None.

VI. CONCLUSION

The data offers a snapshot of the current realities, struggles and challenges of CSR standards and best practices within the education sector. As this is an exploratory study, it requires a small study in order to gain a deeper meaning. Overall, results suggested, a university with high credibility in the eyes of the public and the media, may tend to overlook certain aspects of CSR in its sharing of information through the corporate website. While there were some aspects communicated, there were many important aspects that were neglected to mention, such as human rights and anti-corruption management. For a university that champions green campus living, results suggested that it was poorly mentioned on its corporate website. A corporate website is less likely an effective tool for managing CSR if it does not follow a certain guideline in communicating CSR. A university with reputational standing requires international standards in communicating CSR, in order to sustain its reputation as a global player.

There were several limitations to the study. A case study analysis often leaves room for a greater exploration of a particular phenomenon. Similarly, this research requires more exploration of other universities in Malaysia, particularly, universities with the same ranking standards as UPM. A comparative study of both public and private universities in Malaysia will provide a better outlook of the current standards in communicating CSR on their public domain.

Future research can also explore on another communication channel, such as the university's social media and student blogs to explore outcomes of CSR initiatives as well as the university's annual report for a thorough understanding. Conducting interviews with the management team will assist the university to gain deeper meanings of the current realities of the education institution on CSR.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author thanks the organising committee of the Conferene on Business Management, the staff of the Business School of Universiti Utara Malaysia, for providing the opportunity for scholars to share valuable information to a wider audience. Thanks to the editors and reviewers of this journal for allowing this paper a chance to be heard. The author would also like to thank Universiti Putra Malaysia for providing the author a research grant to conduct this research.

REFERENCES

- Abdul Wahab, E. A. & How, J. C. Y. (2007). The impact of the Malaysian code of corporate governance: Compliance, institutional, investors and stock performance. *Journal of Contemporary Accounting and Economics*, 3, 1-36., in press.
- Abdullah, Z. (2010). Cultural diversity management in Malaysia: A perspective of communication management. In Syed, J. & Ozbilgin, M. F. (Eds.) *Managing cultural diversity in Asia: A research companion* Cheltenham, UK, Edward Elgar., in press.
- Abu bakar, N. B. & Ameer, R. (2011). Readability of corporate social responsibility communication in Malaysia. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 18, 50-60., in press.
- Ahmad, J. (2012). Can a university act as a corporate social responsibility (CSR) driver? An analysis. . *Social Responsibility Journal*, 8, 77-86., in press.
- Ahmad, N. H. & Ramayah, T. (2012). Does the notion of 'doing well by doing good' prevail among entrepreneurial ventures in a developing nation? *Journal of Business Ethics*, 106, 479-490., in press.
- Abdul Wahab, E. A. & How, J. C. Y. (2007). The impact of the Malaysian code of corporate governance: Compliance, institutional, investors and stock performance. *Journal of Contemporary Accounting and Economics*, 3, 1-36., in press.
- Abdullah, Z. (2010). Cultural diversity management in Malaysia: A perspective of communication management. In Syed, J. & Ozbilgin, M. F. (Eds.) *Managing cultural diversity in Asia: A research companion* Cheltenham, UK, Edward Elgar., in press.
- Abu bakar, N. B. & Ameer, R. (2011). Readability of corporate social responsibility communication in Malaysia. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 18, 50-60., in press.
- Ahmad, J. (2012). Can a university act as a corporate social responsibility (CSR) driver? An analysis. . *Social Responsibility Journal*, 8, 77-86., in press.
- Ahmad, N. H. & Ramayah, T. (2012). Does the notion of 'doing well by doing good' prevail among entrepreneurial ventures in a developing nation? *Journal of Business Ethics*, 106, 479-490., in press.
- Amran, A. (2006). Corporate social reporting in Malaysia: An institutional perspective. Kuala Lumpur, University of Malaya., in press.
- Amran, A. & Susella, D. (2007). Corporate social reporting in Malaysia: A mixed method approach. *Fifth Asia Pacific Interdisciplinary Research in Accounting Journal*. Auckland, NZ., in press.
- TheStar (2015). Malaysia needs to enhance visibility to foreign investors, says Mustapa. *The Star* Kuala Lumpur, The Star., in press.
- Arshad, R., Othman, S. & Taylor, D. (2010). Regulation, ownership structure and quality of corporate social responsibility disclosure. *The 2010 International Conference on Business, Economics and Tourism Management*. Singapore., unpublished.
- Atan, R. & Mohamed, R. (2010). Transnational corporate social responsibility: A tri-dimensional approach to international CSR research. *The Recent Advances in Management, Marketing, Finances: Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference on Management, Marketing and Finances*. Penang, Malaysia., in press.
- Bartlett, J. L. & Devin, B. (2011). Management, communication, and corporate social responsibility. IN IHLEN, O., BARTLETT, J. L. & MAY, S. (Eds.) *The Handbook of Communication and Corporate Social Responsibility*. West Sussex, Wiley-Blackwell., in press.
- Bursa, M. (2008). Corporate social responsibility (CSR) framework for Malaysian public listed companies., in press.
- Chapple, W. & Moon, J. (2005) Corporate social responsibility. *Business & Society*, 44, 415-441., in press.
- Charmaz, K. (2009). Constructivist grounded theory. IN MOSE, J. M., STERN, P. N., CORBIN, J., Bowers, B., Charmaz, K. & Clarke, A. E. (Eds.) *Developing grounded theory: The second generation*. Walnut Creek, CA, Left Coast Press., in press.
- Chen, S.-H., Nasonghkla, J. & Donaldson, J. A. (2015). University social responsibility (USR): Identifying an ethical foundation within higher education institutions. *The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 14, 165-172., in press.

- Christensen, P., Thrane, M., Jørgensen, T. & Lehmann, M. (2009). Sustainable development: Assessing the gap between preaching and practice at Aalborg University. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, 10, 4-20., in press.
- Dahan, G. S. & Senol, I. (2012). Corporate social responsibility in higher education institutions: Istanbul Bilgi University case. *American International of Contemporary Research*, 2, 95-103., in press.
- Dima, A. M., Vasilache, S., Ghinea, V. & Agoston, S. (2013). A model of academic social responsibility. *Transylvania Review of Administrative Sciences*, 38, 23-43., in press.
- Eberstadt, N. N. (1973). What history tells us about corporate responsibility. *Business & Society*, Autumn, 76-81., in press.
- Gariga, E. & Melé, D. (2004). Corporate social responsibility theories: Mapping the territory. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 53, 51-71., in press.
- Green@UPM (n.d.). Green Living on Campus. Serdang, Malaysia, UPM., in press.
- Greenfield, M. (2016). Number of Facebook users in Malaysia from 2014 to 2021 (in millions). In Greenfield, M. (Ed.), in press.
- Hammond, J. L. & Hammond, B. (1925). *The rise of modern industry*, London, England, Methuen., in press.
- Haw, R. B. H. (2010). Malaysia. *The world guide to CSR: A country by country analysis of corporate sustainability and responsibility*. Sheffield, England, Greenleaf., in press.
- Heald, M. (1988). *The social responsibility of business: Company and community, 1900-1960*, New Brunswick, NJ & Oxford, England, Transaction., in press.
- Homayoun, S., Rahman, R. A. & Bashiri, N. (2011). Internet corporate reporting among public listed companies in Malaysia: An exploratory study. *African Journal of Business Management*, 5, 11863-11873., in press.
- Jamil, M., Alwi, K. & Mohamed, R. (2003). Corporate social responsibility disclosure in the annual reports of Malaysian companies: A longitudinal study. *Analisis*, 10, 139-159., in press.
- Jenkins, R. (2005). Globalization, corporate social responsibility and poverty. *International Affairs*, 81, 525-540., in press.
- Kostova, T. & Zaheer, S. (1999). Organizational legitimacy under conditions of complexity: The case of the multinational enterprise. *Academy of Management Review*, 24, 64-81., in press.
- Leitão, J. & Silva, M. (2007). CSR and social marketing: What is the desired role for universities in fostering public relations? *MPPRA Paper 2954.*, in press.
- Lin-hi, N., Hörisch, J. & Blumberg, I. (2015). Does CSR matter for nonprofit organizations? Testing the link between CSR performance and trustworthiness in the nonprofit versus for-profit domain. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 26, 1944., in press.
- Malaysia, M. O. F. (2010). The 2010 budget speech by YAB Dato' Sri Mohd. Malaysia, The Prime Ministry's Office., in press.
- Mccorkindale, T. (2010). Can you see the writing on my wall? A content analysis of the Fortune 50's Facebook social networking sites. *Public Relations Society of America* 4, 1-12., in press.
- Mehta, S. R. (2011). Corporate social responsibility (CSR) and universities: Towards an integrative approach. *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity*, 1, 4., in press.
- Mohd Hasan, N. A. (2015). Communicating corporate social responsibility: How messages in text influence the standards. *Journal of Language and Communication*, 2, 105-118., in press.
- OECD (2001). Private initiatives for corporate responsibility: An analysis *Working paper on international investment.*, in press.
- OECD (2009). Overview of selected initiatives and instruments relevant to corporate social responsibility. *Annual report on the OECD guidelines for multinational enterprises 2008 employment and industrial relations*. United States OECD., in press.
- Pan, P. & XU, J. (2009). Online strategic communication: A cross cultural analysis of U.S and Chinese corporate websites. *Public Relations Reviews* 35, 251-253., in press.

- Salleh, M. F. B. M. (2009). Political influence, corporate governance and financial reporting quality: Evidence from companies in Malaysia. Wellington, NZ, Massey University., in press.
- Symonds, Q. Q. (2016). QS University Rankings Asia 2016. IN SYMONDS, Q. Q. (Ed.). QS Quacquarelli Symonds Limited., in press.
- Tee, K. K. (2008). Motivations for corporate social reporting and non-reporting in Malaysia: An exploratory study from a public relations perspective. Waikato, NZ, The University of Waikato., in press.
- Thompson, P. & Zakaria, Z. (2004). Corporate social responsibility reporting in Malaysia: Progress and prospects. *Journal of Corporate Citizenship*, 13, 125-136., in press.
- Vasilescu, R., Barna, C., Epure, M. & Baicu, C. (2010). Developing university social responsibility: A model for the challenges of the new civil society. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2, 4177-4187., in press.
- Votaw, D. (1973). Genius becomes rare. In Votaw, D. & Sethi, S. P. (Eds.) *The corporate dilemma: Traditional values versus contemporary problems*. Englewood Cliff NJ, Prentice-Hall., in press.