

Evidence from Romanian Companies on the Effect of Corporate Social Responsibility on Employee Satisfaction



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Abstract The following study's purpose is to examine at how corporate social responsibility CSR affects employees' employee satisfaction, which is assessed by a positive attitude toward their work, in companies listed on the Bucharest Stock Exchange. CSR has three aspects: environmental, community service, and human resources. A questionnaire was created and distributed via Google Forms to 84 Romanian businesses in order to collect data. To investigate the link between the dependent and independent variables, research questions and hypotheses were developed. The data collected using the SPSS system was then analyzed. Employees in higher managerial positions at the chosen firms were included in the respondents. There were 589 surveys collected that could be analyzed. The results of the study showed that corporate social responsibility has a favorable effect on employee satisfaction in Romania through its chosen aspects, which in turn helps increase employees' performance at work.

Keywords Corporate social responsibility · Environment · Employee satisfaction · Human resource · Community service

1 Introduction

Competition between corporations is identified based on a variety of factors, such as human resources, operational effectiveness, customer happiness, and other concerns. Competent employees enable a corporation to obtain several advantages when corporations are competing (Lu et al., 2020). As a result, it is important to note that, according to Osborne and Hammoud (2017), a particular firm must pursue profit maximization in order to exist in the market. In order to sustain profitability, it was also noted that corporate leaders must take into account the involvement and participation of employees. Additionally, it was highlighted by Estacio and Cabrera (2018)

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that the involvement of employees is a sign that those who are more familiar with their work have strategies for managing work operations.

Therefore, it is essential to incorporate corporate social responsibility, which will contribute in attracting and maintaining staff. According to Petrenko et al. (2016), corporate social responsibility (CSR) refers to practices and initiatives adopted by a company as a voluntary matter that is necessary for social well-being. Corporate social responsibility concerns relating to the environment, employees, and society have recently become crucial and significant for business in general (Al-Zoubi and Al-Tkhayneh, 2019). The level of employee satisfaction is another indicator. According to Abuhashesh et al. (2019), job satisfaction relates to employees' perceptions of their attitudes about both their jobs and the workplace. The fact that these emotional states and sentiments are a result of upholding work values was added. As per Abuhashesh et al. (2019), having a job that makes you satisfied is related to essentials like motivation, productivity, and performance.

In the current study, the researcher will investigate how corporate social responsibility affects employees' satisfaction among companies that are listed on the Romanian Stock Exchange.

1.1 The Study Problem and Its Questions

The awareness of implementing corporate social responsibility has rapidly become familiar. It is worth mentioning that firms listed on the stock exchange were forced to implement corporate social responsibility. On the other hand, customers became familiar with corporate social responsibility from different aspects and they also supported firms that apply and follow corporate social responsibility. Therefore, firms might have expenses in order to implement corporate social responsibility from different aspects including: The environment, community, and employees, and these expenses will lead to satisfaction among employees. This is justified because firms are aware that they don't own their employees. So, employees may leave their jobs even after firms have spent expenses on them and then loss will be incurred. Keeping in mind that in general the main aim of firms is to have continuous profitability by considering the implementation of corporate social responsibility and spread it among different firms.

Therefore, this current study has one major question:

Q: "Is there any significant impact of corporate social responsibility through its dimensions (environmental, community services, and human resources) on employees' satisfaction in Romania and which dimension has the most impact among the dimensions?"

1.2 The Importance of the Study

For each company, it is crucial to consider concerns relating to corporate social responsibility. Also, it is vital to remember that implementing corporate social responsibility will enable workers to get associated with and take part in business activities. Corporate social responsibility is therefore essential for boosting workplace relationships. A company should also provide corporate social responsibility initiatives that reflects the demands and requirements of its personnel. Bearing in mind that a company that practices CSR will provide its its staff with the opportunity to express their values in a variety of topics, such as: Community service and charity.

Additionally, businesses invest in their employees’ training in order to raise their credentials and boost production. As a result, anytime employees receive quality training, this will improve their performance and commitment.

1.3 Research Model

The link between the independent and dependent variables, which were established based on several studies, is presented in the study’s model. As an illustration, consider the study done by Ali et al. in 2021, which examined the environmental aspect of corporate social responsibility. In addition, Appiah (2019) and Gahlawat (2015) conducted a research that, respectively, looked at community service and human resource elements. However, Omer (2018)’s research looked at employee happiness as a dependent variable (Fig. 1). Relying on studies of Ali et al., (2021), Appiah (2019), Gahlawat (2015), and Omer (2018), the below model was designed.

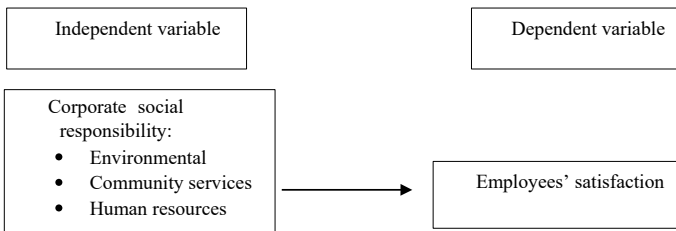


Fig. 1 Variables description. Source: Authors’ own research on the basis of (Ali et al., (2021), Appiah (2019), Gahlawat (2015), & Omer (2018))

2 Literature Review

2.1 *About Corporate Social Responsibility*

According to Appiah (2019), corporate executives are now putting more emphasis on all stakeholders. Furthermore, according to Omer (2018), corporate social responsibility is regarded as a contemporary idea that is connected to the ethical business practices of a particular company.

Additionally, according to Shuli & Suwantee (2017), corporate social responsibility encompasses a variety of perspectives, definitions, and techniques. A company is likely to make contributions to its stakeholders through corporate social responsibility, which is involved with more than just the interests of stakeholders in a corporation. Additionally, Ali et al. (2021) discovered that it is advantageous for staff members to participate in CSR initiatives and make contributions in order to enable businesses to develop CSR activities as stakeholders. It was also stated that as workers are more conscious about these corporate social responsibility initiatives, their awareness of CSR will affect how they respond to such approaches.

According to Gazzola and Mella (2016), the analysts found that companies generally engage in CSR activities in response to stakeholder demands from outside the company as well as because they are aware of the benefits CSR has on a company's reputation. Also, businesses that practice corporate social responsibility might tackle the measures taken to raise employee dedication, productivity, and attitude. According to the same study, the relationship between workers' contributions and corporate social responsibility is seen as a collection of methods and processes that take into account people's linguistic expression and knowledge when evaluating their significance, worth, and relevance. Also, firms that apply corporate social responsibility are able to address the efforts spent to improve workers' motivation, performance, morale, and commitment. In the same study, it was stated that the link between the contribution of employees and corporate social responsibility is considered as a group of tools and techniques that consider the experience of people and their verbal expression whenever examining their meaningfulness, value, and applicability.

Cazeri et al. (2018) noted that through taking part in social, economic, and environmental management, a company's social responsibility seems to have an impact on overall continuity. Furthermore, Ali et al. (2021) claimed that businesses demonstrate their commitment to society via corporate social responsibility by displaying their admirable deeds on a national, regional, or local level. The experts likewise suggested that a specific company think about incorporating corporate social responsibility into its agenda because doing so will enhance a business's overall efficiency.

As per Sarkar and Searcy (2016), corporate social responsibility means that a particular firm must primarily account for both its moral and economic responsibilities that go above and beyond the requirements of the law. As a result, the business will always act ethically while doing anything that has an impact on stakeholders in a community, especially when it comes to sustainability efforts around the world.

Returning to the study by Ali et al. from 2021, corporate social responsibility encompasses both the psychological and behavioral impact on staff where employees participate in everyday activities related to corporate social responsibility, watch the results, and develop an awareness of the CSR practices of their workplace as a whole.

2.2 *The Dimensions of Corporate Social Responsibility*

Environmental practices. Environmental practices. As asserted by Chwilkowska-Kubala et al. (2021), the primary goal of environmental practices is to lessen environmental harm and strengthen an organization's commitment to environmental sustainability. Environmental practices likewise address the activities that a company considers taking in order to lessen its impact on the environment. As a result, environmental practices represent the steps done to safeguard natural resources. Additionally, according to Hoogendoorn et al. (2015), environmental practices comprise the activities and steps that a business considers taking in order to execute these practices inside ecologically friendly actions. According to Morales-Raya et al. (2019), a company implements and comply by environmental policies to meet users' environmental expectations, adhere to the law, and create an effective brand.

Community services practices. A community is categorized by a variety of characteristics, such as the country in which it is being developed, the virtual communities in which participants can engage, the location where the community's affiliation will take place, and a group of individuals who will engage in activities and share interests (Deigh et al., 2017). Additionally, according to Ying et al. (2022), a community is made up of members of the public, customers, and interest groups who all contribute to the company's reputation. Additionally, it was mentioned that as corporate social responsibility is linked to stakeholders within a community, it also benefits them. Corporate social responsibility will strengthen a community's ability to act, work together, and respond. The term "communication" inside a firm, as well as an awareness of its social influences, will help in developing the perception of stakeholders within a community, according to Li et al. (2019). Finally, Ying et al. (2022) pointed out that there are key elements that reflect how a firm responds to social expectations and the local community, namely: The expectation of a firm's behavior, the growth in stakeholders' ability to influence a business' operations, and the changes in how a community presents its expectations. Furthermore, according to Deigh et al. (2017), communities differ depending on a variety of specialties, such as psychological, anthropological, urban planning, philosophical, sociological, and political sciences. Additionally, it was found that whether or not people live in the same location, communities that rely on face-to-face or electronic interaction include people who are creating and fostering social connections.

Human resources practices. The main objective of human resource management is to increase a company's productivity by maximizing the effectiveness of its employees (Chong et al., 2020). It was also mentioned that using human resource management techniques can help a company's strategy by giving services that focus

on the value of its clients. The use of human resources by a company and its competitive strategy are intrinsically tied (Kutieshat and Farmanesh, 2022). According to the same study, the development of information technology and its integration with new human resource management practices may result in innovative performance, which will reduce risks and failures. Additionally, any company's human resources are considered to be the key component in gaining a competitive advantage, implying that implementing human resource policies can affect how well a particular organization performs. It's interesting to note that it was also mentioned that the use of human resource practices in relation to the empowerment, support, and development of a firm's culture is thought to have a good association with both its performance and innovation performance (Kundu and Gahlawat, 2015). According to Chong et al. (2020), managing human resources is seen as a strategic method that is used to handle employment-related issues that are beneficial to employees' skills in order to obtain a competitive advantage.

Employees' contentment. Employee happiness is generally influenced by a number of factors, including efficiency, work productivity, and individual well-being. Different leadership and motivational techniques can affect each employee differently, which will improve both job satisfaction and productivity. Employee happiness is therefore seen as a crucial element in motivating and advancing workers to achieve greater results (Dziuba et al., 2020). A pleased worker is a happy worker, and according to Al-Zoubi and Al-Tkhayneh (2019), such individuals are seen as advocates for a company both internally and outside. A contented employee was also discovered to be more dedicated and devoted to the company and its objectives. The degree to which employees are satisfied with their jobs shows the general favourable mindset of the staff. Also, the physical environment of the workplace affects how satisfied employees are. In general, people's levels of job contentment are stable (Omer, 2018). Therefore, there are various elements that can result in either a higher or lower degree of employee satisfaction. That according Al-Zoubi and Al-Tkhayneh (2019), employees' satisfaction refers to the grateful and favourable response, which is an output that varies depending on the assessment of people's job experience. Managers and businesses believe that supplements and salary are two important workplace variables that influence employees' satisfaction.

3 Methodology

3.1 Hypotheses

This study intends to investigate the impact of Romanian corporate social responsibility on employee satisfaction across three areas: The environment, community service, and human resources.

H1: In Romania, corporate social responsibility has a favourable effect on employee satisfaction.

H1. A: In Romania, the environmental dimension has a favourable effect on employee satisfaction.

H1. B: The community service dimension has a favourable effect on employee satisfaction in Romania.

H1. C: In Romania, the human resource factor has a favourable effect on employee satisfaction.

3.2 *The Used Method and Tool*

A quantitative approach is used in the current study. Interestingly, it is beneficial for a variety of reasons, including time and money savings, generalization, and replicability (Abuhamda et al., 2021). Questionnaires were used to gather the data. The 84 enterprises that are listed on the Bucharest Stock Exchange make the population of this study, which consists of employees in higher management. With the assistance of a company that specializes in sending questionnaires, surveys were sent using Google Forms. Additionally, an average of 7 surveys per firm out of 589 total questionnaires were pertinent to analysis.

3.3 *Test–Retest Reliability*

Test-Retest The study tool's reliability was tested initially on a small sample of (45) observations in the month of (4) of (2022). The test was then repeated and it was discovered that there was a match in the sample replies of 88.69 %, showing a high level of validity in the questionnaire. Additionally, the following reliability test analysis, model validation, and convergent validity analysis of the study model were adopted:

The internal consistency and consistency of the questionnaire paragraphs were tested using Cronbach's alpha, and the results showed that ($\text{Alpha} \geq 0.70$) indicates a high level of stability in the research variable and is regarded appropriate according to prior studies (Aslanidis and Hartigan, 2021; Shrestha, 2021; He et al., 2021; Spoorthy et al., 2021). However, the factor loadings were used to assess the convergent validity of the responses, and according to a different study (Van et al., 2020; Cho, 2021), all factor loadings should be higher than ($\text{FL} > 0.50$). Cronbach's alpha values for all variables are higher than the suggested value of (70%), as shown by the data in Table 1, where the values ranged from (0.712) as the lowest value, which was for the Environmental dimension, and (0.919) as the highest value, which was for the Human Resources variable. This clearly shows that Cronbach's alpha coefficient ratios imply a high degree of stability for all questions of variables within the questionnaire. The analysis's results also show the convergent validity of all the questionnaire's variables' questions, as evidenced by the fact that all of their FL values are greater than the suggested level of (50%), with values ranging between (0.525–0.982) The

researcher believes that this is because the study sample observations were carefully chosen for this study, based on the results of the analysis that demonstrate the validity and reliability of the study instrument.

Descriptive analysis. Using a Google Form, the survey was disseminated online to (589). The researcher had to exclude (49) incomplete questionnaires from the study sample. The (540) surveys were included in the final analysis. The study sample’s demographic distribution is shown in Tables 2 and 3:

According to prior findings of the authors’ own research, the descriptive analysis of the research variables show that the Human resources dimension had the highest

Table 1 Variables reliability and validation of model

Environmental		Factor Loading (FL > 0.50)	Cronbach’s ($\alpha \geq 0.70$)
E1		0.597	0.712
E2		0.645	
E3		0.785	
E4		0.747	
E5		0.811	
Community services		Factor Loading (FL > 0.50)	Cronbach’s ($\alpha \geq 0.70$)
CS1		0.678	0.842
CS2		0.691	
CS3		0.696	
CS4		0.525	
CS5		0.716	
Human resources		Factor Loading (FL > 0.50)	Cronbach’s ($\alpha \geq 0.70$)
HR1		0.802	0.919
HR2		0.678	
HR3		0.824	
HR4		0.709	
HR5		0.647	
SMEs performance		Factor Loading (FL > 0.50)	Cronbach’s ($\alpha \geq 0.70$)
Employees’ satisfaction	ES1	0.802	0.820
	ES2	0.708	
	ES2	0.982	
	ES3	0.587	
	ES4	0.799	
	ES5	0.799	

Source: Authors’ own research

Table 2 The results of the descriptive test for the distribution of the study sample

Item		Choice	Frequency	Percentage
Personal information	Gender	Male	60	11.1%
		Female	480	88.9%
		All	540	100.0%
	Level of education	Diploma	22	4.1%
		Bachelor	265	49.1%
		Higher diploma	105	19.4%
		Masters	109	20.2%
		PhD	39	7.2%
		All	540	100.0%
		Age	From 35 or Less	26
	From 35 -40		342	63.3%
	From 40–45		141	26.1%
	From 45–50		12	2.2%
	More than 50		19	3.6%
	All		540	100.0%
	Level of experience	Less than 5 Years	38	7.0%
		(5- less than 10) Years	33	6.1%
		(10- Less than 15) years	346	64.1%
		15 years and Above	123	22.8%
		All	540	100.0%

Source: Authors' own research

Table 3 Results of the descriptive analysis of the study variables

No	Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Degree of approval
1	Environmental	4.003	0.297	High
2	Community services	3.531	0.867	High
3	Human resources	4.461	0.105	High Very
4	Employees' satisfaction	4.226	0.135	High Very

Arithmetical mean has a value between (1 to 1.79), the result of degree of approval is "Very low"; (1.80 to 2.59) the result of degree of approval is "Low"; (2.60 to 3.39) the result of degree of approval is "Medium"; (3.40 to 4.20) the result of degree of approval is "High"; (4.21 to 5.00) the result of degree of approval is "Very High"

Source: Authors' own research

Table 4 The results of the multiple regression test for the study model

F-statistic:	37.305		Adjusted R-Square:	0.469	
Sig (F-statistic):	0.000		R-squared:	0.472	
S.E. of regression:	0.079		R:	0.687	
Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	Sig.T	VIF	Tolerance
Constant	–	7.234	0.000	–	–
Environmental	0.169	5.323	0.000	1.142	0.876
Community services	0.498	15.034	0.000	1.676	0.597
Human resources	0.365	11.926	0.000	1.095	0.913

Source: Authors' own research

level of importance among the Corporate Social Responsibility dimensions, with an arithmetic mean of (4.461) and a very high degree of approval, the Environmental dimension was in second position in terms of importance with an arithmetic mean of (4.003) and a high degree of importance, and the Community services dimension was in second place in terms of importance with an arithmetic mean of (4.003).

Hypotheses test. Through the use of both (Variance Inflationary Factor) (VIF) and Tolerance (Tolerance), it was determined that there was no linear interference problem in the study models. All of the variables' VIF values were less than (10), and the analysis's findings, which are shown in the table below, showed that the Tolerance coefficient values for all variables were greater than ten (0.10). There is no evidence of a linear interference problem in the study model, according to the studies of (Ekiz, 2021; Salmerón et al., 2018) and all independent study variables pass these two indications. The following study hypotheses were therefore tested using the multiple regression test, as follow (Table 4).

Based on the authors' own research, it can be seen that the calculated F value was (37.305) and that it is significant at the level of (0.05), demonstrating the appropriateness of the suggested study model. The findings of the regression analysis also showed that the value of the (Sig. F-statistic) was (0.000), which is lower than the level of significance, which is (%), and based on the correlation value of (R = 0.687), it is obvious that the main hypothesis is accepted, which demonstrates that in Romania, corporate social responsibility has a favorable effect on employees' satisfaction. The adjusted R-square value for the regression analysis reached (0.469), which indicates that only about 46.9% of the variations in employee satisfaction can be attributed to changes brought about by the implementation of corporate social responsibility. Another study that ranked explanatory power (Purwanto & Sudargini, 2021) determined that this model's explanatory power is strong and reliable when it comes to predicting and assessing employees' satisfaction in Romania. The findings also revealed a level of significance decrease for all aspects of corporate social responsibility at the level of significance of (Sig.T 0.05), which suggests that all aspects of corporate social responsibility, as represented by environmental, community, and human resource concerns, have an effect on the employees' satisfaction. Additionally, based on the value of the coefficients, it was discovered that each of

these dimensions has a favorable effect; as a result, the study's sub-hypotheses are all accepted. Along with the coefficient value of (0.365) that belongs to the human resources dimension, indicating that this dimension is ranked second in terms of order, and the coefficient value of community service, the environmental dimension's score of (0.169) shows that environmental influences employees' satisfaction the least in Romania among the dimensions covered by the study within the CSR application.

4 Findings Discussions

Firstly, Romanian employees are more satisfied as a result of corporate social responsibility. That is acceptable since CSR improves an organization's culture and encourages people to work with purpose. The reason for this is because anytime workers do something they are concerned about and that is important to them, they will be at ease. As a result, it will encourage employees' contribution and partaking. This outcome is aligned with a study conducted by Gazzola and Mella (2016) that found that corporate social responsibility influences employees' perceptions, which in turn affects company's environmental and societal effectiveness.

Secondly, the environmental measurement is determined to have the minor impact among the examined dimensions, yet it does have an impact on employees' contentment. That is acceptable because implementing an ecofriendly workspace will reduce the harmful effects of the business on the planet by providing a safe and sanitary working atmosphere. As a result, that will contribute to job satisfaction by boosting productivity among employees. This finding is in line with a study done by Ali et al. in 2021, which revealed a major and obvious association between the environmental factor and the level of working participation among employees.

Thirdly, the social service factor has been determined to have the highest beneficial influence on employees' happiness of all the tackled dimensions. This is reasonable because volunteering in the community often makes workers feel more linked to their place of employment. Workers who are involved in community activities outside their job are more likely to increase their output as a sign of fulfillment. This finding is in line with a study by Appiah (2019), which demonstrated the importance of community service in addressing employee fulfillment.

Fourthly, the human resource component has a favorable effect on employees' enjoyment; it is discovered to have the second-highest impact among the evaluated variables. This is reasonable since if workers are happy to work for a firm, it will show in their output, which will improve as a result of their satisfaction. Employees will be pleased about their jobs by being both dependable and contented, recognizing the fact that human resources procedures and guidelines are useful to identify various issues in a specific organization.

4.1 Limitations and Recommendations

When completing this study, the researcher encountered two major limitations: First, despite using a specialized company to send out surveys, not all recipients completed them and returned them. The absence of comparable studies in the area generally and Romania particularly was another drawback.

Furthermore, after performing this study, the researcher gave several suggestions, such as: Promoting corporate social responsibility to raise awareness of employees' roles.

It is also recommended to do the survey again while taking into account other corporate social responsibility factors. Additionally, it is advised that businesses promote sustainability inside their own walls. Another thing to think about is that it's advised for businesses to implement ecologically friendly procedures at workplace. For the sake of progress and evaluation, it is also advised to consider other industries and in various nations.

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