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The 11th International Conference on Social Responsibility, Ethics and Sustainable Business

Guest Editors

Ng See Kee, Jamilah Ahmad and Rehan Tariq

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Preface

It's a great privilege to present the proceedings of the 11th International Conference on Social Responsibility, Ethics, and Sustainable Business (ICSR 2024), hosted under the Pertanika Journal of Social Science and Humanities, UPM Press. Given our significant global challenges, adopting sustainable business practices is crucial in building a resilient and responsible future. This conference represents a significant milestone in the ongoing dialogue on corporate social responsibility (CSR), bringing together a diverse group of scholars, practitioners, policymakers, and industry leaders from across the globe.

The conference theme, "Local solutions to global challenges: Communicating sustainability initiatives to diverse communities," reflects the urgency of communication strategies that address global sustainability challenges. It serves as a crucible for scholarly dialogue and practical insights, bridging the gap between sustainability imperatives and the needs of diverse communities crucial for their realisation.

The scope of the conference proceedings encompasses a wide range of research and practical perspectives on corporate social responsibility, ethics and sustainable business. It includes theoretical and empirical studies exploring innovative frameworks, analysing case studies, and proposing actionable strategies for sustainable development and responsible corporate governance. These proceedings papers collectively derived from the themes of "Business and ethical leadership in CSR", "Storytelling for impact: Evolving narratives in CSR communication," "Digital accountability: The new frontier in sustainability reporting," "Engaging stakeholders: Strategies for effective communication," "Marketing with purpose: Aligning campaigns with societal values," and "Sustainable practices in action." It aims to advance the understanding of corporate social responsibilities' roles in fostering a balanced relationship between business objectives, societal needs, and environmental stewardship.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to UPM Press for their invaluable support in bringing the Pertanika Proceedings to fruition. We also want to sincerely thank all committee members, collaborators, conference presenters, and participants for their unwavering support of ICSR 2024. Your contributions have been essential to the success of this event.

Guest Editors
Ng See Kee (Dr.)
Jamilah Ahmad (Prof. Dr.)
Rehan Tariq (Dr.)

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15 Years of Research on the Use of Storytelling in the Dissemination of CSR

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ABSTRACT

This study conducts a systematic review of research published from January 2009 to December 2023 on the use of storytelling in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) communication. The aim is to analyze the relationship between CSR and storytelling from an academic perspective, demonstrating how storytelling serves as a potent tool for shaping perceptions, engaging stakeholders, and enhancing organizational image within the realm of CSR. Articles from the Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus databases were reviewed, with data extracted as of December 31, 2023. Results highlight storytelling's pivotal role in humanizing complex CSR endeavors, fostering emotional connections with stakeholders, and authentically conveying organizational values. These findings emphasize the strategic importance of integrating CSR into core business operations as a fundamental aspect of organizational identity and responsibility.

Keywords: Communication, CSR, organizational behavior, stakeholder engagement, storytelling, sustainability

INTRODUCTION

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) plays a vital role in shaping organizational behavior and stakeholder relationships. CSR fosters trust, loyalty, and engagement when integrated with effective communication strategies. Storytelling has become a key tool in humanizing CSR efforts, enhancing reputation, and creating emotional connections. Scholars highlight the significance of storytelling in shaping perceptions and engaging stakeholders. This study seeks to explore the relationship between CSR and storytelling by addressing the following research question: *What are the primary implications raised by these investigations concerning the relationship between CSR and storytelling?*

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METHODOLOGY

This study systematically reviews CSR and storytelling literature from 2009 to 2023 using the Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus databases. A total of 28 articles were analyzed to assess how CSR storytelling influences organizational practices and stakeholder perceptions. This systematic literature review follows the methodology of other studies (Aguaded et al., 2023; Rodríguez et al., 2023; Nieto-Ferrando J., Gómez-Morales B., & Castro-Mariño D. 2023), and focuses on two major databases: Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus. The search, conducted in September 2023, included terms like "storytelling" and "corporate social responsibility" or "CSR," and was limited to journal articles. Book chapters and conference proceedings were excluded. The earliest relevant study was from 2009. The review process involved three steps. First, literature was gathered using predefined filters from both databases. Second, 14 duplicate entries were removed, reducing the initial set from 52 to 38. Third, 10 more papers were excluded for not addressing the core relationship between CSR and storytelling, leaving 28 papers for final analysis.

Below is a diagram summarizing the process for selecting and including the final set of articles (Figure 1).

Phase 1. Initial search	**Phase 2. Elimination of Duplicates**
Databases: Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus **Search terms**: "storytelling" and "corporate social responsibility", "storytelling" and "CSR". **Time period**: From the inception of each database to September 2023 (The earliest article found on the subject dates to 2009) **Document type**: Article **Sample size (N)=52**	Duplicate articles found in both databases were removed. **N= 38**

Phase 3. Initial Researcher Analysis	**Phase 4. Analysis Table Application and Categorization**
The documents were reviewed, and 10 works were excluded from the sample, as the relationship between CSR and storytelling was not a core part of their analysis. **N = 28**	An analysis table was applied with variables and categorization. **N = 28**

Figure 1. Diagram of the process of selection and inclusion of the articles by phase
Source. Authors

RESULTS

This section outlines key insights into the relationship between CSR and storytelling, divided into three thematic blocks. The first block, *Discourse Analysis*, explores how CSR narratives are crafted through storytelling techniques and language. Studies like Hall et al. (2021) and Pérez et al. (2020) demonstrate how CSR stories humanize corporate activities and foster emotional connections, while critical approaches stress the need for ethical consistency between stated values and practices. Research on counter-narratives highlights the risks of perceived hypocrisy in CSR storytelling. The second block, *Communication Tools*, examines the channels used to share CSR narratives, such as corporate websites, social media, and reports. Studies emphasize the importance of selecting the right communication tools to engage diverse stakeholders. Research by Steenkamp and Rensburg (2019) and Coombs (2019) shows how multichannel strategies enhance CSR communication effectiveness. The third block, *Stakeholder Impact*, focuses on how CSR storytelling shapes stakeholder trust, loyalty, and engagement. Hall et al. (2021) show that compelling stories influence stakeholder support, while research explores how storytelling impacts organizational culture and leadership. Additionally, industry-specific studies highlight how CSR narratives vary by sector, offering tailored communication strategies.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Investigations into the relationship between CSR and storytelling reveal key insights. Storytelling significantly enhances communication effectiveness between companies and stakeholders. Engaging narratives with well-defined characters and clear plots fosters deeper connections, improving stakeholder engagement and increased transparency. Such stories humanize corporate actions and strengthen brand reputation by showcasing commitment to social and environmental responsibilities. Techniques like metaphor and foreshadowing emphasize long-term vision, reinforcing stakeholder trust and loyalty. Additionally, discourse analysis offers insights into CSR activities' cultural and leadership impacts, highlighting the need to integrate storytelling into CSR strategies for more meaningful consumer engagement.

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Evaluating the Process Quality of Taking CSR Through the Lens of Stakeholder Service

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ABSTRACT

Improving the performance of corporate social responsibility (CSR) is often contemplated in terms of the quality improvement of taking CSR. In this context, measuring CSR performance is viewed as a foundational step. Given the qualitative essence of CSR, improving the quality of taking CSR should extend beyond the measurement of CSR performance—quantitative performance metrics. Nevertheless, within academic discourse, there is a notable absence of methodologies for evaluating the quality of taking CSR alongside performance measurement. This paper aims to develop a framework for evaluating the quality of taking CSR by treating CSR as a service directed towards various stakeholder groups and, in turn, linking service quality with the quality of taking CSR. The (CSR-related) literature is scrutinised by employing a mapping approach to elucidate CSR narratives from different perspectives. Drawing upon the Service Quality Gap Model, these perspectives and their stories are applied to evaluate the quality of taking CSR. The research contributes to evaluating the quality of taking CSR by presenting an evaluation framework grounded in the Service Quality Gap Model. Such evaluation is essential if corporations intend to improve their CSR performance, become more socially responsible, and align with the UN's sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), quality evaluation, service quality, stakeholder group

INTRODUCTION

He (2023) explored the developmental history of CSR. Over the past seven decades, the main debate on CSR focused on various questions: "Do social responsibilities exist in business?" (the 1950s–1970s); "What should CSR be like?" (the end of the 1970s); "To whom should corporations be responsible?" (the 1980s–1990s); "What results should CSR achieve?" "How to benefit from CSR?" (the 2000s–2010s); and "How can CSR be sustainable?" (the 2010s–2020s). Despite

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this extensive development, the quality of taking CSR has not been a central focus in academia until now. The debate on "How can CSR be sustainable?" implies a need to seek an approach to maintaining and improving the quality of CSR. However, existing research lacks a focus on CSR quality. Specifically, regarding the evaluation of CSR, existing research contributes to the performance of CSR and the quality of CSR reporting. It seems that quality is rarely taken into consideration until the outcomes of CSR are observed; however, maintaining quality is an ongoing process, which involves evaluating the quality of the process of taking CSR from stakeholder expectations to delivery. In this context, this paper aims to develop a framework for evaluating the quality of taking CSR.

The following session explains the application of the Service Quality Gap model in the CSR context. Subsequently, it presents the results of contextualising the Service Quality Gap model and develops a framework for evaluating the quality of CSR based on existing CSR-related literature. Finally, the research is reviewed, and further relevant research is proposed.

It should be noted that the existing literature on CSR primarily focuses on the Western world. Consequently, frameworks developed from this literature may be better suited to a Western context. It remains questionable whether such frameworks can effectively evaluate the quality of taking CSR in countries with different contexts. One is China, an emerging economy with a unique socialist system and a history of semi-colonisation by the UK. The concepts of CSR and SDGs are intertwined in existing research, sharing similarities with notable differences. The embryo of CSR in China can be tracked back approximately 2500 years to the introduction of Confucianism, which promoted the idea of "Great Harmony" and linked to the development of a harmonious society in modern China. In contrast, the SDGs in China originated from the development of China National Sustainable Communities (CNSCs) in 1986. The seeds of CSR in modern China were sworn around the same period, as 1978 marked a pivotal shift from a socialist planned economy to a socialist market economy. Before this transition, the primary focus since the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) was economic and poverty alleviation. By 1992, marketisation had gained prominence, leading to increased cooperation with Western multinational corporations (MNCs). They introduced the Western concept of CSR, particularly concerning labour standards (anti-sweatshop). Since then, CSR in China has increasingly focused on addressing the needs of foreign (business) stakeholders.

The United Nations (UN)' Global Compact was launched in 2007, encouraging firms to commit to ten principles in labour, environment, human rights and anti-corruption, with around 200 Chinese companies joining in the subsequent year. Today, CSR in China also encompasses specific social objectives such as education, health care, and environmental protection. Similarly, following China's commitment to the UN's 2030 Agenda, there has been a highlighted focus on achieving SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 3 (Good Health & Well-being), and SDG 4 (Quality Education), along with increased attention to SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) and SDG 13 (Climate Action). Overall, CSR in China tends to adopt a state-centric approach, viewing governmental social responsibility as paramount, while achieving SDGs is often seen as a discretionary commitment in China.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In terms of service quality and stakeholder expectation and perception, the Service Quality Gap Model (Parasuraman et al., 1985) is a suitable reference for evaluating the quality of CSR. Among the four approaches suggested (2020) for developing conceptual articles, *theory adaptation* is an appropriate methodology for this research. The Service Quality Gap Model to evaluate the quality of taking CSR (Parasuraman et al., 1985) was adapted to define potential gaps and logicise these gaps in the CSR context based on CSR-related literature (i.e. CSR-GAP). This approach aids in evaluating the quality of CSR as a whole.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the CSR context, the topics related to bridging quality gaps, each of which can serve as an independent CSR research theme, are summarised below:

(a) What stakeholders are identified, and how can their expectations be met?
(b) How can CSR be translated into implementation?
(c) How do we implement CSR in practice?
(d) How do we communicate CSR implementation legitimately?
(e) How do we align stakeholders' perceptions with their expectations regarding CSR?

As shown in Table 1, this framework can carry out surveys (interviews or questionnaires) and engage many management-level individuals of an organisation and specified stakeholders in responding to the questions in this framework. It should be noticed that the questions under GAP1-GAP4 are applied to enquiry the organisation's management-level individuals, while the rest are expected to be responded to by the organisation's stakeholders. By systematically addressing the questions under each topic, every CSR quality gap can be clearly articulated. This process facilitates the development of CSR strategies that bridge these gaps, ultimately enhancing the overall quality of CSR initiatives.

Table 1
Framework for evaluating the quality of taking CSR

CSR quality gap (GAP)	The questions for evaluating the quality of CSR taken by an organisation (Q)
CSR-GAP1: Stakeholder Expectation on CSR-Management Perception on CSR Gap	**Q1a**: Who are your organisation's stakeholders in particular? **Q1b**: What issues do these stakeholders expect you to address? **Q1c**: How important are these issues?

Table 1 *(continue)*

CSR quality gap (GAP)	The questions for evaluating the quality of CSR taken by an organisation (Q)
CSR-GAP2: Management Perception on CSR-CSR Quality Specification Gap	**Q2a**: How far would your organisation stretch its responsibilities in its CSR strategies? **Q2b**: What issues would you take up based on these CSR strategies? **Q2c**: How meaningful do you think taking up these issues is? **Q2d**: How does your organisation combine economic, social, and environmental strategies? Do you have any successful cases to share? **Q2e**: Do your organisation's CSR strategies consider "context" when taking up each issue? **Q2f**: Specifically, do your organisation's CSR strategies have global or local concerns?
GAP3: CSR quality specification-CSR delivery gap	**Q3a**: What principles motivate your organisation to implement CSR? **Q3b**: What are the processes your organisation uses in implementing CSR? **Q3c**: What are the outcomes your organisation achieves from its CSR implementation?
GAP4: CSR delivery-external CSR communication gap	**Q4**: What are the purposes of your organisation for externally communicating CSR?
GAP5: Expected CSR-perceived CSR gap	**Q5a**: What is CSR in your concept? **Q5b**: What CSR do you expect to be taken by this organisation? **Q5c**: What CSR expected needs to be improved in your perception?

CONCLUSION

This paper develops a framework for evaluating the quality of taking CSR by adapting Parasuraman et al. (1985) Service Quality Gap Model. In this theory adaptation, CSR is defined as a stakeholder-oriented CSR-related service quality (Teixeira et al., 2018), and the key to improving the quality of taking CSR in each perspective is discussed with support from CSR-related literature. This paper is initial theoretical research exploring the quality of CSR. He (2023) stated that all CSR, ESG, and SDGs are in the realm of sustainability. Further research could link the quality of CSR with ESG and SDGs, followed by categorising this quality on the basis of sustainability, e.g. social sustainability, environmental sustainability, and economic sustainability. Besides, empirical research is expected to apply this evaluation framework in practice, engaging the corporations, which are the representatives in taking CSR and/or taking the quality improvement of considering CSR – in evaluating their quality of taking CSR.

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Improving CSR Transparency Through Blockchain

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ABSTRACT

The Blockchain could potentially transform the way CSR reporting is conducted. Initially, Bitcoin brought blockchain into public opinion for peer-to-peer immutable decentralized financial transactions. The second generation of blockchains, Ethereum, has introduced the concept of smart contracts, immutable pieces of code saved on the blockchain. Smart contracts elevate transactions into trust-minimizing agreements, thus disrupting existing markets and organizations. A CSR report outlines a company's environmental, social, and ethical efforts, highlighting its impact on society. It informs stakeholders about the company's commitment to sustainability. However, challenges like transparency, data manipulation, and inconsistent standards persist in traditional CSR reporting. Many reporting needs, such as trust between multiple parties, transparency, progress monitoring, autonomy and automation, seem to be covered by the blockchain value proposition: a distributed, immutable, publicly accessible ledger. Regardless of its potential, blockchain has lacked massive adoption due to its still very technical, security-oriented nature. This paper includes an in-depth review of academic literature to outline the current understanding of CSR reporting and blockchain technology. It proposes a theoretical framework for implementing blockchain in website CSR reporting.

Keywords: Blockchain, CSR reporting, Ethereum, smart contracts, social responsibility

INTRODUCTION

The European Union introduced the Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility Directive (CSRD) to improve transparency and standardization in environmental, social, and governance (ESG) reporting for companies operating within the EU (European Union, 2022).

The EU Directive (2014/95/EU) requires large public-interest companies with over 500 employees to disclose ESG information from 2018, aligning with global

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standards like the Global Reporting Initiative (European Union, 2014). Since 2017, the European Commission has guided non-financial reporting standardization. On January 5, 2023, the CSRD expanded these requirements to more large companies, listed SMEs, and non-EU firms with over EUR 150 million in EU revenue (European Commission, 2023).

A non-financial report provides qualitative and quantitative details on how a company integrates ESG (environmental, social, governance) into its operations and outcomes (Daub, 2007). According to Moravcikova et al. (2015), CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) communications offer significant advantages, including transparency, supervision of CSR activities, stakeholder involvement, and cross-sector cooperation, thereby enhancing their value.

Einwiller and Carroll (2020) found that negative Corporate Social Performance (CSP) often involves environmental and labour issues such as emissions, accidents, and health problems. While regulations and International Labour Organization guidelines require reporting on greenhouse gas emissions, energy use, and occupational accidents, companies tend to disclose unavoidable negative CSP and hide less visible issues.

Transparency is crucial in CSR reporting, and blockchain technology can enhance it. Blockchain is a secure distributed digital ledger that can be programmed to record data and anything of value beyond financial transactions. Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT) is the Internet's third generation, Web 3.0. Unlike the current Web 2.0, where data hosting and communication mainly depend on private servers owned by private companies, DLT allows different interactions without intermediaries (Tapscott & Tapscott, 2018).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study examined specialized articles on CSR reporting, identified existing solutions, and explored the use of blockchain to enhance CSR reporting through theoretical scenarios. This article focused on the challenges of website reporting. While common, company websites can be manipulated, allowing for editing or deleting content and reports, which may obscure information.

Nakamoto (2008) defined blockchain as an immutable, append-only, ordered, timestamped, transparent, and consistent ledger. As Sarajoti et al. (2023) emphasized, these attributes make it suitable for CSR reporting. Moreover, it is secure in terms of identification, authentication, and authorization.

Blockchain can serve as a CSR reporting system by tracking reporting data such as sustainability metrics, recording compliance documents, verifying certifications, linking reports to unique identifiers, and sharing transparency data with stakeholders.

Cryptographic provenance standards reveal when, how, and by whom a particular piece of data was created, offering a practical, high-impact method for reducing disinformation in CSR reporting. Additionally, hash functions ensure data integrity on the blockchain. A hash function is a mathematical function that generates a unique, fixed-size string from input data, acting as a digital fingerprint. Any change in the input results in a completely different output, making it difficult to reverse or alter data undetected.

The core resilience of blockchain technology is its decentralized or distributed structure. Multiple participants or "peers" operate the blockchain; they form a network of nodes, each with equal authority. If discrepancies arise between blockchains maintained by different peers—whether from tampering or other issues—the consensus is determined by the majority hash, as the network collectively agrees, as depicted in Figure 1.

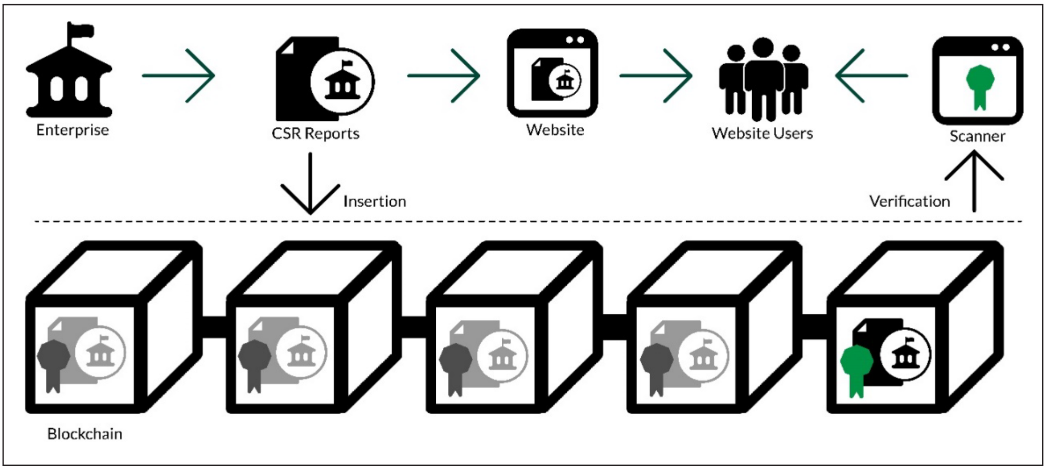

Figure 1. Blockchain entry verification (Authors' creation)

Ethereum revolutionized the blockchain landscape by introducing smart contracts and self-executing agreements with the terms directly written into code. When a smart contract is deployed, it is stored as a bytecode. This bytecode represents the compiled code of the smart contract and is recorded on the blockchain along with a timestamp, ensuring transparency and immutability (Buterin, 2014). This setup allows for automated, trustless transactions and interactions. In the Ethereum network, two notable standards exist: ERC20 and ERC721, which outline how to create and manage fungible and non-fungible tokens. Non-fungible tokens (NFTs) are unique and non-interchangeable; each NFT is distinct and cannot be exchanged on a one-to-one basis with another. NFTs have become popular for digital art and collectables. They help artists gain proper recognition and compensation, addressing issues of digital ownership and attribution in an age where copying and sharing can undermine the value of their work. Nevertheless, the variety of NFT use cases continues to expand.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

CSR reports can be represented as NFTs. The ERC721 standard ensures that NFTs can be created, managed, and transferred across the Ethereum network. Each token has a unique identifier that differentiates it from others. A key difference from traditional NFT is that CSR reports do not require transfer. Another aspect worth noting is that while NFTs' unique identifiers and ownership information are stored on the Ethereum blockchain, the attributes and metadata are often stored off-chain, mainly because of high transaction costs (Ojog, 2024).

NFTs are also making significant strides in DeFi (Decentralized Finance), which refers to financial services and products built on blockchain operated without traditional intermediaries. Within DeFi, NFTs are utilized in a variety of innovative ways such as (1) breeding, NFTs are combined to create new assets; (2) burning, where NFTs are permanently removed from circulation; (3) merging, which allows NFTs to be combined into a new, more valuable token, (4) fractional ownership, enabling multiple parties to own a share of a high-value NFT, (5) staking, where NFTs are used to earn rewards in decentralized platforms, and (6) airdrops, where NFTs are distributed to users as part of promotional or incentive programs. The exploration and experimentation with these applications are ongoing, continually expanding how NFTs interact with and enhance the DeFi ecosystem (Ojog, 2021).

NFTs can be effectively integrated with DAOs (Decentralized Autonomous Organizations), blockchain-based entities governed by smart contracts and managed collectively by their members through a voting mechanism. By leveraging NFTs within DAOs, organizations can represent ownership stakes, voting rights, or unique membership statuses as digital tokens. This integration can enhance transparency and engagement, as NFTs can provide verifiable proof of participation and contribution. For CSR reporting, DAOs using NFTs offer a novel approach to tracking and verifying contributions and impact. NFTs can record and showcase CSR initiatives, reward stakeholders for their involvement, and ensure accurate and tamper-proof reporting. This synergy between NFTs and DAOs holds the potential for more accountable and transparent CSR practices, allowing organizations to demonstrate their commitment to social and environmental goals in a decentralized and verifiable manner.

CONCLUSION

Mainstream blockchain adoption constantly faces challenges, such as improving user experience, addressing scalability, tackling market manipulation and overcoming restrictive legislation. Assessing proper use cases that create high value can soften these hurdles.

Organizations can achieve greater transparency, accountability, and engagement in their CSR initiatives by utilizing some of the latest blockchain innovations, such as NFTs and DAOs. NFTs can provide verifiable records of contributions and achievements, while DAOs can facilitate decentralized decision-making and stakeholder involvement. This approach ensures that CSR activities are documented, immutable and transparent and that the stakeholders have a clear and accurate view of a company's social and environmental impact.

Ultimately, these innovations can lead to more credible and effective CSR reporting, fostering trust and demonstrating a genuine commitment to responsible and ethical practices.

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From Connections to Advocacy: Examining Relationship Marketing's Influence on Brand Advocacy Among Malaysian Facebook Users

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ABSTRACT

Individuals forge and nurture relationships through social media platforms, engaging actively with content and connections in the digital landscape. Understanding user behaviour on these platforms is pivotal for organisations, facilitating consumer bonding and potentially enhancing brand advocacy. Leveraging social media, businesses in Malaysia bolster online visibility, broaden audience reach, and foster engagement, thereby strengthening relationships and promoting brand advocacy. With Malaysian users predominantly engaging with businesses on Facebook, this examines how relationship marketing influences brand advocacy within this context. Amidst limited research on relationship marketing and brand advocacy, this study scrutinises the relationship among Malaysian Facebook users. Data from 159 users interacting with various brand pages on Facebook were analysed using the partial least square method of structural equation modelling (SEM-PLS). The analysis revealed that commitment and consumer engagement significantly influence brand advocacy. This study illuminates the pivotal role of establishing and nurturing connections on social media to amplify brand advocacy. In conclusion, it delves into the dynamics of consumer-brand relationships among Malaysian Facebook users, advocating for future comparative studies across diverse social media platforms and recommending the utilisation of PLS-MGA analysis in forthcoming research endeavours.

Keywords: Brand advocacy, Facebook users, relationship marketing

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INTRODUCTION

It is noted that the consumption of social media across the globe has led to increased interest in organisations' marketing activities, especially in the demand that businesses need to address the most effective and appropriate techniques to communicate and, thus, build relationships with consumers. Relationship marketing is based on the assumption that developing and maintaining strong customer relationships will benefit the organisation, such as increased customer loyalty or brand advocacy. Customers with a strong sense of connection and engagement with a brand can actively endorse and promote it (Bilro et al., 2018). This study examines relationship marketing, which is increasingly common in social media. The novelty of this paper mostly lies in the unique contribution of brand advocacy conceptualisation in the context of social media research.

When consumers trust a company, they spread the word about it. Satisfied consumers are more likely to become advocates for the company and spread favourable word-of-mouth among new customers. Research indicates that consumer advocacy is a significant outcome of commitment (Bhati & Verma, 2020). Similar to commitment, consumer-perceived values improve their experience with a brand, particularly with intense interaction. Interaction in social media can enhance consumer engagement by maintaining existing relationships and culminating brand advocacy. The associations between relationship marketing and brand advocacy led to the development of five hypotheses for our study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The measurement items are adapted from the previous studies. An online survey was used in this study to assess the research hypotheses. A pre-test was conducted with a small group of experts (content validation) and target users (face validation). A pilot test was conducted with Facebook users who liked and followed brands that met the study's inclusion criteria. Out of 331 Facebook users approached 164 completed questionnaires were received for this study. Nonetheless, only 159 responses were used in the final data analysis due to sample outliers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

One hundred fifty-nine (159) datasets were cleaned and tested for missing values, normality, and multicollinearity. The datasets were analysed using partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). The measurement model was tested for reliability and validity (Hair et al., 2022). All indicators were at least at 0.708 and higher. Composite reliability for all constructs greater than the minimum cut-off value 0.7 ranged from 0.937 to 0.953. The average variance extracted (AVE) ranged between 0.672 and 0.773, indicating convergent validity. The discriminant validity of the measures was evaluated using the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT), where the values were less than 0.90 for all constructs except trust and satisfaction (0.905) (Henseler et al., 2015). Thus, HTMT inference is applied. Discriminant validity is demonstrated in the measurement model since HTMT's 95% bootstrap confidence interval is less than 1, confirming discriminant validity.

The hypothesis was tested using a bootstrapping approach with a 10,000 resampling rate to generate t-values, p-values, and confidence intervals. The results are presented in Table 1. Two of the five predictors of brand advocacy had a significant relationship. Commitment ($\beta = 0.223$, $t = 2.133$, $p < 0.05$, [.054, .397]) and consumer engagement ($\beta = 0.316$, $t = 2.927$, $p < 0.01$, [.129, .484]) had positive relationship with brand advocacy. Trust, satisfaction and perceived values were not significantly related to brand advocacy. The brand advocacy model is substantial, as indicated by the coefficient of determination (R^2 value) of 0.664. It was found that commitment's effect over brand advocacy (f2 =0.039) and consumer engagement over brand advocacy (f2 =0.078) was minimal. Additionally, as Shmueli et al. (2019) suggested, the PLS-Predict with a five-fold test was used to assess the model's predictive power. The present study used the commonly used default Root Mean Squared Error (RMSE), and if indicator differences (PLS-LM) are lower for all indicators, the model shows high predictive power.

Table 1
Structural model

Hypothesis	Relationship	Std. Beta	Std. Dev	t-value	p-value	PCI LL	PCI UL	f^2	VIF	Supported
H1	**TRU -> BA**	0.145	0.115	1.264	0.103	-0.043	0.333	0.015	4.081	NO
H2	**SAT -> BA**	0.136	0.109	1.247	0.106	-0.042	0.313	0.012	4.482	NO
H3	**COMM -> BA**	0.223	0.105	2.133	0.016	0.054	0.397	0.039	3.793	YES
H4	**PV -> BA**	0.103	0.108	0.957	0.169	-0.075	0.281	0.009	3.527	NO
H5	**CE -> BA**	0.316	0.108	2.927	0.002	0.129	0.484	0.078	3.805	YES

The study confirms that consumer engagement and commitment are important factors in influencing brand advocacy. Customers who commit to a brand they like and follow on social media can positively influence brand advocacy by going above and beyond their regular role to ensure the success of the organisation. Companies that use social media to connect with their customers are more likely to implement tailored marketing strategies to strengthen their relationships. However, trust, satisfaction, and perceived values do not significantly relate to brand advocacy. One possible explanation for this result could be cultural differences between countries that affected the mindset and behaviours of social media users. This study contributed to the marketing literature by identifying the factors that promote brand advocacy. Malaysia's research on brand advocacy is limited so that this study could contribute to the field of studies. Practically, this study gives practitioners insight into the critical role of establishing and nurturing connections on social media in amplifying brand advocacy. Further research should look into social media users on other platforms. PLS-MGA analysis can analyse more than two groups at a time. It is recommended that organisations uphold a high standard of relationship management to maintain enduring customer relationships.

CONCLUSION

The study's findings highlight the significance of relationship marketing in the digital world and offer insightful information on the factors that influence brand advocacy among Facebook users in Malaysia. The results emphasise that companies must actively interact with their online audience, establish enduring relationships, and cultivate a sense of commitment to promote their brands and generate good word-of-mouth.

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Synergizing Cultural Values for Digital CSR Communication

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how Indonesian cultural values contribute to CSR initiatives that shape Indonesian millennial expectations. Results, based on 14 in-depth conversations with millennials actively using Instagram and following one of the Indonesian unicorn companies (UCs), revealed that millennials expect companies to include Indonesian cultural values, such as *gotong royong* (mutual help), *tenggang rasa* (tolerance), and *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (unity in diversity) when communicating CSR through Instagram. Considering Indonesia's diversity, this study proposes that to ensure harmony, issues of ethnicity, religion, group-based interests, pornography, LGBT, and politics should be avoided when communicating CSR.

Keywords: Cultural values, digital CSR, harmony, millennial expectations, unicorn companies

INTRODUCTION

Culture significantly influences individual behaviour and business ethics, making it essential for companies to integrate local cultural values into their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategies (Pandin & Yanto, 2022). In Indonesia, values such as mutual assistance, harmony, and religiousness shape CSR communication, requiring companies like Gojek and Tokopedia to adapt their strategies accordingly (Blasco & Zølner, 2008). Despite the importance of these values, Indonesian unicorn companies (UCs) face challenges in effectively engaging millennials through CSR communication, particularly on digital platforms like Instagram (Neufeld, 2021).

Existing research on cultural values and CSR often overlooks Southeast Asia, leaving a gap in understanding how Indonesian cultural norms impact CSR, especially in relation to millennials (Esteban et al., 2017). This study addresses this gap by exploring how Indonesian UCs use Instagram for CSR communication, aiming to enhance

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theoretical developments and provide practical recommendations for engaging millennials through culturally relevant CSR strategies (Rideout & Watkins, 2019). Given Indonesian millennials' digital engagement and influence on businesses, companies must tailor their CSR communication to resonate with this key demographic (Stewart et al., 2017).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed a qualitative case study approach to explore how Indonesian cultural values influence millennial expectations of digital Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) communication among Indonesian unicorn companies (UCs). Semi-structured interviews with purposively selected 14 key informants, based on their active Instagram use and engagement with UC CSR content, were conducted to gather in-depth insights. The interview guide focused on digital CSR communication and cultural values, with interviews conducted in Bahasa Indonesia to facilitate clear expression. Data were recorded with consent, transcribed, and coded into themes aligned with the research objectives. Findings were translated into English and analyzed inductively to ensure accurate representation and deeper understanding.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research findings highlight that Indonesian unicorn companies (UCs) are expected to engage in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to benefit society and the environment, especially given their profits. During the COVID-19 pandemic, CSR initiatives often focused on philanthropy, such as vaccinations and aid distribution, reflecting the cultural value of *gotong royong* (mutual help). Informants appreciated these efforts and viewed them as demonstrating the companies' commitment to societal welfare. Additionally, UCs supported Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) with mentorship and digital tools, which were vital for businesses and the broader economy.

Despite positive perceptions, some informants raised concerns about the potential negative impacts of CSR activities, such as increased consumption driven by digital platforms, which could exceed people's purchasing power and harm traditional businesses. The research emphasizes the need for more inclusive CSR programs that consider vulnerable populations. Moreover, integrating Indonesian cultural values like *gotong royong* (mutual help), *tenggang rasa* (tolerance), and *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity) into CSR communication is crucial. UCs should ensure that their communication is transparent and culturally sensitive, fosters inclusivity, and aligns with deeply rooted societal values.

Indonesian unicorn companies (UCs) like Gojek, Traveloka, Bukalapak, Tokopedia, and OVO have embraced Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives focused on social and environmental well-being, particularly during COVID-19. Their philanthropic efforts, including vaccinations, mask donations, and aid distribution, reflect the cultural value of *gotong royong* (mutual help) and have strengthened stakeholder relationships (Jaiyeoba et al., 2021). By supporting Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and promoting digital economic growth, these companies align their core business with community needs, enhancing organizational sustainability and social benefits (Chuah et al., 2022).

Effective CSR communication is essential for engaging millennials, a key stakeholder group. While Instagram has been a primary platform, UCs should leverage other channels like Twitter and traditional media to broaden their reach. Millennials expect CSR content to be relevant and engaging, but many are unaware of UCs' CSR efforts on Instagram, suggesting a need for more compelling content (Katadata Insight Center, 2020). Incorporating Indonesian cultural values such as *gotong royong* (mutual help), *tenggang rasa* (tolerance), and *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (unity in diversity) into CSR communication is crucial for gaining millennial support. Focusing on harmony and empowerment while avoiding sensitive topics will help UCs build stronger relationships and adapt to the digital age (Chatzopoulou & de Kiewiet, 2021). Moreover, this study supports the study of Blasco and Zølner (2008), in which in making social responsibility and ethics, the cultural values must be locally adapted by the companies. Values and practices regarding culture influence the practical implementation of CSR at the individual and organizational levels (Stahl, 2024).

CONCLUSION

This study explored the role of culture in developing millennials' expectations of Indonesian unicorn companies when communicating CSR through Instagram. Results suggest such values—*gotong royong, tenggang rasa*, and *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, make messages more relatable to millennials and should be considered when designing, implementing, and communicating CSR. In the interest of maintaining harmony, issues of ethnic groups, religions, race, pornography, LGBT, and politics should be seen as divisive and best avoided. In sum, we provide a foundation for Indonesian unicorn companies' CSR communications via Instagram to identify more closely with the millennial cultural values practised daily.

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Navigating Complex Networks: Stakeholder Engagement Strategies in Technology-Driven Humanitarian Response—A Case Study of Sky Volunteer Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Sky Volunteer, an initiative by the Synersia Foundation, leverages drone technology for Indonesia's humanitarian and disaster response efforts. The research aims to identify best practices and challenges in stakeholder management within humanitarian drone operations. The study investigates mechanisms of stakeholder identification, prioritisation, communication channels, and strategies for fostering trust and collaboration using a qualitative approach through key stakeholder interviews. Preliminary findings reveal Sky Volunteer's multi-faceted engagement strategy, tailored to each stakeholder group's needs. The organisation employs traditional and digital communication channels, emphasising transparency and accountability through regular updates and feedback. The study concludes with recommendations for enhancing stakeholder engagement in humanitarian drone operations, including more inclusive practices, integration of advanced communication technologies, and continuous feedback loops. These findings offer valuable insights for NGOs and organisations seeking to optimise stakeholder engagement strategies in complex operational environments. The research contributes to understanding effective stakeholder management in humanitarian technology applications, particularly drone-assisted disaster response efforts.

Keywords: Disaster response, humanitarian drone, NGO, sky volunteer, stakeholder engagement

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INTRODUCTION

Integrating drone technology into humanitarian response efforts presents opportunities and challenges for stakeholder engagement and communication (Nair et al., 2024). Drones enhance situational awareness, data collection, and resource distribution, but their implementation requires careful consideration of legal, ethical, and social factors and effective stakeholder engagement (Musdalifah et al., 2023; Santoso, 2021). Sky Volunteer, an initiative of the Synersia Foundation, uses drone technology in Indonesia for humanitarian and disaster response, facing unique challenges due to the country's geographical diversity and frequent natural disasters (Pinora et al., 2024). This study aims to identify best practices and challenges in stakeholder management, focusing on stakeholder identification, prioritisation, communication channels, and strategies for fostering trust and collaboration. Analysing Sky Volunteer's multi-faceted engagement strategy provides insights into effective practices for building and maintaining stakeholder relationships in technology-driven humanitarian operations.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach to examine Sky Volunteer's stakeholder engagement and communication strategies in Indonesia. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders selected through purposive sampling, focusing on stakeholder identification, communication strategies, and challenges (Pitrolino et al., 2024). Sky Volunteer's internal reports and public documents were analysed to provide context and triangulate the data, as recommended by Wellens and Jegers (2014). Thematic analysis identified themes, with member checking and peer debriefing ensuring validity (Nowell et al., 2017). Ethical guidelines were followed, and informed consent was obtained to ensure confidentiality and respect for participants' contributions (Manti & Licari, 2018).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of Sky Volunteer's stakeholder engagement strategies in technology-driven humanitarian response reveals a multi-faceted approach tailored to diverse stakeholder needs, including government entities, beneficiaries, financial contributors, and volunteers. This approach underscores the importance of effective stakeholder management in complex environments and demonstrates a strong commitment to social responsibility. Sky Volunteer's use of drone technology for humanitarian and disaster response efforts highlights its clear positioning in social responsibility.

Stakeholder Engagement Strategies

Sky Volunteer employs a comprehensive stakeholder identification process that aligns with best humanitarian engagement practices. This approach adapts to each operation's context and the evolving needs of affected communities, reflecting a strong commitment to social responsibility. The process involves local communities and government agencies like BNPB and BRIN, integrating diverse stakeholder perspectives and emphasising top-down management. Table 1 summarises the stakeholder identification and prioritisation mechanisms used by Sky Volunteer.

Table 1
Stakeholder identification and prioritisation

Stakeholder Group	Identification Mechanism	Prioritisation Criteria
Local Communities	Community surveys, focus groups	Immediate needs, vulnerability
Government Agencies	Formal collaborations, regulatory compliance	Strategic importance, resource availability
Financial Contributors	Donor databases, fundraising events	Contribution amount, frequency
Volunteers	Volunteer registration, skill assessment	Skill relevance, availability

Table 1 highlights Sky Volunteer's comprehensive stakeholder identification process, which involves various mechanisms tailored to each stakeholder group. For instance, local communities are identified through community surveys and focus groups, while government agencies are engaged through formal collaborations and regulatory compliance.

Technology Integration and Capacity Building

Sky Volunteer uses drone technology for aerial mapping and surveillance, enhancing disaster mitigation and showcasing innovation. This approach highlights their commitment to community resilience and reducing disaster impact, a key aspect of social responsibility. The organisation employs diverse communication channels and tools tailored to various stakeholder groups, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Communication channels and tools

Stakeholder Group	Communication Channels	Tools
Local Communities	Community meetings, social media	WhatsApp groups, Facebook pages
Government Agencies	Formal meetings, email	Official reports, memos
Financial Contributors	Email updates, annual reports	Donor newsletters, financial statements
Volunteers	Training sessions, online forums	WhatsApp groups, Facebook pages

Table 2 shows Sky Volunteer's multi-faceted communication approach. Local communities are engaged through community meetings and social media, while government agencies are communicated with through formal meetings and email.

Challenges, Transparency, and Adaptations

Sky Volunteer enhances transparency and accountability through regular updates and feedback mechanisms. These mechanisms are crucial for maintaining trust in humanitarian operations and aligning with social responsibility principles. These mechanisms keep stakeholders informed and involved in decision-making. The organisation employs several strategies to foster trust and collaboration, as detailed in Table 3.

Table 3
Strategies for fostering trust and collaboration

Strategy	Description	Stakeholder Group
Transparency	Regular updates, feedback mechanisms	All stakeholders
Accountability	Clear reporting, audits	Government agencies, financial contributors
Community Engagement	Participatory approaches, community events	Local communities
Capacity Building	Training programs, skill development	Volunteers, local communities

Table 3 shows that Sky Volunteer emphasises transparency and accountability through regular updates and feedback mechanisms and uses participatory approaches and training programs to foster community engagement and capacity building, all crucial for maintaining stakeholders' trust.

CONCLUSION

The study on Sky Volunteer's use of drone technology in Indonesia's humanitarian efforts highlights the importance of a multi-faceted stakeholder engagement strategy. This approach effectively addresses the needs of local communities, government agencies, and international partners through traditional and digital communication channels, reflecting a strong commitment to social responsibility. Key strengths include transparency, accountability, and regular communication, which are crucial for building trust and collaboration. Despite challenges, Sky Volunteer's methods emphasise inclusive engagement practices and advanced communication technologies. Recommendations include adopting inclusive practices and leveraging technology for real-time information sharing to optimise stakeholder management in technology-driven humanitarian contexts.

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Factors Influencing the Intention to Continuously Use DouYin: A Study Among Media Content Producers in China

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ABSTRACT

In the ever-evolving landscape of Web 3.0, driven by technological advancements such as 5G, artificial intelligence, and virtual reality, Douyin has played a pivotal role in social media platforms, especially in China. Previous studies have mainly focused on the experiences of general Douyin users, overlooking the perspectives of content media producers. In response, this study delves into the factors that continuously boost the intention to use Douyin, especially among media content producers. Using the Uses and Gratifications Theory and the Theory of Planned Behaviour, this study conducted a web survey with 421 respondents. The results indicate that motivational factors (information-seeking, self-expression, entertainment, and financial incentives), and belief factors (attitude and perceived behavioural control) significantly affected the intention to continue using Douyin. However, socialisation did not have a significant positive effect towards the intention. These findings have practical implications for Douyin-centric investigations, studies involving media content producers, and the broader context of Chinese social media exploration.

Keywords: China, Douyin, intention to continuously use, media content producers, Theory of Planned Behaviour, Uses and Gratifications Theory

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a global increase in Internet media users, demonstrating its expanding impacts towards global countries. Given the total of 5.40 billion Internet users worldwide, with 1.03 billion Internet users from China, among whom 97% engage with social media platforms, online social interaction has become an integral part of people's lives (Firth et al., 2019). The advancement of the Internet, particularly during the Web 3.0 Era, has revolutionised communication and information exchange

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by eliminating time and location constraints. It allows for seamless interaction and access to information from anywhere in the world at any given time (Attaran, 2023). This digital revolution has increased the demand for diverse social interaction tools, leading to the rise of popular social media platforms such as Douyin in China.

Douyin, a short-form, music-based social video application, has gained over 800 million users in China by 2022 (Scherr & Wang, 2021). This application permits users to produce and post video content of 30 to 60 seconds. It also allows users to watch, share and comment on videos. Unlike traditional media, Douyin enables users to create and access user-generated content, making it a significant platform for general users and content producers (Pratiwi et al., 2021). Hence, it is essential to examine the factors influencing users' intentions to use Douyin, especially among media content producers.

The study aims to fill a gap in existing research by investigating the motivations and beliefs that drive media content producers' intention to use Douyin, particularly in China. The study utilises the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and the Uses and Gratifications Theory (U&G) to develop its theoretical framework. It includes motivational factors such as information-seeking, self-expression, entertainment, socialisation, and economic benefits, as well as belief factors like attitude and perceived behavioural control in predicting media content producers' intentions.

The research questions include:

RQ1: Do motivational factors (i.e., information-seeking, self-expression, entertainment, socialisation, and economic benefits) have a significant effect on the intention to use Douyin continuously?

RQ2: Do belief factors (i.e., attitude and perceived behavioural control) significantly affect the intention to use Douyin continuously?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A web survey was conducted, and purposive sampling was employed to gather 421 respondents. Given the study's objective to examine the factors that influence the intention of Chinese media content producers to continue using Douyin, the questionnaire was distributed via the Douyin platform. The questionnaire contained three sections. The first section included a filtering question to ensure respondents were Douyin users and media content producers. The second section included demographic variables such as gender, age, education level, and the frequency of using Douyin. The third section consisted of 41 items on eight variables (i.e., information-seeking behaviour, self-expression, entertainment needs, social behaviour needs, economic benefits, attitude, perceived behavioural control, and intention to use continuously) using a Five-point Likert Scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the data analysis in Table 1 unveil several key findings that provide significant insights into the factors influencing media content producers' intentions to use the Douyin platform continuously. First, the study revealed that motivational factors, including information-seeking, self-expression, entertainment, and economic benefits, affect the intention to use Douyin. However, the study findings confirmed that the absence of socialisation leads to the intention among media content producers to use the Douyin platform. These findings offer detailed insights into the complexities of media content producers' behaviour towards Douyin's social media platforms. Paulino and Gomes (2021) underscored the significance of the platform's social accountability, highlighting the need for transparent and responsible practices in engaging with and serving the platform's users. It relies heavily on the accuracy of the information disseminated by media content producers to the users within the platform.

Table 1
Direct effect hypotheses

Research hypotheses		Beta (β)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1	IS->ITCU	0.085	0.083	0.029	2.923	0.003	Accepted
H2	SE->ITCU	0.143	0.145	0.053	2.690	0.007	Accepted
H3	ENT->ITCU	0.150	0.147	0.046	3.244	0.001	Accepted
H4	SOC->ITCU	0.012	0.008	0.034	0.336	0.737	Rejected
H5	EB->ITCU	0.197	0.200	0.050	3.927	0.000	Accepted
H6	ATT->ITCU	0.275	0.272	0.081	3.396	0.001	Accepted
H7	PBC->ITCU	0.149	0.147	0.051	2.945	0.003	Accepted

Note. *p = 0.05, **p < 0.05, ***p < 0.001
IS = information-seeking; ITCU = intention to continuous use; SE = self-expression; ENT = entertainment; SOC = socialisation; EB = economic benefits ATT = attitude; PBC = perceived behavioural control

CONCLUSION

This study explores factors influencing the media content producers' intention to continue using the Douyin platform, focusing on their motivations and beliefs in China. Producers who find Douyin entertaining and perceive financial benefits are more likely to continue using it, with past positive experiences reinforcing future use of the social media platform. However, social interaction does not significantly affect their intentions, signifying that producers may prioritise other platform features. The findings provide insights for improving Douyin, suggesting enhancements in features such as information-seeking, self-expression, and entertainment, as these drive the continuance usage of the Douyin platform. In addition, Douyin could also offer more incentives, such as revenue-sharing or sponsorship opportunities, to encourage high-quality content production of the short videos. However, the study has limitations, including using non-probability sampling, which limits its generalisability. Future studies could address these limitations by employing probability sampling, examining producers from other regions, and exploring mediating factors that affect producers' intentions. Additionally, future research could explore the influence of Douyin updates on content creators' usage intentions by comparing factors affecting both media content producers and general users to gain a more comprehensive understanding of users' behaviour on the social media platform.

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Director-led Sustainability Communication in Companies: A Content Analysis of Director Forewords in SRI-KEHATI Indexed Companies' 2023 Sustainability Reports

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ABSTRACT

Corporate sustainability has become a critical concern for businesses striving to demonstrate their social and environmental responsibility. One way to communicate corporate sustainability is through sustainability reports, which often begin with guidance from the company's director. This study investigates the sustainability communication strategies that companies employ, focusing on the directors' forewords in their sustainability reports. These companies are listed on the SRI-KEHATI index, a stock index that evaluates the performance of companies in Indonesia based on their environmental, social, and governance. This research will use quantitative content analysis to identify and categorise sustainability themes based on Landrum's framework, encompassing economic orientation, business orientation, systemic change, and regenerative and co-evolutionary approaches. The study aims to identify the dominant themes in corporate sustainability communication, potentially emphasising economic and business aspects while exploring the extent of awareness regarding broader environmental issues.

Keywords: Corporate communication, corporate sustainability, ESG, sustainability communication, sustainability report

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INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, there has been a significant rise in non-financial reporting, including sustainability reports, attracting attention from various institutions and organisations. This comprehensive form of corporate reporting has become increasingly prevalent (Herzig & Schaltegger, 2011). These reports improve public relations, credibility, investor relations, financial disclosure, stakeholder perception, and company image, increasing the company's success and reputation (Osman & Kadri, 2022).

In Indonesia, the trend of sustainability disclosure, such as sustainability reports, is generally low; however, the quality is increasing yearly (Harymawan et al., 2020). Indonesia is now in the initial phases of implementing disclosure, as it's required for financial service institutions, issuers, and public enterprises by the Financial Service Authority Regulation Number 51/POJK.03/2017 (Utami et al., 2024).

As companies are encouraged to adopt sustainability reporting as a key mechanism for engaging with stakeholders (Egbunike et al., 2018), understanding the message sent by the corporation through their sustainability report is becoming essential. The director forewords are among the important components of these reports because they offer a high-level overview of the business' sustainability plan, demonstrating the leadership's commitment and aligning with organisational objectives.

Despite their significance, there is a gap in understanding how directors' forewords communicate sustainability strategies and how they influence business commitment to environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles. ESG companies are thought to have a necessary concern for the environment and society by developing standards for routine operations and possible investment opportunities (Rath et al., 2020). This study aims to fill this gap by examining how these forewords communicate sustainability efforts, providing insights to help businesses improve their communication techniques, and showing the commitment to ESG.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research will analyse the director's foreword in a sustainability report published in 2023 by 26 SRI-KEHATI-indexed companies. The SRI-KEHATI index includes companies that have implemented Sustainable and Responsible Investment (SRI) principles as well as ESG standards (Yayasan KEHATI, n.d.). The index's performance is undoubtedly good, and it can compete with other major exchange indices (Akbar & Murdiyanto, 2023).

The methodology used in this research is content analysis, which, according to Landrum and Ohsowski (2018), has been used by others to study corporate sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) reports. It is a type of textual analysis that studies the messages or characteristics of a text to interpret meaning. In this study, content analysis of director foreword from companies' sustainability reports is a technique for gathering data. Guthrie and Abeysekera (2006) say that it involves codifying information into pre-defined categories to derive patterns in the presentation and reporting of information.

This research will identify and categorise sustainability themes based on Landrum's framework: Compliance, business orientation, systemic change, regenerative, and co-evolutionary approaches using quantitative content analysis (Landrum & Ohsowski, 2018).

Each paragraph will be coded into a predetermined theme category to find the main theme of the director's foreword by counting the categories that appear most frequently in the document.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The SRI-KEHATI index 2024 includes 26 companies. The list covers a wide range of industries, including mining, plantations (palm oil), automotive, banking, technology and media, food and beverage, cement, livestock and animal feed, infrastructure, pharmaceuticals, healthcare, telecommunications, consumer goods, and construction. The industries most represented on the list are banking, automotive, mining, and plantations.

The Sustainability Report has been analysed utilising several standards for their report. Most of them are using the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standard. GRI is an independent international organisation that helps businesses and other organisations account for their impacts by providing a global common language for communicating those impacts (Global Reporting Initiative, n.d.). Most companies in this data also comply with the Peraturan Otoritas Jasa Keuangan (POJK) No. 51/POJK.03/2017 and Surat Edaran Otoritas Jasa Keuangan (SEOJK) No. 16/SEOJK.04/2021, which are national regulations in Indonesia that require listed companies to implement sustainable finance and follow technical guidelines for sustainability reporting. Besides the GRI, POJK, and SEOJK, several standards are being utilised based on different industrial standards for sustainability reporting.

Some key findings are interesting to point out based on the data collected, categorised, and analysed. First, the systemic theme is dominant. According to Landrum and Ohsowski, the systemic theme in stage 3 reflects intermediate sustainability. It means that firms work with others, integrating the full realm of sustainability activities, which are environmental, economic, and social, to address systemic change. In the systemic stage, the understanding of sustainability is about doing better, and the corporation begins to look externally in defining sustainability. There is an understanding that business is part of the larger industry, and to create systemic change, the corporation in the industry needs to work together as a community.

The theme absent from the director forewords from the 26 companies is co-evolutionary. This absence indicates that none of the companies are at the highest level of sustainability, where they view their operations as part of a symbiotic relationship with the natural world. Landrum and Ohsowski define the co-evolutionary as the highest stage, reflecting strong sustainability. In this stage, firms understand the place of humans, corporations, and societies in partnership with the natural world. The orientation of this stage is more to ecology, where the understanding of sustainability is that earth's beings are in a mutually enhancing and beneficial relationship.

There is variation across industries in the percentages of the themes. Certain industries, such as banking and automotive, tend to have higher systemic percentages. It somehow reflects the specific industry's challenges and the opportunity to integrate sustainability into their business model. However, in the mining industry, the themes are more diverse, with a higher occurrence of compliance and business-centred themes. It reflects the pressure from the regulation and the industry's environmental impact.

CONCLUSION

This research finds that the Indonesian companies listed in the SRI-KEHATI index 2024 tend to prioritise the economy and business-centred orientation in the director's foreword on their sustainability reports. It reflects the companies' primary focus on financial and operational performance in meeting social and environmental responsibilities. However, there is variation in the extent to which these companies integrate sustainability into their business practices, indicating their commitment to ESG principles, but at varying levels of depth.

On the other hand, the study also revealed that awareness or emphasis on broader environmental issues is still limited among these companies. This finding suggests that while these companies have recognised the importance of sustainability, there is still room to expand their focus to a more comprehensive sustainability approach.

This study provides important insights for other companies in developing their sustainability communication strategies by providing practical guidance to improve the effectiveness of such communications. In addition, this study contributes to the CSR communication and ESG literature by highlighting the importance of adopting a more holistic and integrative long-term sustainability strategy.

For future research, it is required to investigate whether the message expressed in the director's foreword is mirrored in the report and backed by adequate evidence. It is also necessary to ensure that the company's sustainability statement aligns with its sustainability practices.

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Dynamics of Interethnic and Interreligious Relations: Building Harmony (Case Study of Chinese and Non-Chinese Ethnic Group in Tangerang, Indonesia)

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ABSTRACT

Various conflicts influence the presence of the Chinese minority in Indonesia. There are many negative stereotypes attached to Indonesian Chinese, which causes poor relationships with non-Chinese ethnic groups. However, in Tangerang, Indonesia, the Chinese ethnic group called Cina Benteng; has lived in harmony with local people who are non-Chinese. This study aims to uncover the strategies used by Cina Benteng and non-Chinese ethnic groups in the Tangerang area to negotiate their identities to maintain harmonious relations in society. This study utilises a qualitative approach employing the case study method. The data collection involves in-depth interviews, observations, and focus group discussions (FGDs), while the data analysis techniques include pattern matching. The informants in this study are religious figures, cultural figures, village heads, and residents in the Tangerang area. The results showed that the Cina Benteng and non-Chinese ethnic groups in Tangerang, which are Sunda ethnicity, are able to negotiate their socio-cultural identities in the form of ethnic and religious identities. The intercultural communication competencies possessed by the Cina Benteng and Sunda ethnic groups create a multicultural, harmonious, and inclusive community group. The city government and local community leaders also have a significant role in maintaining harmonious relations between ethnicities in Tangerang.

Keywords: Cina Benteng, harmonious society, identity negotiation, interethnic relations, interreligious relations

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INTRODUCTION

There has been a longstanding history of resentment towards the ethnic Chinese community in Indonesia, characterised by unfair beliefs and negative stereotypes that persist to this day. Historical records showed that Chinese ethnicities in Indonesia have become victims of inter-ethnic conflicts since

Indonesia's independence in 1945 (Hidayat & Farid, 2021; Nurrahmi & Putra, 2019). In the Chinese ethnic settlement area in Tangerang, Banten, Indonesia, the Chinese ethnic group known as Cina Benteng; has displayed remarkable adaptability and identity negotiation, fostering harmony and tolerance with diverse ethnic and religious groups. Establishing a reputation for minimal conflict and harmonious living (Hidayat & Farid, 2021; Malik et al., 2022).

In the given framework, many elements require negotiation by both parties to establish harmony. During the process of negotiating identity, individuals aim to uphold and affirm their identities through interaction (Compton-Lilly et al., 2017; Dorjee & Ting-Toomey, 2020; Eko & Putranto, 2019, 2021; Ting-Toomey, 2017). In multicultural settings, it is important to flexibly negotiate one's socio-cultural and personal identity across different social boundaries (Blair & Liu, 2020; Ting-Toomey, 2017). Interactions in multicultural society lead to the emergence of dual or bicultural/biracial identities, where individuals identify with two different ethnicities. This identity results from mixed marriages between races, ethnicities, or religions and is shaped by complex and layered life experiences (Compton-Lilly et al., 2017; Hussain & Muhamad, 2022; Janík, 2017; Kim & Meares, 2024).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study employs a qualitative approach utilising a case study method to examine the dynamics of inter-religious and ethnic relations between the Cina Benteng and non-Chinese ethnic groups in the Tangerang area. Data was collected in July 2024 through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and direct observation of ethnic Chinese residential areas to acquire extensive data on the interactions between the Cina Benteng and non-Chinese ethnic groups. The study involved religious and cultural figures, local officials, community members, and representatives of the Tangerang City Interfaith Harmony Forum.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

History of Cina Benteng

According to research data, it is estimated that around 1407 Chinese people settled at the mouth of the Cisadane River. Over time, this Chinese ethnic group integrated and intermarried with local inhabitants, giving rise to a generation of Peranakans known as Cina Benteng that communicate in regional languages such as Betawi and Sundanese. The Cina Benteng represents a group that has deeply assimilated into the local culture and considers itself an essential part of the Indonesian nation. Unlike the more visible Chinese population known for their business success, the Cina Benteng are often unfairly stereotyped as lower-class citizens by many Indonesians (Muhammad et al., 2023; Sugihartati, 2019).

Examining the Negotiation of Religious Identity Among Cina Benteng and Non-Chinese Ethnic Group

The data shows that the people of Cina Benteng strongly follow Confucian teachings, which emphasise love for others. These teachings guide their daily lives, shaping their interactions with others. It leads to conceptualising local wisdom values into religious values known as "tepo seliro", a Javanese concept emphasising tolerance's importance. Meanwhile, non-Chinese ethnic groups who are Muslim adhere to the principle of Rahmatan Lil'Alamin, which includes Islamic teachings of peace, prosperity, and tranquillity for all individuals in the universe (Ulva et al., 2021).

Examining the Negotiation of Ethnic Identity Among Cina Benteng and Non-Chinese Ethnic Group

Non-Chinese people living in the Tangerang area are mainly from the Sundanese ethnic groups. The Sundanese people in Tangerang valued "Someah", which shows their friendly and open attitude towards others. To embrace their identity as Sundanese citizens open to newcomers, non-Chinese ethnic groups incorporate Mandarin words into their daily communication. The daily lives of the Cina Benteng are also influenced by various local cultures, with the use of the Sundanese language in their interactions. The diverse forms of art in the Tangerang area also reflect the integration of Chinese elements into traditional arts, showing that non-ethnic Chinese groups embrace foreign cultural influences and express them through original cultural arts in their region. As a result, the unique arts of Tangerang are closely linked to Chinese culture.

Through the process of identity negotiation, the Cina Benteng in the Tangerang area developed a biracial identity, facilitated in part by intermarriage between Cina Benteng and non-Chinese ethnic groups, constructing the Cina Benteng identity as Peranakan Chinese, descendants of black-skinned Chinese, their lack of fluency in Mandarin, and their fluency in Sundanese. As a result, they construct personalised identities that distinguish them from other ethnic Chinese residents in Indonesia. It demonstrates the ability of Cina Benteng residents to negotiate their socio-cultural identities (Malik et al., 2022).

The same occurred for non-Chinese ethnic groups in the Tangerang area. They established their identities as welcoming Sundanese Tangerang residents who embrace and respect diversity. This identity sets them apart from Sundanese ethnic residents in other regions. This discovery illustrates that both Cina Benteng and non-Chinese ethnic groups acquire effective communication skills through their daily interactions within their multicultural environment (Dorjee & Ting-Toomey, 2020). The Tangerang City Government, along with religious and cultural leaders, has played a key role in integrating Cina Benteng as valued members of the local community.

CONCLUSION

Identity negotiation entails the dialectical process that occurs when members of minority groups enter a culturally distinct society and negotiate their identities through verbal and non-verbal communication. This process was evident in the interactions of Cina Benteng with non-Chinese ethnic groups in the Tangerang area. They negotiated through verbal communication in Sundanese and non-verbal adoption of Sundanese cultural practices in their daily lives. The integration of the Cina Benteng and non-Chinese ethnic groups is furthered by intermarriage, which gives rise to the Peranakan Chinese with a dual racial identity. This unique identity eases the acceptance of differences and facilitates learning among Tangerang residents. This phenomenon, not commonly observed in Indonesia, stands as a symbol of inclusivity and mutual understanding.

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Islamic and Conventional Financial Institutions: Emerging Market Perspectives on Corporate Social Responsibility

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ABSTRACT

Concerns about corporate social responsibility (CSR) have emerged for several reasons related to the change in the CSR agenda and international compliance. This study presents new evidence by investigating the perceptions of CSR practices among executives of Islamic and conventional financial institutions in Malaysia, a prominent financial hub and partner for Middle Eastern, Central Asian, and European markets. The paper employs a mixed methods approach, using a survey questionnaire covering 27 Islamic and 20 conventional financial institutions and probit regression to test the effect of executives' attributes on the importance of different elements of their perceived CSR. The findings challenge a prevailing CSR view that underplays the importance of values and responsibilities. Overall, the results show that executives pay close attention to ethical considerations, contrary to longstanding prior results. Findings reflect stakeholders' interest in corporate environmental, social, and governance practices, prompting businesses to align with long-term social and ethical values beyond financial returns. This paper adds to the literature on CSR in financial institutions, providing insight into the impact of executives' attributes. It provides a clear understanding of CSR in Islamic and conventional financial institutions grounded in the framework of stakeholder theory.

Keywords: Corporate social responsibility, developing countries, emerging markets, executives' demographics, financial institutions, Islamic finance

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INTRODUCTION

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has gained prominence due to shifts in the CSR agenda and international compliance, impacting investor confidence (Abd Rahman et al., 2011; Brogi & Lagasio, 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic further emphasized aligning with environmental, social, and governance (ESG) practices for long-term value. Islamic financial institutions (IFIs), driven by Islamic ethical principles, have shown significant potential in promoting CSR (Aribi & Arun, 2015). However, academic research on CSR in IFIs remains limited. This study addresses this gap by examining CSR practices in Malaysia, a key financial hub, and aims to contribute to CSR development within Shari'ah principles.

This study surveys 27 Islamic and 20 conventional financial institutions (CFIs) in Malaysia to assess CSR understanding among executives, the impact of demographics, and motivations for CSR engagement. Unlike Carroll's (1979) CSR pyramid, which prioritizes economic responsibilities, this study suggests ethics as paramount, challenging Visser's (2008) view that ethical priorities are lower in emerging markets.

Exploring CSR perceptions within Malaysia's financial sector addresses a critical knowledge gap for aligning with global sustainability goals. CSR has evolved from shareholder value to broader social, economic, legal, ethical, and environmental responsibilities (Carroll, 1991; Dhingra & Mittal, 2014; Kumar & Srivastava, 2022; Sarkar & Searcy, 2016). This shift, rooted in stakeholder theory, is especially relevant in Islamic finance, where CSR reflects values of social good, governance, and environmental stewardship (Di Bella & Al-Fayoumi, 2016; Freeman, 1984; Platonova et al., 2018).

Studies indicate that growing CSR awareness in Malaysia is driven by government initiatives (Abdul Hamid, 2004; Ahmad & Rahim, 2005; Broadstock et al., 2020). This study applies Carroll's (1979, 1991) CSR model to identify key elements of CSR and examine its applicability to IFIs in an emerging market context while testing the effect of demographic factors on ethical standpoints. The study conjectures the following hypotheses:

H_{01}: The perception of how CSR affects institutional performance differs by the gender of the executive.

H_{02}: The perception of how CSR affects institutional performance differs significantly by the age of the executive.

H_{03}: The perception of how CSR affects institutional performance differs significantly by ethnic group.

H_{04}: The perception of how CSR affects institutional performance differs significantly by religious beliefs.

H_{05}: The perception of how CSR affects institutional performance differs significantly by work experience.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The survey explored CSR attitudes among executives at IFIs and CFIs in Malaysia, sampling from Bank Negara Malaysia's licensed institutions, including Islamic banks, takaful companies, conventional banks, and insurance companies. Out of 540 distributed questionnaires, a 67% response rate resulted in 360 returns. The anonymous survey used a Five-point Likert Scale across 16 items in three sections: attitudes towards Carroll's CSR pyramid, motivations for CSR engagement, and the influence of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, and work experience. Table 1 summarizes descriptive statistics. Four probit regression models are applied to economic, social, ethical, and philanthropic responsibility to test the association between respective perceptions of four CSR elements (Carroll, 1979, 1991, 1999, 2000, 2016) and executive-specific characteristics (Table 2).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results reveal that ethical responsibilities are prioritized over philanthropic, legal, and economic responsibilities, with "increasing community trust and support" and "enhancing public image and reputation" as key CSR motivations. At the same time, factors like "government pressure", "international regulations", and "NGO pressure" are less influential. Over 90% of respondents emphasize trust and public image, whereas legal and economic responsibilities rank lower. Ethical and philanthropic duties, including equal employee treatment and avoiding activities like alcohol and gambling, are highly valued.

Gender significantly affects CSR orientation: males in IFIs prioritize legal responsibilities ($p<0.05$) and both legal and economic responsibilities in CFIs ($p<0.01$). Younger executives (<30) focus on economic responsibilities, while older respondents (>51) emphasize legal ones. Ethnicity also impacts CSR priorities, with economic ($p<0.01$) and legal ($p<0.05$) responsibilities more significant in CFIs. Religion influences CSR views, especially economic and legal responsibilities across IFIs and CFIs ($p<0.01$ and $p<0.05$).

Table 1
Corporate social responsibility score (mean, ranking, and standard deviation)

	Islamic financial institutions			**Conventional financial institutions**			**t-test differences in means**
	Mean (ranking)	**Std. Dev.**	**95% confidence interval**	**Mean (Ranking)**	**Std. Dev.**	**95% confidence interval**	
Economic responsibility	12.25 (4)	2.51	11.88 to 12.61	12.45 (4)	2.51	12.08 to 12.83	0.44
Legal responsibility	14.91 (3)	2.44	14.56 to 15.27	14.59 (3)	2.43	14.22 to 14.95	0.20
Ethical responsibility	15.92 (1)	2.55	15.56 to 16.29	15.67 (1)	2.44	15.30 to 16.03	0.33
Philanthropic responsibility	15.83 (2)	2.60	15.45 to 16.20	15.55 (2)	2.52	15.17 to 15.92	0.30

Note. Std. Dev. = Standard deviation

Table 2
Probit regression models

	Islamic financial institutions (IFIs)								Conventional financial institutions (CFIs)							
	Model (1) Economic		Model (2) Legal		Model (3) Ethical		Model (4) Philanthropic		Model (1) Economic		Model (2) Legal		Model (3) Ethical		Model (4) Philanthropic	
Intercept	**B**	**Sig.**	**B**	**Sig.**	**B**	**Sig.**	**B**	**Sig.**	**B**	**Sig.**	**B**	**Sig.**	**B**	**Sig.**	**B**	
Gen_{ij}	1.82	.13	6.53**	.01	.22	.24	2.40	.38	5.52**	.00	3.89*	.03	1.59	.65	5.71	.09
Age_{ij}	1.60	.19	.53	.49	.44	.42	.41	.50	.63	.18	.29*	.04	.20	.15	.09*	.03
$Ethn_{ij}$	.53	.15	72.17	.99	.15	.41	16.53	1.00	1.42	.37	.42	.17	.64	.57	1.87	.64
Rlg_{ij}	.77	.28	.00	.99	6.49	.39	1.39	1.00	.75	.30	2.38	.13	.77	.69	.84	.83
Exp_{ij}	.55**	.01	1.93	.24	2.93	.10	3.40	.15	.77	.27	1.72	.17	4.94*	.03	6.29**	.01
Own_i	1.28	.62	10.56	.16	.22	.13	17.76	1.00	.71	.37	.83	.75	.68	.71	.48	.42
No. of obs.	186		186		186		186		174		174		174			174
Pseudo R^2	.186		.333		.163		.260		.221		.138		.192			.277

Note. *p<0.05; **p<0.01

$$\mathrm{EconResp}_{ij} = \partial_1 + \partial_2\mathrm{Gen}_{ij} + \partial_3\mathrm{Age}_{ij} + \partial_4\mathrm{Ethn}_{ij} + \partial_5\mathrm{Rlg}_{ij} + \partial_6\mathrm{Exp}_{ij} + \partial_7\mathrm{Own}_{ij} + \varepsilon_{ij} \quad (1)$$
$$\mathrm{LegResp}_{ij} = \beta_1 + \beta_2\mathrm{Gen}_{ij} + \beta_3\mathrm{Age}_{ij} + \beta_4\mathrm{Ethn}_{ij} + \beta_5\mathrm{Rlg}_{ij} + \beta_6\mathrm{Exp}_{ij} + \beta_7\mathrm{Own}_{ij} + \varepsilon_{ij} \quad (2)$$
$$\mathrm{EthicResp}_{ij} = \gamma_1 + \gamma_2\mathrm{Gen}_{ij} + \gamma_3\mathrm{Age}_{ij} + \gamma_4\mathrm{Ethn}_{ij} + \gamma_5\mathrm{Rlg}_{ij} + \gamma_6\mathrm{Exp}_{ij} + \gamma_7\mathrm{Own}_{ij} + \varepsilon_{ij} \quad (3)$$
$$\mathrm{PhilResp}_{ij} = \delta_1 + \delta_2\mathrm{Gen}_{ij} + \delta_3\mathrm{Age}_{ij} + \delta_4\mathrm{Ethn}_{ij} + \delta_5\mathrm{Rlg}_{ij} + \delta_6\mathrm{Exp}_{ij} + \delta_7\mathrm{Own}_{ij} + \varepsilon_{ij} \quad (4)$$

Where each dependent variable is measured as the mean score for the relevant questions (economic/legal/ethical/philanthropic) for respondent *i* at firm *j*; Gen_{ij} = A dummy variable that equals one (1) if respondent *i* at firm *j* is a male and zero (0) otherwise; Age_{ij} = A dummy variable that represents age group of below 30, 31–40, 41–50, and above 51; $Ethn_{ij}$ = A dummy variable that represents ethnicity groups of Malay, Chinese, and Indian; Rlg_{ij} = A dummy that represents the religion of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and other; Exp_{ij}= A dummy variable that represents work experience of ≤ 5, 6-10, 11-15, 16–20, and ≥ 21 years; Own_{ij} = A control variable representing ownership structure and is measured as a dummy variable that equals one (1) if the firm *i*, of respondent *j*, is dominated by foreign investment and zero (0) otherwise.; B = coefficient; Sig. = t-statistic ; Obs. = number of observations

Work experience does not significantly impact ethical and philanthropic responsibilities in IFIs yet is associated with economic responsibility in CFIs ($p<0.05$), with less experienced respondents more inclined toward economic aspects.

Probit regression (Table 2) shows gender and work experience as significant predictors for CSR views, especially in CFIs, where males rate economic and legal responsibilities higher than females. Among IFIs, gender distinctions are primarily noted in legal responsibilities. Younger and Malay executives in IFIs prioritize economic aspects, whereas Indian executives emphasize legal ones. In CFIs, executives of diverse ethnicities focus on economic responsibilities. Religion affects IFI executives' focus, with Muslims emphasizing economic aspects, Christians legal, and Hindus ethical. Overall, IFI executives slightly prefer economic dimensions, while CFI executives lean toward ethical and philanthropic priorities.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this paper show that executives in IFIs and CFIs prioritize ethical and philanthropic responsibilities, challenging Carroll's (1979, 1991) CSR framework. Notably, demographic differences influence CSR attitudes, with IFIs emphasizing community support and public image over external pressures. The integration of ethics and philanthropy is crucial in Malaysian business, especially within Islamic finance. The study highlights the strategic importance of workplace diversity in achieving CSR goals, leveraging Malaysia's multi-ethnic context. It also underscores the need for further research on the influence of demographic factors on CSR in the Islamic financial industry, particularly in the context of rising FinTech and digitalization.

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Predicting Political Participatory Behaviour in Pakistan: A Social Media Communication Mediation Approach

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ABSTRACT

The declining trend of political participation in the young population has become a global concern. Although the profound effect of partisanship and social media on politics has been established, less is known about their role in reinforcing political participation in comparatively weak democracies. The present study explored the role of partisanship, social media use, political expression, and political efficacy in communication mediation to develop an understanding of political participation in Pakistan to address this concern. Young voters (N = 410) in Pakistan aged between 18 and 29 were recruited using snowball sampling. We used PLS-SEM (partial least squares structural equation modelling) to analyse the survey data. The results revealed that partisanship is positively correlated with social media use, whereas it also moderated the relationship between social media use and orientations of political expression and political efficacy. The study showed that social media use positively influences political expression and political efficacy and passes this positive influence, through these two variables, on online political participation and offline political participation. Based on these results, we introduced the social media communication mediation model. This paper shares some limitations and provides the study's theoretical contributions and practical implications.

Keywords: Communication mediation, Pakistan, partisanship, political efficacy, political expression, political participation, social media use

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INTRODUCTION

The consistent and rapid development of social media technologies enhanced access to information and the ability of people to communicate with the global community. Scholars suggested that social media use fosters political awareness among people and influences their participatory behaviour in political activities (Lee & Xenos, 2020). Research showed that social media venues employed revolutionary tools to disseminate democratic ideas that expanded political repertoires with new modes of action, such as hashtags, likes, and joining online groups (Theocharis & van Deth, 2018). We tested a framework that explains the structure under which social media usage adds to the level of participation in Pakistan. Rooted in the orientation-stimuli-orientation-response (O-S-O-R) model of communication mediation, we posit a positive association of social media use with political expression and efficacy, which converts into a higher level of political participation in online and offline environments. Outcome orientations of political efficacy and political expression mediate between social media use and political participation. We also examined the moderation of partisanship between social media use and subsequent outcome orientations.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

We performed an online survey to collect responses from voters aged between 18 and 29, as 60% of Pakistan's population is under the age of 30. We used snowball sampling to ensure the recruitment of respondents (Babbie, 2020). WhatsApp was used to distribute the online link to the questionnaire. Individuals from the contact list were requested to share the questionnaire further among their contacts and ask them to do the same. Items to measure the study variables were adopted/adapted from the past literature.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To test the significance of the relationship, bootstrapping of 410 cases with 5,000 samples was conducted. Table 1 presents the results of direct and indirect relationships in structural path analysis.

This research contributed to political communication and the social media domain by exploring social media use and underlying behavioural characteristics that influence people's involvement in political activities. The theorised path model, containing moderation and mediation paths, was tested for measurement and structural model. Partisanship is revealed as the most influential element in Pakistani youth. It is also a potential driver for social media use. Under the O-S-O-R framework, the incorporation of partisanship as predisposition orientation and at the same time as moderator (McLeod et al., 2008) between social media use and political expression and between social media use and political efficacy is the strength and theoretical contribution of the present study. Our study highlights the novel role of social media in fostering political engagement among young voters, a key demographic in Pakistan. By encouraging their active participation, this research aims to address the democratic deficit and contribute to transforming from a weak to a stronger democracy. Testing communication mediation outside the developed countries of the US and Europe in an unstable democracy for political outcomes on online venues is another noteworthy contribution of this study. The positive relationship

Table 1
Direct and indirect effect hypotheses

Relationships	β-value	t-value	p-value	Confidence intervals bias corrected LL = 5%, UL = 95%	Supported
PTS → SMU	0.341	7.266	0.000***	[0.257, 0.411]	Yes
SMU → PEF	0.297	5.390	0.000***	[0.198, 0.381]	Yes
SMU → PEX	0.234	4.960	0.000***	[0.150, 0.306]	Yes
PEX → ONP	0.616	17.572	0.000***	[0.552, 0.669]	Yes
PEX → OFP	0.600	16.832	0.000***	[0.538, 0.656]	Yes
PEF → ONP	0.131	3.308	0.000***	[0.065, 0.197]	Yes
PEF → OFP	0.109	2.592	0.005*	[0.037, 0.177]	Yes
SMU*PTS → PEX	0.100	1.886	0.030**	[0.010, 0.184]	Yes
SMU*PTS → PEF	0.145	3.424	0.000***	[0.071, 0.210]	Yes
SMU → PEX → ONP	0.144	4.734	0.000***	[0.091. 0.191]	Yes
SMU → PEX → OFP	0.141	4.749	0.000***	[0.090, 0.186]	Yes
SMU → PEF → ONP	0.039	2.698	0.004**	[0.018, 0.066]	Yes
SMU → PEF → OFP	0.032	2.294	0.011**	[0.012, 0.059]	Yes

Note. β-, *t*-, and *p*-values were computed through bootstrapping with 5,000 samples; *$p = 0.05$, **$p < 0.05$, ***$p < 0.001$; PTS = Partisanship; SMU = Social Media Use; PEF = Political Efficacy; PEX = Political Expression; ONP = Online Political Participation; OFP = Offline Political Participation

among variables in the communication mediation model clearly depicts that political identity enhances social media use's impact, indirectly increasing online and offline political participation.

CONCLUSION

Based on the O-S-O-R model, we demonstrated factors that predict youth engagement in online and offline political avenues. Our study sample is drawn from Pakistani society. Findings revealed political expression as the most significant antecedent of online and offline political participation. We also found the significant role of partisanship as a moderator between stimuli and outcome orientation. In this way, we incorporated and proved the longstanding proposal regarding moderating the role of partisanship in the communication mediation model. In light of the results, we recommended that the government of Pakistan utilise the potential of social media and partisanship to strengthen democracy by providing freedom of expression and political empowerment to young voters.

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The Impact of People's Daily Douyin Use on Political Trust and Political System Support: An Empirical Study in China

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ABSTRACT

The rapid proliferation, low access barriers, and decentralisation of new media have facilitated a competitive environment in the age of burgeoning technology. In this context, the Chinese Communist Party-backed People's Daily and other mainstream official media have leveraged short video platforms like Douyin to disseminate and reinforce ideological discourse. The People's Daily Douyin account aims to propagate Chinese socialist principles within the virtual cultural sphere. However, the impact of this dissemination on political trust and support among the Chinese population remains underexplored. Drawing on agenda-setting and system justification theories, we developed a conceptual framework encompassing the variables of People's Daily Douyin, parasocial relationships, nationalism, political trust, political system support, and collectivism. The relationships between these variables were examined through partial least squares structural equation modelling. Data from 417 Chinese participants, recruited through snowball sampling, were analysed using SPSS 27 and Smart PLS 4.2.0 software. The findings supported five direct hypotheses and revealed the strongest positive association between People's Daily Douyin use and nationalism. Additionally, the moderating effect of collectivism on the relationship between People's Daily Douyin use and parasocial relationships was confirmed. The study concludes by discussing its implications, acknowledging its limitations, and offering recommendations for future research.

Keywords: Nationalism, parasocial relationships, People's Daily Douyin, political system support, political trust

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INTRODUCTION

With the rapid advancement of the Internet era, social media platforms built on Web 2.0 technology have significantly enhanced the integration of individuals into social networking systems, facilitating communication and information exchange (Shodiyev, 2022). Short videos have become a prominent feature in citizens' daily lives among these new communication mediums. In this context, People's Daily, a news outlet sponsored by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), exemplifies this trend (Zhang et al., 2023). Communication effects on Chinese mainstream media, particularly on the Douyin platform, are often measured by data indicators such as shares, comments, and likes, focusing on content characteristics and their impact on audience engagement (Chen et al., 2021). People's Daily has consistently utilised this platform, posting short videos daily to engage its audience (Wang, 2020). Given the increasing political significance of People's Daily's Douyin account, the present study investigates its impact on political trust and political system support, exploring the roles of parasocial relationships and nationalism. The study is grounded in system justification theory and agenda-setting theory, providing a robust theoretical framework for understanding these dynamics.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A quantitative research methodology was opted for. Scales to measure the study variables were adapted/adopted from past literature. We used Questionnaire Star software version 1.2 to develop the questionnaire. The questionnaire was posted in the People's Daily Douyin comment area and forwarded to People's Daily Douyin WeChat, QQ group, WeChat Moments, and Weibo. Douyin only operates in China, and "People's Daily" has 160 million followers (Qu, 2022). The sample size of 385 for the target population was determined using the calculator.net website. However, a total of 417 responses were collected. The snowball sampling approach was used to collect data. The questionnaire was available in both Chinese and English.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To test the significance of the relationship, bootstrapping 417 cases with 5,000 samples was conducted. Table 1 presents the results of direct and moderating relationships in structural path analysis.

This study examines the usage of the "People's Daily" Douyin account by the survey group, focusing on how individual cognitive characteristics of the audience influence the effectiveness of communication. It explores the cognitive aspects of political communication effectiveness and relevance, highlighting their significance. The analysis revealed that increased use of the People's Daily Douyin account leads to heightened parasocial relationships and nationalism. Our findings indicate that a stronger parasocial relationship enhances political trust, while increased nationalism positively affects support for the political system. The study also confirmed a moderating effect of collectivism on the relationship between People's Daily Douyin use and parasocial relationships, although this effect was negative. These unique findings within the Chinese context offer significant practical and theoretical insights.

Table 1
Structural model assessment

	β-value	*t*-value	*p*-value	Standard deviation	Confidence interval (5%)	Confidence interval (95%)
PDDU → PSR	0.337	6.363	0.000	0.040	0.522	0.680
PSR → PT	0.393	7.139	0.000	0.061	0.054	0.294
PDDU → NTM	0.557	12.498	0.000	0.045	0.466	0.640
NTM → PSS	0.391	7.756	0.000	0.050	0.291	0.488
CTV*PDDU → PSR	-0.165	5.557	0.000	0.043	-0.258	-0.094

Note. PDDU = People’s Daily Douyin use; PSR = Parasocial relationship; PT = Political trust; NTM = Nationalism; PSS = Political system support; CTV = Collectivism

CONCLUSION

This research explored the impact of “People’s Daily” Douyin usage on political system support and political trust by reviewing existing literature and conducting quantitative survey research. It developed a hypothesis model based on institutional legitimation theory and agenda-setting theory, proposing five key hypotheses. Data was collected from users of the “People’s Daily” Douyin account through a questionnaire survey for empirical analysis. The study highlights the importance of content, stressing that video creators must be aware of the potential impact of their content on users. Future research should investigate the effects of communication and the role of short videos in shaping public opinion, thereby providing deeper insights into how such media influences audience perceptions and public attitudes.

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Sustainability Communication Based on Local Wisdom in Ecotourism Development in Waturaka Village, Ende District

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ABSTRACT

Sustainability communication practices based on local wisdom in building awareness and increasing community involvement in ecotourism management in Waturaka village, Ende Regency, are essential for building ecotourism. Local wisdom is important to sustainability communication because the Waturaka community is still traditional and highly upholds cultural values. This research aims to identify a sustainable communication model for ecotourism development in Waturaka village and identify the role of local wisdom in sustainable ecotourism development. The research uses sustainability communication, ecotourism, and local wisdom concepts. This study utilizes a qualitative approach employing the case study method. Data collection used observations, in-depth interviews, and FGDs. The results showed that horizontal, persuasive, participatory sustainability communication is used to communicate issues: (1) cultural preservation, (2) environmental preservation, (3) tourism promotion, (4) village community-based ecotourism, and (5) education for tourists. Local wisdom in the form of the "Pire" tradition, the Gawi Dance, and the cultural ritual "Pati Ka Dua Bapu Ata Mata" contribute to sustainability communication. In ecotourism development, Interpersonal and group communication carried out by various elements of society can run harmoniously and inclusively. Sustainability communication has an impact on changes in the behaviour of all stakeholders.

Keywords: Ecotourism, harmonious, inclusiveness, local wisdom, sustainability communication

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia can potentially develop ecotourism because of its unique culture, nature, and biodiversity. However, ecotourism management must consider aspects of ecotourism and sustainability communication in the ESG framework.

Tourism problems in Indonesia are (1) conflicting regulations and policies at tourist attractions, (2) the quality of human resources, (3) the packaging of tourist attractions, (4) limited product diversification, (5) lack of communication and publication, (6) lack of attention to environmental aspects, (7) inadequate Tourism Infrastructure (Nugroho, 2020).

The success of ecotourism depends on local community participation, effective communication, environmental education, cultural conservation, and economic improvement of local communities. Sustainability communication in ecotourism needs to be carried out by relevant stakeholders such as local government, tourism offices, village tourism awareness groups, village heads, and community members affected by ecotourism. The quality of communication plays an essential role in building a shared understanding of expectations and needs (Albu, 2015). The study shows that tourism companies must communicate sustainability work to stakeholders to create value (Bogren & Sörensson, 2021).

According to Genç (2017), communication about sustainability refers to exchanging and debating information, interpretations, and opinions about sustainability issues. Issues are transformed and framed in horizontal communication, which can occur at various levels, from face-to-face interpersonal interactions to mediated mass communication.

Waturaka Village, Ende Regency, has great tourism potential because it is supported by various cultural arts, flora, and fauna, as well as an abundance of natural wealth. If managed optimally, tourism will provide benefits both economically and socially. Sustainability communication practices based on local wisdom in building awareness and increasing community involvement in ecotourism management in Waturaka village are critical to sustainable ecotourism. Local wisdom is essential to sustainability communication because the Waturaka community is still traditional and highly upholds its cultural values.

This study examines sustainability communication by tourism awareness groups and village-related stakeholders in the context of nature conservation, cultural preservation, and organic farming. The research aims to identify how tourism awareness groups and ecotourism village administrators communicate sustainability issues related to nature conservation, tourism promotion and management, cultural preservation, and organic agriculture. It is essential to communicate with stakeholders to ensure sustainable ecotourism. Sustainability communication aims to make residents, tourists, tourism awareness groups, traditional leaders, religious leaders, and village administrators aware of the importance of maintaining the sustainability of tourist attractions, environmentally friendly agriculture, preserving local culture and wisdom, and the availability of organic products and the sustainability of their marketing. In addition, researchers will identify the involvement of village administrators to encourage interactive dialogue between various relevant stakeholders.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research on participatory communication in ecotourism development uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to examine cases causally by explaining the relationship between one thing and another. Data collection used observation, in-depth interviews, and FGDs. We conducted interviews with 10 participants on July 18–20, 2023. Participants in the research were selected using purposive sampling techniques. The criteria for participants are those involved in ecotourism development and communication (Initiator of Village Ecotourism, Head of Waturaka Village, Traditional Leaders, Agrotourism Coordinator, Homestay Manager, Guide Coordinator, Chairman of Pokdarwis). The location of Waturaka Village was chosen because it is a village that has developed diverse ecotourism activities such as Kelimutu nature conservation, organic agrotourism, cultural preservation, and community-based homestay development.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sustainable Ecotourism Implementation in Waturaka Village

Waturaka Village is one of the villages that has developed village- and community-based sustainable ecotourism. This village is located about 54 KM from Ende City. Most of the people in this village adhere to the Catholic religion and are of the Lio tribe. They still firmly adhere to their ancestors' traditions, values, and beliefs.

Waturaka Village develops a community-based ecotourism village. Ecotourism is developed independently by involving various elements of society, starting from village heads, tourism awareness groups, Empowerment of Family Welfare (PKK) activists, traditional leaders, religious leaders, village unit business entities and village youth. The central tourism concept being developed is sustainable ecotourism through nature conservation; organic farming for agrotourism that sells the concept of agricultural activities such as rice farming activities, Kelimutu natural tourism; Liasembe hot springs, Kolorongo hot springs, Mutulo'o hot steam source, and Muru Keba waterfall; environmentally friendly homestay with nuances of local wisdom, preservation of cultural rituals and arts, development of cultural products (weaving) and preservation of traditional houses.

This research finds four sustainability dimensions: (1) Environment: natural conservation of Kelimutu Lake, organic farming, and organic catfish cultivation; (2) Culture: preservation of traditional rituals, arts (dances, musical instruments, myths, songs) and local products (weaving), traditional musical instruments "Sato". The Gawi dance has been preserved from generation to generation. It is practised in every cultural ritual, (3) Society: Community empowerment, residents become tourism actors, and (4) Ecolodges/Homestays: Waturaka Village now has 17 Homestays prepared as lodging so that tourists linger in Waturaka Village.

Sustainability Communication Model Based on Local Wisdom for Ecotourism Development

The findings show that Waturaka Village's sustainability communication communicates matters related to (1) cultural preservation, such as dance, musical instruments, traditional rituals, and folk legends (folklore, myths); (2) environmental conservation including natural conservation of Lake Kelimutu, waterfalls, hot springs, organic farming and organic catfish cultivation; (3) Ecotourism Management related to integrated and holistic tourism promotion using websites; (4) development of village community-based ecotourism programs; and (5) information and education to foreign tourists about the importance of appreciating local culture, utilizing home stays and living experiences with local communities.

Issues are transformed and framed in village meetings through horizontal, interpersonal, and group communication. Interpersonal and group communication tends to be done because the residents of Waturaka village are still traditional and adhere to kinship culture. Group communication was carried out at the Waturaka Village office and attended by village heads, Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), traditional leaders, religious leaders, Empowerment of Family Welfare (PKK) activists, village youth, and Village Unit Business Entities.

Traditional media, for example: 1) the cultural ritual "Pati Ka Dua Bapu Ata Mata", is used for education and gratitude. This ritual is full of meaningful messages of respect for God, ancestors, and the universe, as well as educational facilities related to the importance of caring for nature; 2) the Pire ritual, used as a means for the Pire community to respect and protect nature so that it is not damaged. The "pire" tradition is carried out at the beginning of October. Residents cannot do any activities outside the home for one week. People are not allowed to go to the garden, burn or make a fire in the garden, and not allowed to dry clothes.

Sustainability communication carried out by ecotourism development stakeholders in Waturaka village is deliberative and transformative communication. In a deliberative context, group communication in ecotourism development makes choices regarding issues, problems, and solutions. They use dialogue and bottom-up communication. Decision-making is carried out through consensus deliberation from all participants involved. The relationship between humans and nature is an essential aspect of dialogue. It is even regulated through a traditional ritual called " Pire". Moral values such as justice from the economic aspect obtained from ecotourism profits must be shared somewhat with the community.

Newig et al. (2013) state that a consultative, horizontal, and many-to-many communication direction characterizes communication about sustainability. The function of communication is for consideration, intersubjective/joint production, and concepts/frames. The measure of effectiveness is discourse-oriented, as well as the quality of the discourse and the suitability of the concept for sustainability. It is in line with the concept of Netwig et al. (2013) that sustainability communication practised by the ecotourism community is characterized by consultative, horizontal, and many-to-many communication direction and aims to provide consideration and orientation to sustainability discourse and is dialogical. This communication practice has provided knowledge, understanding, and awareness for the ecotourism community, including foreign and local tourists. The ecotourism community has practised sustainable ecotourism by involving community participation.

This definition of sustainability and sustainability communication aligns with SDGs, emphasizing the relevance of actions taken by all regions to meet the needs of all people. Sustainability is an issue in all dimensions of media communication: media production, media content, media reception, and media practices (Kannengießer, 2023). The concept and practice of sustainability communication in the context of ecotourism development in Waturaka village align with the SDGs. This practice manifests in traditional and modern communication media, content, discourse, and inclusive and egalitarian relationships between communication participants.

Sustainability communication carried out by ecotourism development stakeholders in Waturaka village is deliberative and transformative communication. They use dialogue and bottom-up communication. Decision-making is carried out through consensus deliberation from all participants involved. Sustainable communication practices play a vital role in achieving SDGs. Through communication practices related to ecotourism hunting, tourism awareness groups and village officials have built awareness and encouraged active participation of tourism communities, including residents, to achieve sustainable ecotourism goals. In addition, communication practices have facilitated collaboration between tourism communities. This collaboration is essential to achieve SDG 16, which promotes peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and provides access to justice for all.

CSR is a foundation for organizations to practice actions that positively impact related stakeholders. The public must know and understand these actions through sustainability communication practices. In the context of this study, the development of ecotourism-based communities in Waturaka village is a responsible development practice carried out by the local government, village government and tourism awareness groups. The sustainable ecotourism program and its management have been communicated through transparent, inclusive, dialogical communication and attention to local wisdom. It provides social significance in community empowerment where the community is actively involved in developing tourist villages, cultural preservation and solidarity. The economic significance is in the form of developing local businesses such as homestays and souvenir shops.

CONCLUSION

Communication about sustainability related to nature conservation, cultural preservation, community empowerment, and eco-lodges or homestays is characterized by a consultative, horizontal, and many-to-many communication direction. The function of communication is to consider intersubjective/joint production and framing of sustainability issues in the context of ecotourism. The local wisdom acknowledged by the Lio tribe in Waturaka village in the form of values, norms, beliefs, and customs contributes to message factors and changes in attitudes and behaviour. The local wisdom contributes to changes in the behaviour of residents, tourists (on trips), attitudes, behaviour throughout stakeholders, and behaviour among residents outside the Waturaka village area.

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Application of Intelligent Manufacturing Technology in the Ceramic Industry: Innovative Practices to Improve Efficiency and Environmental Performance

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ABSTRACT

This study takes the ceramics industry as its object to improve production efficiency, reduce resource waste, and reduce environmental pollution. It explores the application of intelligent manufacturing technology in the ceramics industry. The ceramics industry is a significant part of China's traditional manufacturing industry. However, it has low production efficiency, causes serious resource waste, and causes severe environmental pollution. In the era of Industry 4.0, intelligent manufacturing has become a meaningful way to address these issues. This paper uses a combination of literature reviews, case studies, and other methods to evaluate and analyse intelligent manufacturing technologies' actual effects on the ceramics industry's transformation, upgrading, and sustainable development. The research shows that intelligent manufacturing technologies represented by the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence, and robotics have begun to show clear advantages in the ceramics industry. Improving production efficiency and reducing resource waste also positively affect environmental protection.

Keywords: Ceramic industry, environmental protection, intelligent manufacturing technology, production efficiency

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INTRODUCTION

Currently, China's ceramics industry has high energy consumption, severe environmental pollution, outdated equipment technology, insufficient innovation, low labour productivity, and a severe problem of overcapacity (Ding, 2022). As China enters the later stages of industrialisation, there is increasing emphasis on resource conservation and environmental protection, and the pressure on the ceramics industry to transform and upgrade is increasing, as is the gradual waning of the demographic dividend. The deep integration of the digital economy and the ceramics industry has opened new paths to address these issues. The integration of the digital economy and the ceramics industry is of great significance for reforming the development model of the ceramics industry and improving its added value and competitive advantage. This integration not only improves industrial performance but also promotes the optimisation of the industrial structure and promotes the industry's transformation towards a high-efficiency, energy-saving, and low-carbon model (Zhang, 2023). This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of intelligent manufacturing in China's ceramics industry and formulate corresponding promotion recommendations accordingly. This study will be based on the theory of industrial integration and the techno-economic paradigm. It will comprehensively use research methods such as literature reviews and case studies to analyse the application of Internet of Things (IoT) and artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in the ceramics industry.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This paper is based on the theory of industrial integration and the techno-economic paradigm and comprehensively uses research methods such as literature study and quantitative analysis. The literature study obtains data and information and determines the research objectives. Scholars' historical and current research status on the digital economy and industrial integration are understood. Quantitative analysis is used to research and analyse information such as enterprise production efficiency, and a comparative analysis is made of the KPI data before and after the introduction of IoT and AI technologies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Case 1: Application of IoT Technology in Ceramic Production

An in-depth study of a ceramics company with successful IoT technology applications. In ceramic manufacturing, IoT-based ceramic manufacturing is gradually realising the efficient use of resources. In practical application, the enterprise improves the manufacturing efficiency of the factory by using IoT technology (Wu et al., 2024).

On this basis, the introduction of Internet of Things (IoT) technology has greatly improved the production efficiency of ceramic enterprises (Liu, 2021). Data show that productivity can be improved by 18% by reducing downtime through real-time monitoring and predictive maintenance by introducing IoT technology. Accurate kiln temperature control and combustion efficiency through IoT technology can save 15% of energy consumption and lower scrap rates. Intelligent energy management systems with

IoT technology can reduce energy consumption by up to 15%. Real-time monitoring of process parameters can help reduce reject rates and improve product pass rates to over 99%. RFID tags and other tracking technologies can reduce inventory inaccuracies to less than 1% while increasing inventory turnover to 4. With IoT technology, companies can reduce supply chain response times by more than 20% and increase on-time delivery of orders by 10%. Predictive maintenance can reduce maintenance costs by 5% compared to planned maintenance. We compared the KPI data before and after the introduction of IoT technology, as shown in Figure 1.

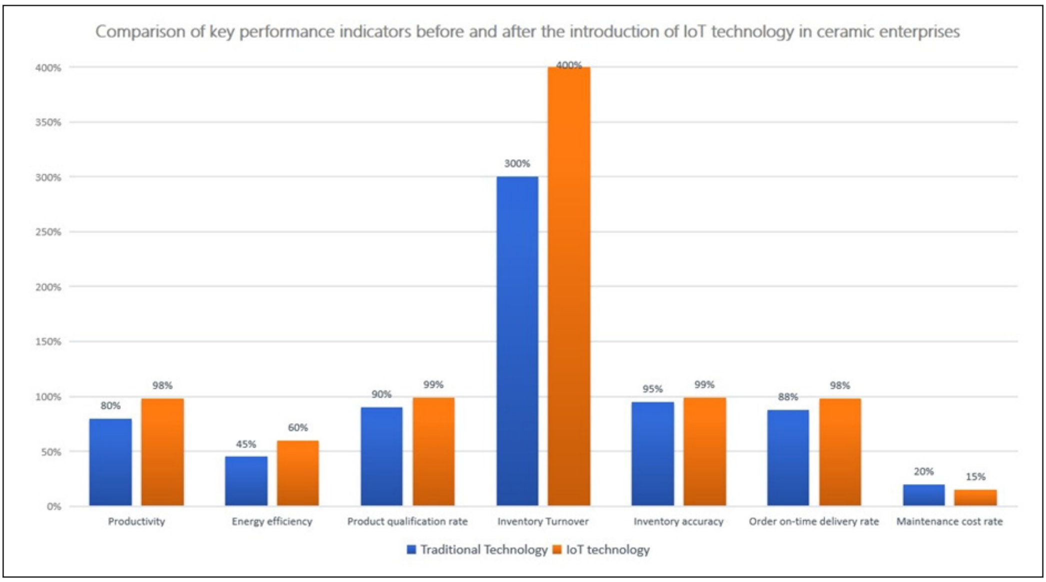

Figure 1. Comparison of KPI data before and after the introduction of IoT technology in ceramic enterprises

Case Study 2: Application of Artificial Intelligence Technology in Ceramic Quality Inspection

An in-depth study of a ceramics company with successful AI technology applications was conducted. In recent years, artificial intelligence has been increasingly used in industrial testing. Due to the complexity of the production process of ceramic products and the diversity of product characteristics, higher requirements are imposed on product quality inspection (Mao et al., 2020). The porcelain manufacturing company proposes to apply AI technology to automate the checking of ceramic products.

In ceramic production enterprises, with AI technology, the efficiency and precision of product quality inspection are greatly upgraded. Compared with traditional manual inspections, we can analyse vast quantities of pictures in a much shorter period (Gu, 2024). It is what makes rapid inspections of ceramic products possible. After testing, the testing efficiency is improved by about 30%, and the testing time is reduced by 25%. The company's internal data shows that the AI testing system's false alarm and omission rates have been greatly reduced, and the accuracy rate has increased by 20%. In addition, the use of AI technology has led to a significant reduction in scrap rates. Checking and eliminating defective products can effectively avoid the inflow of defective products into the market, protect the enterprise's brand image, and reduce the cost of raw materials and production. The data shows that after adopting this system, the scrap rate is reduced by 15%, saving the enterprise a huge amount of money. The detection rate of products has been reduced by 10%, and the leakage rate has been reduced by 12%. We compared the KPI data before and after the introduction of AI technology, as shown in Figure 2.

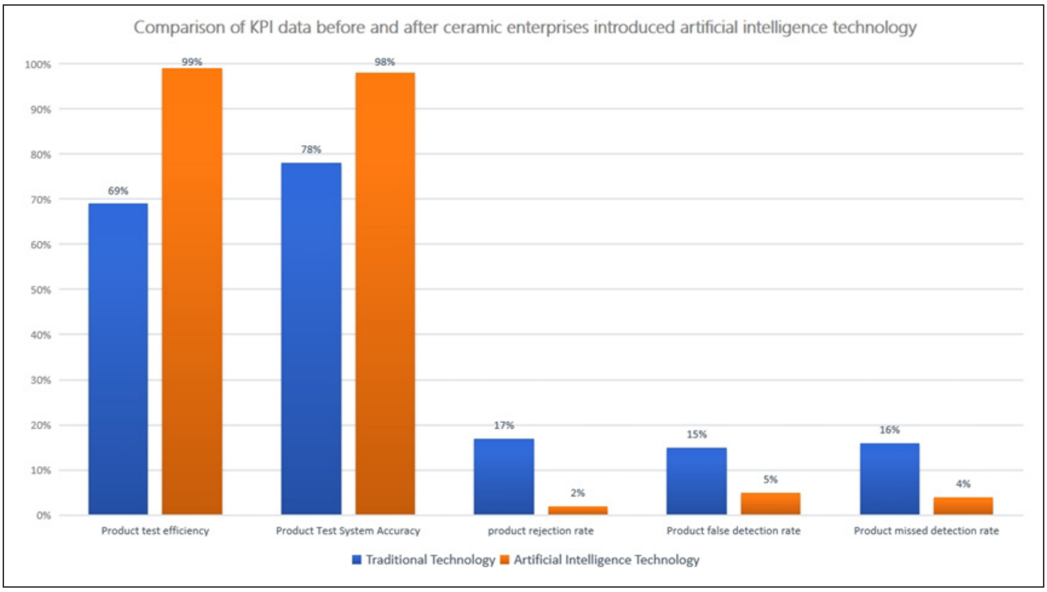

Figure 2. KPI data comparison between AI technology and traditional technology

Simultaneously, increased product output, energy savings, and reduction of environmental pollution are key priorities for the development of the ceramics industry. By comparison, a contemporary ceramic production enterprise might sometimes not look like a factory. It often combines large state-of-the-art plants with small office areas where design work is done and sales staff is accommodated, which is natural handicraft. It greatly accelerates production efficiency, reduces energy consumption, reduces manpower, reduces production costs, and simultaneously reduces environmental pollution. Strengthening support for enterprises in terms of policies and regulations, the government has introduced important incentives such as financial subsidies and tax incentives (Sakhaii et al., 2016)—enhancement of technological research and development and innovation in the firm. The company needs to invest more in technological research and development—increased research on new processes (Zhang et al., 2018). Strengthen the cooperation between industry, academia, and research to accelerate the transformation and popularisation of scientific and technological achievements. Strengthen joint scientific research with institutions of higher learning, research institutes, and research institutes. Strengthening the talent training program and cultivating talents is the key to achieving sustainable industrial development. In higher vocational education, vocational literacy education must be strengthened, and based on this, additional relevant courses are set up so that students' theoretical knowledge and practical skills can be comprehensively improved. A group of competitive and capable high-quality talents can be cultivated, thus promoting the long-term development of China's industrial enterprises.

CONCLUSION

By analysing examples, people can see how intelligent manufacturing technology reduces business production costs and their environmental impact. The production process has automation and intelligence, making enterprises implement production management more accurately, eliminating human errors, and raising productivity. Intelligent manufacturing systems can also rationalise resource distribution and reduce waste on raw materials and fuel. It will reduce production costs. From the standpoint of environmental protection, energy conservation and environmental protection can be made even more successful by monitoring and data analysis in real-time to reduce pollution. The national government should give priority to enterprises in terms of policies and rewards and encourage enterprises and related research institutions to innovate through technology research and development.

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Leveraging Social Media for National Unity: The Role of CSR Merdeka Advertisements, Slacktivism, and Clicktivism

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ABSTRACT

In the digital age, leveraging social media through CSR Merdeka advertisements offers a powerful avenue to promote national unity in Malaysia by engaging in slacktivism and clicktivism behaviours. This study examines how social media advertising fosters national unity by encouraging slacktivism and clicktivism while utilising nudging theory to shape audience perception and engagement. The study analysed fifteen CSR Merdeka advertisements from Petronas, Celcom, and TM using a triangulation approach combining content analysis, surveys, and focus group discussions (FGDs). Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques were employed, including sentiment analysis, thematic analysis, word clouds, and Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA). Results indicate that CSR Merdeka advertisements effectively incorporate themes of national unity, with engagement levels significantly influenced by nudging techniques. The findings suggest that targeting slacktivism and clicktivism behaviours enhances message dissemination and audience engagement, making CSR campaigns more effective in fostering national unity. Recommendations are provided for future CSR campaigns to better engage audiences and promote unity through innovative content.

Keywords: Clicktivism, nudging theory, CSR Merdeka advertisements, national unity, slacktivism, social media

INTRODUCTION

National unity remains a critical goal in Malaysia's multicultural society, where diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds coexist. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Merdeka advertisements have emerged as a key tool for promoting unity, leveraging the widespread reach of social media platforms. The rise of digital activism, particularly slacktivism and clicktivism, presents opportunities and challenges in engaging audiences (Halupka, 2018). Slacktivism, characterised by minimal-effort digital

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actions like sharing or liking content, and clicktivism, involving online petitions and other low-effort online activities, have shown the potential to spread awareness and foster engagement (Smith et al., 2019). This study explores how CSR Merdeka advertisements on social media can be optimised to promote national unity by examining the relationship between these digital activism behaviours and audience engagement in national unity campaigns. Specifically, Merdeka advertisements from 2020 to 2022, marked by increased digital engagement due to the COVID-19 pandemic, are analysed.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A triangulation approach was employed to ensure comprehensive analysis, combining content analysis, surveys, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Fifteen CSR Merdeka advertisements from 2020 to 2022, produced by three prominent Malaysian corporations, Petronas, Celcom, and TM, were selected for analysis. These companies were chosen due to their significant market presence, consistent production of Merdeka-themed advertisements, and representation of diverse industries (energy, telecommunications, and technology), offering a broad perspective on CSR approaches (Singh & Misra, 2021).

Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques, including sentiment analysis, thematic analysis, word clouds, and Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA), were applied to identify and analyse themes related to national unity within these advertisements (Churchill & Singh, 2022). Audience engagement and sentiment were assessed through surveys and FGDs with university students aged 20–25. This age group was selected due to its high social media usage and engagement in digital activism, making it a key demographic for understanding the impact of slacktivism and clicktivism on national unity campaigns (Skoric et al., 2016). Teenagers were not included in the sample, as the focus was on young adults with the potential for higher civic engagement and digital literacy. These are critical for understanding how minimal effort in online actions could influence larger societal outcomes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of CSR Merdeka advertisements revealed significant insights into their effectiveness in promoting national unity through social media.

Table 1 shows that thematic analysis using NLP techniques identified togetherness, pride, and cultural diversity as dominant themes across the advertisements. The consistent use of terms like “unity,” “heritage,” and “diversity” reinforced these themes, indicating a strong focus on collective identity and national cohesion.

Sentiment analysis demonstrated a predominantly positive reception of the advertisements, with an average sentiment score of 0.78 on platforms like Twitter and YouTube. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) further corroborated this positive sentiment, where participants expressed feelings of inspiration and connection to the conveyed messages.

Table 1
Key Findings from CSR Merdeka Advertisement Analysis

Category	Key findings
Thematic Analysis (NLP)	• Dominant themes: togetherness, pride, cultural diversity • High-frequency terms: "unity," "heritage," "diversity"
Sentiment Analysis	• Overall sentiment: Predominantly positive • Average sentiment score: 0.78 (Facebook and YouTube)
Engagement Metrics	• 85% willingness to share on social media • High prevalence of slacktivism and clicktivism (ages 20-25)
Nudging Techniques	• 25% higher engagement with personalised messaging and visual storytelling • 70% of FGD participants emphasised visual storytelling's importance

Engagement metrics highlighted the prevalence of slacktivism and clicktivism behaviours, particularly among the 20–25 age group. A substantial 85% of survey respondents indicated a willingness to share these advertisements on social media, suggesting a high potential for viral spread and increased visibility of unity-focused content.

The effectiveness of nudging techniques was evident, with personalised messaging and visual storytelling driving a 25% higher engagement rate compared to generic content. Notably, 70% of FGD participants emphasised the significance of visual storytelling in generating positive sentiment and engagement with national unity themes.

These results indicate that CSR Merdeka advertisements successfully leveraged social media to promote national unity. By incorporating emotionally resonant themes and utilising effective nudging techniques, these campaigns fostered positive sentiment and encouraged active engagement, particularly through slacktivism and clicktivism behaviours among younger audiences. This approach demonstrates the potential of digital CSR campaigns to contribute to social cohesion and national unity efforts in Malaysia.

The findings suggest that CSR Merdeka advertisements can promote national unity, especially when engaging in slacktivism and clicktivism behaviours effectively. Advertisements that employed nudging techniques such as emotional appeals and interactive content were more effective in fostering engagement. It aligns with the principles of Nudging Theory, which suggests that subtle cues and prompts can influence behaviour and decision-making (Sunstein, 2020). By appealing to the audience's emotions and social identities, these advertisements created a stronger connection to the concept of national unity.

However, while slacktivism and clicktivism can increase reach and initial engagement, their direct impact on overcoming unity barriers remains unclear and requires further investigation. The translation of online engagement into real-world actions and attitudinal changes is complex. Other factors, such as education levels, cultural literacy, and face-to-face intercultural interactions, may also play crucial roles in promoting national unity (Pettigrew, 2021). These factors could work with digital engagement to create a more holistic approach to fostering unity. For example, individuals who are more educated about the cultural backgrounds of others may be better equipped to navigate and appreciate the messages conveyed in CSR campaigns, leading to deeper understanding and stronger unity.

The prevalence of slacktivism and clicktivism among younger audiences suggests that these behaviours can be strategically targeted to enhance the reach and impact of CSR campaigns. While these forms of digital activism may not necessarily lead to immediate real-world actions, they can catalyse further engagement. Future research should explore how to leverage these initial online interactions to encourage more meaningful participation in unity-building activities, such as community events or intercultural dialogues.

CONCLUSION

CSR Merdeka advertisements on social media have demonstrated significant potential as a tool for promoting national unity in Malaysia. By strategically targeting slacktivism and clicktivism behaviours and applying the Nudging Theory, these campaigns can enhance audience engagement and foster positive sentiment towards unity. However, it is crucial to recognise that digital interactions are just one component of a broader strategy for fostering national unity.

This research contributes to the field by providing insights into the effectiveness of digital CSR campaigns in the Malaysian context, particularly through the understudied lens of slacktivism and clicktivism. It offers practical implications for leveraging digital engagement in future CSR campaigns while highlighting the need for a multi-faceted approach to fostering national unity. For CSR campaigns to have a more profound impact, emotionally resonant and relatable content that appeals to Malaysia's diverse identities should be integrated with offline initiatives, such as educational programs and opportunities for meaningful intercultural exchanges. These efforts can play a comprehensive role in strengthening Malaysia's social fabric.

Further research is needed to fully understand the long-term impact of digital activism on national unity and to identify complementary strategies that can enhance its effectiveness. Ultimately, combining online engagement with real-world actions will be key to promoting a more cohesive and harmonious Malaysian society.

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Stakeholder Engagement Practices among CSR Award-Winning Companies in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Stakeholder engagement is a widely used framework in corporate social responsibility (CSR), aiming to create value for businesses and their stakeholders. This practice helps foster relationships, enabling organisations to better understand stakeholders' real issues, needs, and expectations. The engagement process generates insights useful for organisations to adjust to their core business strategies, including CSR initiatives. In this context, the underlying motivation to engage with stakeholders is to bring about positive change to them and not merely for business gain. Nevertheless, the reason and how organisations engage with stakeholders have not been extensively researched. The objectives of this study are threefold: to examine the underlying motives of engaging with stakeholders, to delve into communication strategies employed to engage with stakeholders and to explore the extent of stakeholders' engagement practices disclosed in the CSR report. This qualitative study examines 17 CSR reports of CSR award-winning companies in Malaysia. This study found that business motive appears dominant: forming a strategic partnership with stakeholders is pertinent to business growth. Nevertheless, the specific benefits that stakeholders gain from this engagement have not been adequately reported.

Keywords: Communication strategies, CSR report, motive, mutual partnership, stakeholder engagement

INTRODUCTION

Stakeholders are individuals or groups who can affect or be affected by an organisation's activities, products or services. Literature affirmed that failure to meet a broader set of stakeholder demands will result in the withdrawal of stakeholder support from companies (Ghezal, 2024). Hence, meeting stakeholders' needs and expectations, which are not limited to shareholders, is crucial for business longevity. Stakeholder engagement

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helps foster relationships, enabling organisations to better understand stakeholders' real issues, needs, concerns and expectations. These insights are crucial for organisations to adjust their core business strategies, including CSR initiatives aligned with stakeholders' needs and expectations. This study argues that stakeholder engagement is a critical process in CSR, as it enables organisations to address stakeholders' actual needs rather than providing what the business assumes is best for them. In this context, organisations' motive to engage with stakeholders is essential as it impacts their CSR practices. The intention to make a positive change requires organisations to be willing to listen and subsequently incorporate stakeholders' needs and expectations into their core business practices. At the same time, a self-serving motive is likely to result in CSR that primarily benefits the organisation without contributing any significant value to stakeholders.

In recent years, there has been a growing demand to incorporate stakeholders' perspectives for businesses to remain sustainable. Jeffery (2009) asserted that an organisation cannot be serious about CSR unless it pays equivalent attention to stakeholder engagement. The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) has explicitly required organisations to identify and engage with stakeholders. In Malaysia, stakeholder engagement gained prominence following the introduction of the Malaysia Code on Corporate Governance (MCCG) by the Securities Commission Malaysia in 2000, with subsequent updates in 2007, 2012, 2017 and 2021. In 2017, the MCCG introduced a new structure encompassing three key principles: integrity in corporate reporting and meaningful relationships with stakeholders. This principle accentuates the importance of ongoing, transparent, and effective stakeholder communication. It promotes active stakeholder engagement using suitable communication channels to elicit stakeholders' feedback on matters that affect them. Through this engagement, stakeholders are better informed about companies' business decisions, policies on governance, the environment and social responsibility that affect them (Securities Commission Malaysia, 2021).

Stakeholders' engagement is not an overnight effort but a continuous and iterative process characterised by constant dialogue, active listening, consultation and collaboration to achieve mutual interests. Nevertheless, the motive to engage with stakeholders and the mode of engagement adopted have not been extensively researched. The objectives of this study are threefold: to examine the underlying motives of engaging with stakeholders, to delve into communication strategies employed to engage with stakeholders and to explore the extent of stakeholders' engagement practices disclosed in the CSR report.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This qualitative study examined the sustainability reports produced by organisations with exemplary commitment and performance in CSR in the country. These organisations were selected from the Sustainability and CSR Award Malaysia 2023, organised by CSR

Malaysia. A total of 17 sustainability reports were analysed, focusing specifically on the stakeholder engagement section. Thematic analysis was adopted to analyse the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Most companies produce standalone documents rather than integrated annual reports to disclose their CSR initiatives, with 'Sustainability report' being the most commonly used title. The underlying motive of stakeholder engagement is predominantly for long-term business survival or business motive. In this context, stakeholders are considered significant business partners whose insights are crucial to developing and refining business strategy. Kujala et al. (2022) argue that stakeholder engagement in this context served as a means for organisational benefit and, hence, could be merely self-serving. Most companies reported that stakeholder engagement enhances their preparedness to navigate risks and opportunities in a volatile business setting. A less dominant motive of stakeholder engagement is responding to stakeholders' concerns or incorporating their perspectives into organisational decision-making. Nevertheless, only a few companies explicitly mentioned their willingness to listen and incorporate stakeholders' perspectives into business decision-making.

Regarding communication strategy, most organisations reported practising regular communication, using multiple media and non-media channels to strengthen stakeholder relationships. Two-way communication was a prominent strategy to engage with stakeholders (e.g., town hall, site visit, consultation, dialogue, community outreach). Drawing from Grunig and Hunt (1984) models, Morsing and Schultz (2006, in Stocker et al., 2020, p. 2073) proposed three ways for companies to engage with their stakeholders: the information strategy (one-way communication), the response strategy (two-way asymmetrical communication) and involvement strategy (two-way symmetrical communication). The latter strategy involves organisational change as a result of the engagement. At the same time, the response strategy will use the insights gained to develop a better strategy to influence stakeholders for organisational advantage.

This research also found that most companies disclosed the type of stakeholders they engaged with, the communication channels used and stakeholders' areas of interest. Nevertheless, little information was disclosed on how the engagement brings positive change to the stakeholders involved or to what extent organisations have responded to stakeholders' needs and concerns.

CONCLUSION

The practice of stakeholder engagement appears promising among CSR award-winning companies in the country. These organisations understand the importance of responding to and incorporating stakeholders' perspectives to stay relevant. However, this engagement should not be limited to achieving business strategic goals but to ensure a positive impact on the affected stakeholders. Stakeholder engagement should not be viewed as a mere means for organisations to appear socially responsible; rather, it is an avenue for making a meaningful difference in the lives of others while fostering business growth. Being overly business-centric can lead organisations into the trap of self-serving CSR, ultimately failing to do justice to their stakeholders. This study proposes that organisations report on their impact on stakeholders and examine whether they perceive this impact as mutually beneficial to them.

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Altruistic Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) for Future Employability: A Malaysian Perspective

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ABSTRACT

This study uses Schwartz's Value Theory as a conceptual framework to examine the impact of Altruistic Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on the employability prospects of final-year university students in Malaysia. Through a mixed-methods approach, incorporating surveys of 400 final-year students from various disciplines across public and private universities, alongside Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), the research investigates the importance placed on altruistic CSR elements such as employee welfare, ethical business practices, environmental stewardship, and community engagement in shaping graduates' employment preferences. The findings reveal that Malaysian students prioritise these altruistic CSR attributes, which align closely with Schwartz's values of universalism and benevolence. The study offers actionable recommendations for Malaysian organisations to enhance their CSR strategies to meet the expectations of the future workforce. These insights also contribute to the broader objectives of Malaysia's Social Development Goals (SDGs), emphasising the role of CSR in sustainable development and talent acquisition.

Keywords: Altruistic corporate social responsibility (CSR), graduate employability, Malaysia, organisational selection, Schwartz's Value Theory

INTRODUCTION

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has evolved from a peripheral business practice to a central component of corporate strategy, particularly in its ability to influence talent attraction and retention. In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on Altruistic CSR practices that go beyond compliance or strategic business interests to prioritise the welfare of employees, communities, and the environment. This approach resonates with the increasing demand among employees, particularly younger generations, for meaningful work that aligns with their personal values and ethical standards (Črešnar & Nedelko, 2020).

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With its diverse cultural landscape and rapidly growing economy, Malaysia presents a unique context for examining the role of altruistic CSR in shaping employment preferences (Hizam et al., 2019). As the country progresses towards achieving its Social Development Goals (SDGs), there is a parallel shift in the expectations of its future workforce. Graduates, who represent the next generation of employees, are increasingly looking for employers who offer career opportunities and demonstrate a commitment to ethical practices, social responsibility, and sustainability.

This study explores the influence of altruistic CSR on the employability perceptions of final-year university students in Malaysia. Using Schwartz's Value Theory as a conceptual framework, the research examines how specific altruistic CSR elements such as employee welfare, ethical business practices, environmental stewardship, and community engagement impact graduates' employment decisions. The study seeks to provide empirical evidence on the importance of these CSR attributes in the Malaysian context and offer insights for organisations aiming to align their CSR strategies with the values and expectations of the future workforce.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study utilised a mixed-methods approach, starting with a quantitative survey of 400 final-year students from various Malaysian universities. The survey assessed the importance of four key CSR elements: Employee Welfare (health benefits, work-life balance, career development), Ethical Business Practices (transparency, anti-corruption, fair treatment), Environmental Stewardship (sustainability practices), and Community Engagement (social programs, charity, local support). Community engagement has been shown to play a pivotal role in enhancing organisational reputation and stakeholder trust (Brown & Dacin, 2022). Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics to understand CSR preferences and demographic influences.

Subsequently, five Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted, each consisting of eight participants, for 40 students involved in the qualitative phase. These FGDs provided qualitative insights into students' motivations and values regarding altruistic CSR. The discussions were structured to explore the quantitative survey's themes and gain a deeper understanding of students' perspectives on corporate social responsibility.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results indicate a strong preference among Malaysian graduates for employers committed to altruistic CSR practices. Table 1 summarises the survey results, highlighting the percentage of students identifying each CSR element as a critical factor in their employment decision-making process.

Table 1
Importance of Altruistic CSR Elements in Employment Preferences

CSR Element	Percentage of Students Who Consider it Critical (%)
Employee Welfare	88
Ethical Business Practices	85
Environmental Stewardship	82
Community Engagement	80

The survey results and qualitative insights from the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) converge to paint a clear picture of the preferences and values of Malaysian graduates regarding Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices. The emphasis on altruistic CSR elements aligns closely with Schwartz's Value Theory, which underscores the significance of universalism and benevolence in shaping individuals' attitudes and behaviours.

Qualitative Insights from Focus Group Discussions

The FGDs provided deeper context and validation of the survey findings, particularly through Schwartz's Value Theory. Participants emphasised the need for authenticity in CSR practices, with a clear preference for companies aligning their operations with altruistic values rather than using CSR as a marketing tool. This desire for authenticity mirrors Schwartz's values of universalism and benevolence, reflecting a need for alignment between personal values and organisational practices.

Work-Life Balance, Health and Wellbeing, Environmental Responsibility, and Community Engagement

These factors emerged as key attributes that attract young job seekers and foster long-term loyalty and engagement. The FGDs revealed that participants value employers who offer comprehensive health benefits, support work-life balance, demonstrate environmental responsibility, and engage in community development. These attributes resonate with Schwartz's value theory, highlighting how self-direction, security, universalism, and benevolence are integral to attracting and retaining talent.

Qualitative Insights with Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative data from the survey results provided robust support for the qualitative insights gathered through the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Notably, the high percentages of students who considered altruistic CSR elements critical in their employment decisions (ranging from 80% to 88%) corroborated the FGD findings on the importance of authentic CSR practices. A statistical analysis of these percentages further elucidated the relative importance of each CSR element. Employee welfare emerged as the most critical factor, with 88% of respondents identifying it as crucial, followed closely by ethical business practices at 85%. Environmental stewardship and community engagement also proved significant, with 82% and 80% of students considering these factors critical. These quantitative findings aligned closely with the qualitative themes from the FGDs, particularly the emphasis on work-life balance, health and wellbeing, environmental responsibility, and community engagement. The high percentages across all four CSR elements underscored Malaysian graduates' strong preference for altruistic CSR practices, validating and quantifying the qualitative insights obtained from the discussions.

CONCLUSION

The combined findings from the survey and FGDs offer a robust understanding of how altruistic CSR practices impact employment preferences among Malaysian graduates. The alignment with Schwartz's Value Theory underscores the importance of integrating universalism and benevolence into CSR practices. Organisations authentically embracing these values will likely attract and retain motivated and engaged employees.

The emphasis on genuine commitment to ethical practices, environmental stewardship, and community engagement reflects a shift towards valuing deeper, meaningful CSR initiatives over superficial ones. For employers, this means integrating altruistic values into core business operations, which is beneficial for attracting top talent, fostering long-term employee loyalty, and enhancing organisational performance.

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Exploring the Multidimensional Sustainability of Advertising Agencies in Emerging Economies: A Case Study of Jakarta, the Capital City of Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Against the backdrop of accelerated digital disruption in an emerging economy, this study investigates agencies' sustained existence within the advertising industry based in Jakarta. While digital resilience is a key angle, this research includes other sustainability-implied challenges like financial resilience, client relationship management or continuous innovation. Based on the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with industry professionals, the study presents vital factors, including strategic innovation, effective stakeholder engagement, and service diversification that foster long-term sustainability. This paper offers a multifaceted direction for digital transformation, market dynamics, and sustainable business environment by advertising agencies in Jakarta. Its insights are actionable for agencies seeking to remain competitive and deliver high degrees of client satisfaction and financial success in a constantly shifting market. Then, this research will bring sustainability one step ahead of digital disruption by presenting the myriad strategies advertising agencies must adopt in dynamic and competitive emerging markets to stay alive.

Keywords: Advertising, agencies, disruption, Jakarta

INTRODUCTION

Sustainability in advertising agencies is arguably just as important as ever, perhaps even more so in today's fast-paced digital age, particularly in developing economies such as Jakarta. With consumer awareness about environmental and social issues on the rise, not only do they better adapt to digital transformation, but they need to include sustainability at its inception. It is a race to keep leading. Rahman and Norman (2019) emphasise the role of sustainability advertising in influencing consumer behaviour, highlighting that

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effective sustainability advertising can enhance brand personality and consumer attitudes. Hoffman and Bazerman (2007) discuss the organisational and psychological barriers to adopting sustainable practices, such as resistance to change and the need for continuous innovation. Belz and Peattie (2013) provide a global perspective on sustainability marketing, emphasising the need for a holistic approach that integrates sustainability principles into core business practices. Sheth et al. (2011) introduce mindful consumption, emphasising the importance of consumer-centric sustainability practices.

Cairncross (1991) discusses the challenges and opportunities for businesses in adopting sustainable practices. Mindful conception, economic resilience, and innovation have been called with a holistic approach is the key. Wang and Wu (2016) explore the impact of sustainability advertising on brand personality and consumer attitudes, finding that effective sustainability advertising can significantly enhance brand perception. Amongst agencies serving emerging markets, it is a very common challenge as these companies usually face the challenges of shrinking budgets and uncertain trade performance. Walsh and Dodds (2017) measure the effectiveness of sustainability advertising in the tourism industry, demonstrating that well-executed sustainability campaigns can enhance brand credibility and consumer trust. Research also indicates that digital congruence is a significant factor. The main goal of this study is to describe how advertising agencies in Jakarta address sustainability problems. We examine these through the lenses of past research in South Africa and other emerging markets and answer what strategies market agencies need to implement to outlast the shifts that we all know lie ahead. Mokoena et al. (2023), A., Prinsloo, J. J., Gawlik, R., & Pelser, T. (2023).

The findings of this study paint a picture for agencies looking to meet sustainability demands and remain competitive in the global market. Based on this perspective, the present study investigates the sustainability practices and challenges faced by advertising agencies in Jakarta, Indonesia. By examining the local context, this research seeks to contribute to the broader understanding of sustainability in the advertising industry and provide actionable insights for agencies operating in similar emerging markets.

METHODS

The present study uses a qualitative method to investigate the sustainability practices and challenges encountered by advertising agencies in Jakarta, Indonesia. The primary data for semi-structured, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were collected from managers, employees, and clients at selected agencies. These methods were selected because they allow us to collect a wide range of individual reflections and collective experiences around sustainability.

The study’s sampling strategy involves purposive sampling, selecting agencies and participants that can provide relevant and rich data. The sample will include 10–15 advertising agencies for interviews and 3–5 focus groups, each consisting of 6–8 participants. This approach ensures that a diverse range of perspectives and experiences are captured.

These will be conducted via interviews or focus groups to obtain a sense of financial resilience, client relationships and environmental initiatives. The interviews will be complemented by secondary data such as internal reports and marketing materials (if any), which again can help in profiling these agencies' operational sustainability practices.

All data obtained will be transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis. The following will be coded from interviews and focus groups, where challenges and best practices for sustainability in advertising, similar to those of the title page, would highlight the themes.

It will be informed consent; data anonymisation will be used to maintain confidentiality. Background: The ethics review board will obtain ethical approval to preserve ethical standards throughout the research process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The qualitative analysis of the interviews and focus group discussions revealed several key themes related to the sustainability of advertising agencies in Jakarta. These themes include the impact of digital disruption, the importance of innovation, the role of client relationships, and the challenges of maintaining financial stability.

1. Impact of Digital Disruption. Participants argued that digital technologies have fundamentally changed advertising landscapes. Agencies said that the set-up costs of new technology and training to use digital platforms were costly.
2. Importance of Innovation. Advertising agencies began to prioritise the sustainability of their business through innovation. Moving to data-driven marketing and creative digital solutions, Agencies that employed innovative practices improved client retention and grew the business. In an era where market dynamics are rapidly changing, continuous innovation is advantageous and critical for agencies looking to succeed in this environment.
3. Role of Client Relationships. Robust customer relationships were viewed as indispensable for longevity. The result was more stable revenue streams as agencies were thus incentivised to prioritise long-term relationships with successful affiliates. All they mentioned as they researched the relationships served up to them was that we do an outstanding job with trust and communication, which our clients often say helps us get additional business or be recommended repeatedly.
4. Obstacles to Viable Financial Stability. Many advertising agencies in Jakarta are still struggling to be financially stable. Participants mentioned that changing client budgets and economic uncertainty affected the flow of cash and profitability.

The findings of this study align with existing literature on the sustainability of advertising agencies in emerging economies. The impact of digital disruption has been widely documented, with studies highlighting the need for agencies to adopt new technologies and business models to remain competitive[1]. This study confirms that digital disruption is a critical challenge for agencies in Jakarta, necessitating ongoing investment in digital capabilities.

CONCLUSION

The findings highlight that digital disruption is a significant challenge for advertising agencies, necessitating continuous investment in technology and training. Innovation is crucial for staying relevant and competitive, with agencies that embrace creative and data-driven approaches reporting better outcomes. Strong client relationships are essential for stability, emphasising the importance of trust and effective communication. Financial stability remains a challenge, particularly in the volatile economic environment of emerging markets like Jakarta. Agencies with diversified services and a broad client base tend to be more resilient.

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Evidence-Based Insights and Experiences on Embedding SDG-Focused CSR in Higher Education Curricula

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ASBTRACT

Integrating Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in higher education is key to aligning academic programs with global sustainability objectives. Incorporating SDG-focused CSR into the curriculum connects learning with real-world problems, encouraging ethical decision-making and shaping responsible leaders. This paper explores practical ways to integrate CSR into postgraduate courses, emphasizing how they align with SDG principles. It introduces a framework that merges theory with practical application, ensuring student projects are meaningful and relevant to local issues. The paper also discusses developing tools to measure the impact and sustainability of CSR initiatives, which helps universities assess and refine their programs. By evaluating the outcomes of these activities, institutions can demonstrate their contribution to addressing global challenges. Finally, it provides examples of impactful CSR projects and reflects on the challenges encountered, underlining the important role of education in advancing sustainable development.

Keywords: Evidence-based study, higher education curricula, impactful CSR project, SDG-Focused CSR

INTRODUCTION

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become a critical component of shaping ethical business practices, making its integration into higher education curricula increasingly important. As global challenges like climate change, social inequality, and ethical governance continue to dominate the conversation, universities are now responsible for preparing students for their careers and for leading the way in addressing these pressing issues (Gurr & Forster, 2023).

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Embedding CSR into academic programs enables students to engage directly with real-world problems, fostering accountability and social awareness. It ensures that students not only gain theoretical knowledge but also develop the practical skills increasingly demanded by today's professional world (Boyd, 2020). More importantly, CSR provides students with a framework to grow as future leaders who are professionally competent and socially responsible. This shift aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), reinforcing the need for education to balance economic success with societal well-being (Purcell et al., 2019).

This paper discusses the integration of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) into postgraduate programs, focusing on aligning CSR module structures with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By combining theory with practical application, the SDG-focused CSR framework ensures that student projects are impactful and relevant to local contexts. It also explores the development of measurement frameworks to assess the effectiveness and sustainability of these CSR initiatives. Clear assessment methods help institutions refine strategies and demonstrate the benefits of their CSR efforts, highlighting the critical role of higher education in advancing sustainable development and societal well-being.

SDG-FOCUSED CSR FRAMEWORK

The SDG-Focused CSR framework is designed to help postgraduate programs align their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This approach ensures that student projects are theoretical and make a real difference in their local communities while contributing to global sustainability efforts (Tomasella et al., 2024).

Choosing the Right SDGs

The first step is for students to choose SDGs that match their academic goals and the needs of the community they work in. By focusing on the most relevant issues, such as climate action, poverty, or quality education, students can create projects that tackle pressing problems in an impactful and practical way (Buerkle et al., 2023). This selection process ensures that global goals are applied locally, making projects more effective and meaningful.

An example is a project by a postgraduate student in a small village where the school had low student attendance due to a lack of engagement. The student created a chicken and vegetable farm at the secondary school to encourage attendance, providing pupils with hands-on experience in farming. This initiative directly aligned with SDG 4: Quality Education and SDG 2: Zero Hunger, as it not only improved engagement in education but also taught pupils agricultural skills and provided sustainable food sources. The project succeeded in increasing school attendance, demonstrating how aligning SDGs with local needs can create immediate, practical benefits.

Blending Theory with Action

The framework encourages a balance between learning and doing. Students are taught the theory behind CSR and the SDGs, but they are also given the opportunity to apply that knowledge in hands-on projects. It ensures that the ideas students learn in the classroom translate into real-world solutions that benefit their communities. In the case of the chicken and vegetable farm project, theoretical knowledge about sustainable farming practices was applied to directly address a local issue, making the project a tangible learning experience. The students not only grasped CSR theories but saw firsthand the effects of their work in fostering a stronger, more engaged school community.

Building Sustainable Projects

Sustainability is key; a big part of the framework is ensuring students' projects have lasting value. It's not enough to make a short-term impact—projects need to be designed with sustainability in mind. This means creating plans that can continue to benefit the community even after the students finish their work. Whether forming partnerships with local organizations or developing strategies for long-term improvement, sustainability is key to ensuring the work lives on.

MEASURING IMPACT

Students use tools to measure their impact to see if these projects are truly making a difference. It is not just about checking off boxes—it is about understanding how their work affects people and the environment in the long run. For instance, the student-led farm project did not just end with the completion of the farm; it was designed with sustainability in mind. The project became self-sustaining by ensuring the farm's long-term upkeep through school partnerships and local community involvement. It extended the impact beyond the immediate success of increasing attendance, fostering a long-term culture of engagement and learning within the school.

In addition to direct outcomes like attendance improvement, the sustainability of the project can be measured through ongoing benefits to the school and community. The farm has provided ongoing food resources, allowing the school to maintain the initiative and continue benefiting from it after the initial project concluded. The use of specific tools to measure the farm's productivity, its influence on student participation, and the community's engagement provides tangible data to support the long-term impact of the initiative.

CONCLUSION

Integrating the SDG-Focused CSR framework into postgraduate programs represents a significant step toward cultivating responsible leadership in higher education. By aligning Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), institutions enhance the relevance of their curricula and empower students to tackle real-world challenges. The careful selection of SDGs ensures that projects address urgent local issues, while the blend of theoretical knowledge and practical application fosters a deeper understanding of social accountability.

Moreover, emphasizing sustainability in project design guarantees that the impact of students' efforts endures beyond their academic journey. The chicken and vegetable farm project demonstrates that CSR activities can achieve meaningful, long-lasting change when aligned with local needs and global goals. By measuring outcomes effectively, institutions can refine their strategies, demonstrating the tangible benefits of CSR initiatives. Ultimately, this framework equips students with the skills, mindset, and ethical grounding necessary to make meaningful contributions to society, laying the groundwork for a future where graduates are proficient in their fields and committed to driving sustainable change within their communities and beyond.

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Strategic Drivers of Sustainable Financial Performance: A Legitimacy Theory Perspective on Aligning Strategy with Sustainability and Profitability

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate how Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities impact the sustainable financial performance of listed companies in Palestine, with a mediating role of frugal innovation and innovation ambidexterity. A cross-sectional research design was employed to collect the primary data from 178 respondents: CEOs, CFOs, and finance managers of listed companies in Palestine. This study implemented PLS-SEM by using Smart-PLS software. The present study revealed that CSR activities positively correlate with sustainable financial performance. Innovation ambidexterity mediates, but frugal innovation does not mediate, between CSR activities and the sustainable financial performance of listed companies in Palestine. Listed companies in conflicted zones can amplify the effect of CSR initiatives on sustainable financial performance through innovative activities. The study, grounded in legitimacy theory, shows that aligning CSR with societal expectations enhances financial sustainability, with innovation ambidexterity reinforcing this legitimacy. However, more than frugal innovation is required to maintain legitimacy with broader stakeholder alignment. This study broadens the boundary of knowledge by examining the effect of CSR activities, frugal innovation, innovation ambidexterity, and their interplay on the sustainable financial performance of listed companies in Palestine through legitimacy theory.

Keywords: CSR activities, frugal innovation, innovation ambidexterity, sustainable financial performance

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INTRODUCTION

The pandemic has exposed various companies' financial vulnerabilities. Listed companies in developing and conflicting regions like Palestine face unprecedented financial challenges compared to those in developed and stable countries (Goyal &

Soni, 2024). Lowering spending on CSR activities during financial difficulties negatively impacts investors and stakeholders and endangers the survival of companies. A study on financial markets indicates that companies with strong financial sustainability practices have earned 8.1% higher returns in the past decade compared to 4.7% for those with weak financial sustainability practices (Jaafar et al., 2023). Companies prioritising financial sustainability face lower capital costs and operational risk, which tend to exhibit stronger long-term financial performance and greater resilience in economic turbulence (Atichasari et al., 2023). The literature does not provide a clear answer on how CSR spending can win the trust of investors and stakeholders to invest in listed companies and achieve sustainable financial performance in turbulent regions.

Frugal innovation reduces resource usage, waste, and cost while delivering sustainable, affordable products or services. It can lower companies' operational costs and improve their access to capital, which may result in sustainable development (Shahid et al., 2023). Yáñez-Valdés and Guerrero (2023) revealed that companies involved in cost-effective, innovative activities for their customers' well-being have the potential to drive financial success and create positive social and environmental impact. In addition, we need to find out how frugal innovation can help the listed companies win the investors' and stakeholders' trust in performing corporate social responsibilities and attract investment to gain sustainable financial performance.

Literature indicates that companies that can effectively manage both exploratory and exploitative innovation activities (innovation ambidexterity) can allocate their resources efficiently and adapt to changing market conditions, resulting in improved financial performance (Tajeddini et al., 2024). Many companies struggle to balance exploration and exploitation due to conflicting priorities, limited resources, and resistance to change due to unstable and unpredictable circumstances. In addition, the literature is also unable to answer how innovation ambidexterity can support the CSR activities of listed firms and achieve sustainable financial performance. This study has theoretical and practical contributions for the listed companies in underdeveloped and unstable regions like Palestine. This study distinguishes itself by using the legitimacy theory and examining the underlying mechanism of frugal innovation and innovation ambidexterity between CSR activities and the sustainable financial performance of listed companies in Palestine.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed a cross-sectional research design and a purposive sampling technique to collect primary data from the CEOs, CFOs, and finance managers of listed companies in Palestine. This study used purposive sampling as selected respondents hold decision-making roles and possess the requisite knowledge, influence over corporate strategies and financial decisions and experience relevant to the research questions. The data was collected face-to-face and through WhatsApp. We distributed 500 questionnaires and received 362. After the security phase, 318 questionnaires were finalised for data analysis. This study selected companies based on their market capitalisation, total assets, financial performance, profitability, and revenue growth. The rationale for this criterion is that larger, more financially stable firms may have more established governance practices and greater capacity for innovation. Moreover, firms with more than five years of operational history are listed on the Palestinian stock exchange.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Once the inner model assessment and outer model's requirements were completed, we conducted a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 subsamples using Smart-PLS to test the hypotheses and evaluate the structural model. We used a two-tailed test at the 0.05 significance level to determine the significance of path coefficients (beta values), *t*-values, and coefficient of determination (R2).

Table 1
Direct path analysis

Hypothesis	Direct Path	Co-efficient	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1	CSR→SFP	0.407	14.699	0.000	Accepted

Notes. CSR= Corporate Social Responsibility; SFP= Sustainable Financial Performance.
Source: Author's calculation

Table 1 shows the results of direct paths. The direct path results show that CSR activities (H1: $\beta = 0.407$, $p = 0.000$, $t = 14.69$) have significant positive effects on the sustainable financial performance of listed companies.

Table 2
Mediating path analysis

Hypothesis	Mediating Path	Co-efficient	*t*-values	*p*-value	Decision	BCI-LL	BCI-UL
H2	CSR→FI→SFP	0.010	1.072	0.284	Rejected	0.341	0.459
H3	CSR→IA →SFP	0.397	13.274	0.000	Accepted	-0.022	0.050

Notes. CSR= Corporate Social Responsibility; SFP= Sustainable Financial Performance; FI= Frugal Innovation; IA Innovation ambidexterity
Source: Author's calculation

Table 2 shows the mediating effect of frugal Innovation and innovation ambidexterity on the relationship between CSR activities and sustainable financial performance. The results in Table 2 show that frugal innovation (H2: $\beta = = 0.010$, $p = 0.284$, $t = 1.072$) does not, but innovation ambidexterity (H3: $\beta = = 0.397$, $p = 0.000$, $t = 13.274$) mediates the relationship.

This section presents the results of six hypotheses supported by legitimacy theory. The study's results indicate a positive and significant relationship between CSR initiatives and the sustainable financial performance of listed companies. Hence, H1 is accepted. This result also aligns with (Song and Rimmel, 2021), who found that companies engaging in CSR activities are more likely to earn high profits. Legitimacy theory explains that CSR initiatives help meet societal expectations, maintain legitimacy, and attract more investors, customers, and regulators. By investing in local communities, environmental sustainability, and ethical business practices, Palestinian-listed companies fulfil societal responsibilities and enhance their reputation and credibility for sustainable performance.

The result of H2 reveals that frugal innovation does not mediate between CSR initiatives and sustainable financial performance. H2=Rejected. These findings align with Algarni et al. (2023), who found that cutting costs in innovative activities may not lead to a competitive advantage and positive revenue. Due to unique challenges and constraints, the legitimacy theory suggests that the CSR activities of listed firms do not guarantee legitimacy and financial benefits through frugal innovation, especially in the Palestinian business landscape. While CSR initiatives may contribute to organisational legitimacy and stakeholder trust, the ability of frugal innovation to drive sustainable financial performance seems limited in this context.

The results of H3 show that innovation ambidexterity mediates the relationship between CSR activities and sustainable financial performance. Thus, H3 is accepted. Previous studies by Abbas (2024) showed that firms involved in social responsibility tend to be more innovative and agile, aligning with innovation ambidexterity. Legitimacy theory suggests that companies can benefit from their CSR initiatives by fostering innovation and encouraging employees to pursue new ideas while leveraging existing technologies and resources. It can lead to the development of new products and services, cost-saving innovations, and improved resource efficiency, all contributing to sustainable financial performance.

CONCLUSION

Conclusively, this study emphasises the importance of CSR initiatives and innovative approaches to achieving sustainable financial performance for companies listed in Palestine. This study revealed that companies prioritising CSR activities and demonstrating a commitment to societal responsibility can achieve positive financial outcomes even during challenging economic and political circumstances. In addition, listed Palestinian firms engaging in frugal innovation activities do not play a significant role due to complicated contexts, scarcity of resources, and unrest. Furthermore, the findings suggest that listed companies can maximise the potential benefits of CSR initiatives and enhance their financial performance by adopting a balanced approach to innovation involving exploitative and explorative strategies. In particular, the study highlights the mediating effect of innovation ambidexterity on the relationship between CSR activities and sustainable financial performance. Listed companies can foster innovative activities (frugal innovation and innovation ambidexterity) and achieve sustainable financial performance by prioritising transparency in their CSR activities.

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Effects of Law Enforcement and Risk Perception on COVID-19 Fake News Sharing Behavior among Malaysian Social Media Users

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ABSTRACT

Malaysia faces many delicate issues concerning race and religion, as well as political disputes that fuel fake news proliferation on social media. The government resorts to laws and regulations, namely the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998 (Act 588) and the Penal Code (Act 574), to fight fake news in Malaysia. Nevertheless, there is limited knowledge of the effectiveness of law enforcement in combating the spread of fake news in the country. This study investigates the effects of the perceived effectiveness of law enforcement and the perceived risk of fake news on fake news sharing of COVID-19 issues to fill this void. This study tested the relationships using multiple regression analysis using survey data from 394 social media users. The findings revealed a significant effect of perceived risk on fake news-sharing behaviour, and younger and less educated people tended to share fake news on social media. Effects of law enforcement effectiveness, however, were found insignificant. The findings underscore the importance of educating the public on the risks of fake news as a sustainable measure to curtail the spread in the Malaysian context.

Keywords: Fake news, information literacy, law enforcement, Malaysia, perceived risks

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INTRODUCTION

With the rise of fake news on social media, researchers quickly recognized the serious threat it poses. Hou et al. (2020) found that the more people rely on social media for COVID-19 information, the higher their perception of risk regarding the virus. Pennycook et al. (2020) observed that fake news about COVID-19 has spread widely online, often suggesting dubious preventive measures and coping tips. Similarly, Lampos et al. (2020) discovered that a flood of false information led many to believe in ineffective remedies like using salty water, drinking bleach, and eating oregano. The spread of such misleading health news can endanger people's safety, as it might prompt them to take harmful actions (Pulido et al., 2020). The spread of fake news during a health crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, at the age of social media poses a significant challenge for society and policymakers.

Malaysia has been ascribed to resort to laws and enforcement in fighting fake news. The government has implemented existing laws, such as the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998 (Act 588) and the Penal Code (Act 574), to deter people from sharing fake news. While these measures have been used to curb the spread of COVID-19-related fake news to some extent, there is still limited understanding of their effectiveness. There are limited studies on local contexts, too. A few studies appeared sparingly in the literature focus on patterns of unethical information sharing on social media among Malaysians (Yusof et al., 2020) and factors affecting fake news sharing in the Malaysian context (Balakrishnan et al., 2021: Omar et al., 2024). Studies focusing on predictors of fake news sharing found that Malaysians shared COVID-19-related fake news out of ignorance, for entertainment, and sometimes with altruistic intentions (Balakrishnan et al., 2021) and that environmental factors have greater effects on fake news sharing than individual factors (Omar et al., 2024). These studies, however, ignored the factors that can deter people from sharing fake news, such as law enforcement effectiveness and perceived risks. It is important to note that people refrained from sharing unverified information due to fears of legal repercussions (Kumar, 2023), social backlash (Altay et al., 2020), or personal harm (Waszak et al., 2018). Understanding these perceptions is essential for developing strategies to enhance the effectiveness of law enforcement efforts and future interventions for fake news intervention.

This study aims to determine if a strong belief in law enforcement's ability to counter misinformation and heightened fear of potential consequences could discourage Malaysians from sharing fake news on social media. It also investigates the influence of demographic factors, such as age, gender, and education, in determining fake news sharing of COVID-19 news in the Malaysian context.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed an online survey to collect data from 394 respondents using purposive sampling. The survey was administered in English and Malay and distributed via social media, targeting Malaysian social media users aged above 18. Five-point Likert scales were used to measure key variables of the study: perceived law enforcement effectiveness and perceived risk and fake news sharing on social media.

Perceived law enforcement effectiveness is the degree to which individuals believe that authorities can effectively manage and curb fake news. An example item is "I feel confident that law enforcement is effective in dealing with fake news spread." Perceived risk in fake news sharing measures the extent to which individuals perceive sharing fake news on social media as a risky behaviour that could have negative consequences for them. The questions to assess Perceived Risk include: "I fear that something unpleasant can happen to me if I am caught sharing fake news."

Fake news sharing is the dependent variable that measures the degree to which individuals have shared fake news on social media. An example item is "I have shared information related to COVID-19 that seems accurate at a time, and I later found was made up." Meanwhile, demographic variables included in this study are gender, age, and education. They are categorical variables depicting male and female for gender, young and old for age, and high and low levels for education. Table 1 provides a detailed demographic breakdown of the respondents.

Table 1
Demographic information of the respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Gender		
Male	118	29.9
Female	276	70.1
Age		
18–24	65	16.5
25–34	134	34.0
35–44	115	29.2
45–54	50	12.2
55–64	20	5.1
65 and above	10	2.5
Education Level		
High School	33	8.4
Diploma	64	16.2
Bachelor's Degree	187	47.5
Master's Degree	72	18.3
PhD	23	5.8
Others	17	4.3

Note. N = 394

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study used multiple regression analysis to test the hypotheses of this study, which aims to identify the effects of the perceived effectiveness of law enforcement, the perceived risk of sharing fake news, and demographic variables on fake news sharing. The results show that age (young), education level (low level), and perceived risks have significant effects on fake news sharing among Malaysian social media users; meanwhile, the effects of gender and perceived law enforcement effectiveness were insignificant. Perceived risk has a negative relationship with fake news sharing (β = -.141, p = .027), suggesting that when people perceive higher risks in sharing fake news, they are less likely to share fake news on social media. As for demographic factors, education and age were negatively associated with fake news sharing. The negative results suggest low education and younger age predicted fake news sharing.

The regression model shows that the perceived risk, age and education explained 39.1% of the variance in the dependent variable. It suggests that while these factors play a significant role, the remaining 60.9% is attributable to other variables not accounted for in this study. Further details are provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2
Predictors of fake news sharing

Variables	**β (*p*)**
Gender	-.015 (.771)
Age	-.138 (.006)
Education Level	-.106 (.036)
Perceived Effectiveness of Law Enforcement	0.32 (.613)
Perceived Risks	-.141 (.027)
R^2	.050
Adjusted R^2	.037
F	4.061
Sig	.001

Note. N = 394

This study reveals that many Malaysians perceive law enforcement as an effective measure to combat disseminating fake news. The descriptive results suggest that most Malaysian social media users believe imposing high fines, removing content from social media, and court injunctions can deter them from sharing false information online. This belief, however, was found to be insignificant in predicting fake news sharing. What seems to be statistically significant in deterring fake news sharing is the high perception of risks associated with the behaviour. Simply put, the perception of risks associated with fake news sharing can deter Malaysian social media users from disseminating fake news on social media. Interestingly, their high perception of the effectiveness of laws could not lead to the deterrent of fake news spread.

The findings are paradoxical, yet they provide significant insights into the best intervention strategies to curb fake news in the Malaysian context. This study suggests the importance of increasing public awareness about the danger of fake news. Encouraging social media users to control their Internet use in a day could immediately reduce fake news exposure. Yet, education is key to a sustainable preventive measure in addressing the threats of fake news. This study recommends introducing information literacy courses at primary schools to expose the young generation to the risks of fake news and preventive measures at an early age.

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Exploring the Factors of Corporate Social Responsibility Practices in Small and Medium Enterprises: A Study among Chinese Private Enterprises in Chengdu, China

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ABSTRACT

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is vital for the sustained success of businesses. Traditionally, large enterprises have been the primary implementers of CSR, setting them apart from private small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Consequently, this study investigates the factors influencing CSR practices in SMEs among private businesses in Chengdu, China. Employing a quantitative approach and combining the Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice (KAP) theory with the four components of CSR, the research examines 15 hypotheses to explore the relationships between business owners' knowledge, attitude, and practices related to CSR elements. The sample comprises 400 entrepreneurs from private SMEs in Chengdu, selected through snowball sampling and surveyed via an online questionnaire. The results indicate that all corresponding knowledge, attitudes, and practices exhibit a significantly positive correlation, confirming the importance of knowledge and attitudes in shaping Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices among private enterprises in Chengdu, China. The study concluded by highlighting its contribution to the existing body of knowledge and offering recommendations for future research.

Keywords: Business owners, corporate social responsibility practices, KAP theory, private businesses, SMEs

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INTRODUCTION

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is increasingly vital in global business (Kucharska & Kowalczyk, 2018), though its impact varies by country. CSR gained prominence in China in the 1990s, driven by government advocacy, as China emerged as a major economic power (Yin & Zhang, 2012).

While CSR research often focuses on large corporations, there is limited attention on SMEs, especially in China (Zheng et al., 2022). Given their economic importance (Jin et al., 2020), it is crucial to understand the factors influencing CSR in Chinese SMEs. This study examines SME owners' CSR knowledge, attitudes, and practices based on Porter and Kramer's (2006) four CSR justifications. The findings aim to guide scholars, practitioners, and business owners in promoting CSR and corporate sustainability.

Research Objectives

The research objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To assess the level of knowledge, attitudes, and practices with reference to the four elements of CSR among private businesses.
2. To assess the relationship between knowledge, attitudes, and practices with reference to the 4 elements of CSR.

MATERIALS & METHODS

This study quantitatively explores the relationship between knowledge, attitude, and practice in CSR across Chengdu's private manufacturing SMEs, which are key to the region's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employment. SPSS is used to test variable differences, focusing on CSR and corporate sustainability. The sample size 400 meets Hair's minimum requirement, Cohen's (1992) 80% power, and Thompson's model complexity rules. Snowball sampling effectively reaches SME owners in Chengdu, expanding the sample while reducing costs and time and improving data quality and diversity. Data is collected using a 68-item structured survey covering respondent information, CSR knowledge, attitudes, and practices, measured on a five-point Likert scale. The survey was returned and translated for accuracy. The online survey will be hosted on *Questionnaire Stars* (He et al., 2019). Preliminary questions will screened for Chengdu private business owners; non-qualifiers will be excluded.

Research model

Research model is shown in Figure 1.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile

The demographic data shows that most respondents are male (55.5%) with diverse educational backgrounds, mainly bachelor's degrees (41.3%). They work mostly in food manufacturing (22.5%) or apparel and footwear (22.3%). Most businesses are 1–5 years old (47.3%) and primarily small or micro enterprises (66.5%).

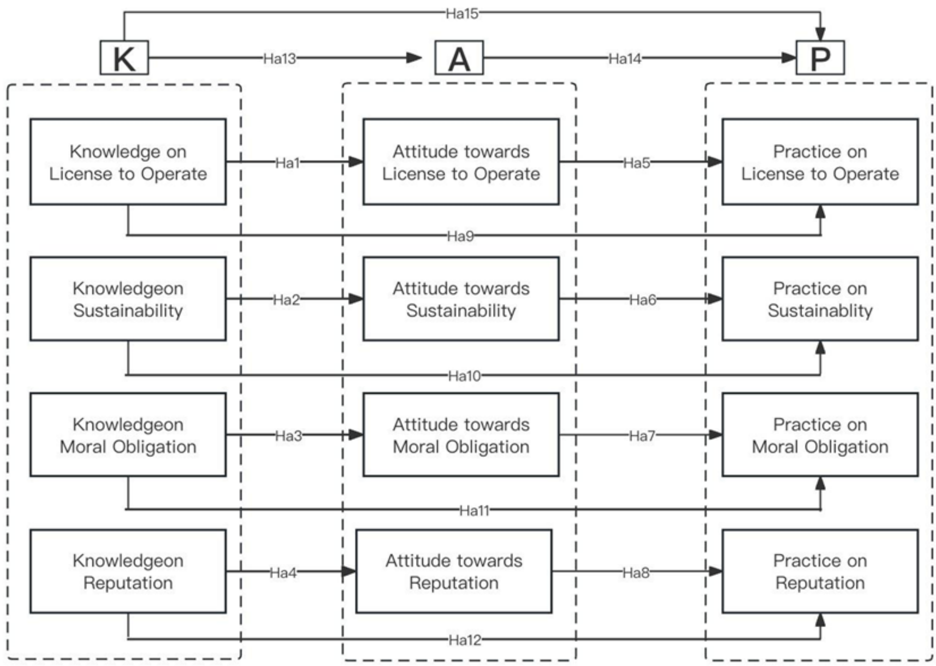

Figure 1. Research model (Porter & Kramer, 2006)

Reliability Analysis

Knowledge (K), Attitude (A), and Practice (P) on CSR show strong internal consistency with Cronbach's α values of 0.925, 0.876, and 0.897, respectively.

Descriptive Analysis

Knowledge Attitude and Practice on CSR

Respondents have high CSR knowledge ($M = 3.94$) and positive attitudes (M=4.34), but CSR practices are moderate ($M = 3.78$). Greater focus on 'sustainability' is needed in both knowledge and attitudes.

Preliminary Analysis Correlation Analysis

Correlation Between Knowledge and Attitude on CSR

The correlation tests show significant relationships between each knowledge and corresponding attitude variable: Knowledge on License to Operate (KL) and Attitude toward License to Operate (AL) ($\rho = 0.301$, $p = .000$), Knowledge on Sustainability (KS) and Attitude toward Sustainability (AS) ($\rho = 0.279$, $p = .000$), Knowledge on

Moral Obligation （KM ）and Attitude toward Moral Obligation (AM) ($\rho = 0.335$, $p = .000$), Knowledge on Reputation (KR) and Attitude toward Reputation (AR) ($\rho = 0.322$, $p = .000$), and most notably, Knowledge on CSR (K) and Attitude toward CSR(A) ($\rho = 0.549$, $p = .000$).

Correlation Between Attitude and Practice on CSR

The correlation tests between attitude and practice variables show significant relationships: AL and Practice on License to Operate (PL) ($\rho = 0.616$, $p = .000$), AS and Practice on Sustainability (PS) ($\rho = 0.605$, $p = .000$), AM and Practice on Moral Obligation (PM) ($\rho = 0.752$, $p = .000$), AR and Practice on Reputation (PR) ($\rho = 0.727$, $p = .000$), and most notably, A and Practice on CSR (P) ($\rho = 0.799$, $p = .000$).

Correlation Knowledge and Practice on CSR

Correlation tests between knowledge and practice variables show significant relationships: KL and PL ($\rho = 0.784$, p = .000), KS and PS ($\rho = 0.703$, p = .000), KM and PM ($\rho = 0.704$, p = .000), KR and PR ($\rho = 0.756$, p = .000), and most notably, K and P ($\rho = 0.848$, p = .000).

RO1 **:** This study evaluated CSR-related knowledge, attitudes, and practices among private business owners. Owners are most knowledgeable and active in the “license to operate” area, while practices related to “moral obligation” are the lowest. Attitudes toward CSR are generally positive, especially for the license to operate, with less favourable views on reputation. Private businesses demonstrate a strong understanding of and a positive attitude toward CSR, although there is room for improvement in their sense of moral obligation.

RO2 **:** All 15 proposed hypotheses were confirmed, highlighting the significant role of business owners’ knowledge of CSR components in shaping their attitudes and behaviours. Higher CSR knowledge in Chengdu SMEs leads to better attitudes and practices, with a notable gap in sustainability knowledge. Targeted education, especially in sustainability, is needed. “License to operate” has the greatest influence on CSR practices, suggesting that focusing on this area can enhance overall CSR performance.

This study enriches existing knowledge by establishing a model that integrates CSR theory and the Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice (KAP) theory, validating its applicability within the unique context of Chinese SMEs in Chengdu. Quantitative methods and a large sample boost reliability and lay the groundwork for future research. The findings deliver actionable recommendations for Chengdu’s business owners and policymakers, emphasizing the importance of targeted educational initiatives to enhance CSR awareness and engagement, ultimately contributing to sustainable development and addressing the challenges faced by local SMEs.

CONCLUSION

The study shows that CSR knowledge is key to positive attitudes and practices in Chengdu SMEs. It recommends better CSR education, especially in sustainability, and collaboration with educational and industry bodies for effective training. Promoting positive attitudes through targeted campaigns and incentives and enhancing internal management with strategies from larger firms will boost CSR implementation and regional sustainability.

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The Mental Health Status of E-Cigarette Users in Hulu Langat District, Selangor

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the mental health status of e-cigarette users and associated factors, emphasising the importance of ethical marketing for sustainable mental wellness. A cross-sectional study was conducted among 303 Malaysian e-cigarette users in Hulu Langat District, Selangor, using the DASS-21 questionnaire to measure depression, anxiety, and stress. Multivariate logistic regression was applied to analyse associated factors. Prevalence rates for depression, anxiety, and stress were 11.9%, 21.5%, and 10.6%, respectively. Factors associated with mental health outcomes included experimentation, withdrawal symptoms, exposure to promotions, and beliefs about e-cigarettes' efficacy in smoking cessation. E-cigarette users experience varying levels of psychological distress. Addressing withdrawal symptoms and promoting ethical marketing practices are crucial for reducing mental health issues and contributing to sustainable community mental health.

Keywords: Anxiety, depression, e-cigarettes, mental health, stress, tobacco

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INTRODUCTION

The prevalence of e-cigarette use among smokers has increased rapidly, with 38.5% of Malaysian daily smokers reporting ever-use in 2019 (Ab Rahman et al., 2019). This trend suggests a misconception about e-cigarettes as an effective smoking cessation aid. Studies show that, on average, using e-cigarettes for cessation did not improve successful quitting or prevent relapse. The rapid growth and the increasing prevalence of use indicate potentially misleading marketing strategies. E-cigarettes are often framed as alternatives to combustible cigarettes, with advertisements placed in retail outlets and across various media channels (Collins et al., 2019).

While studies have shown strong associations between conventional cigarette smoking and mental health issues, the psychological impacts of e-cigarette use remain largely unexplored. Recent research suggests that e-cigarette use is associated with depression, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempts (Fluharty et al., 2017).

This study aims to assess the mental health status of e-cigarette users in Hulu Langat District, Selangor, examining the prevalence of mental health issues, associated factors, and potential correlations between e-cigarette usage and mental well-being. By investigating socioeconomic status, e-cigarette use patterns, and coping strategies, this study seeks to provide evidence on the relationship between e-cigarette use and mental health disorders in Malaysia.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The cross-sectional study involved a quantitative survey of 303 Malaysian e-cigarette users aged 18 and above. The participants were recruited through non-probability convenience sampling in Hulu Langat District, Selangor, using a validated self-reported questionnaire. The study collected data on depression, anxiety, and stress levels using the Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale 21 (DASS-21) Questionnaire, alongside socioeconomic status, e-cigarette use patterns, and coping strategies of e-cigarette users. Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics to present the prevalence of depression, anxiety, and stress among e-cigarette users while analysing its associated factors. Multivariate logistic regression was performed on potential confounders.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Out of the 303 participants of the study, the majority were male (88.4%), Malay (80.2%), above 30 years old (58.1%), single (65.7%), income level below RM5000 (51.5%), and attained a bachelor's degree in education level (41.3%). The prevalence rates of depression, anxiety, and stress among the participants from this study were 11.9%, 21.5%, and 10.6%, respectively. The final multivariate regression model indicated that individuals who smoke e-cigarettes experiment Adjusted Odds Ratio (AOR) 0.335, 95% Confidence Interval (CI) 0.118,0.947, p-value <0.05), individuals experiencing sleepiness (AOR 3.230, 95% CI 1.107, 9.422, p-value <0.05) and frustration during withdrawal (AOR 3.137, 95% CI 0.971, 10.133 p-value <0.05), individuals using a quitline (AOR 17.076, 95% CI 1.418, 205.606, p-value <0.05), individuals exposed to e-cigarette promotions on the internet

(AOR 2.649, 95% CI 1.073, 6.536, p-value <0.05), and individuals who believe e-cigarettes help to quit smoking (AOR 0.391, 95% CI 0.168, 0.909, p-value <0.05) were associated with depression.

Additionally, individuals experiencing withdrawal symptoms during periods of non-e-cigarette use (AOR 5.793, 95% CI 1.549, 21.66, p-value <0.05) and nicotine replacement therapy as an intervention to quit smoking (AOR 23.147, 95% CI 1.357, 394.889, p-value <0.05) were associated with anxiety. Finally, individuals starting e-cigarette use after 20 years of age (AOR 4.203, 95% CI 0.844, 20.922, p-value <0.05), individuals using e-cigarettes to experiment (AOR 0.552, 95% CI 0.179, 1.703, p-value <0.05), individuals experiencing depressed mood (AOR 4.213, 95% CI 1.392, 12.752, p-value <0.05), sleepiness (AOR 3.529, 95% CI 1.079, 11.538, p-value <0.05), and frustration during withdrawal (AOR 4.912, 95% CI 1.385, 17.414, p-value <0.05), individuals using a Quitline (AOR 42.033, 95% CI 2.584, 683.641, p-value <0.05), and praying or meditating (AOR 0.125, 95% CI 0.019, 0.804, p-value <0.05) were associated with stress.

The study revealed that most e-cigarette users utilise products containing nicotine (89.1%). It was also observed that participants were intrigued by the idea of trying e-cigarettes (42.6%), and most participants held the belief that e-cigarettes aid in smoking cessation (70.6%), thus perpetuating a cycle of dependence on them. This cycle is likely to have psychological ramifications. Furthermore, due to participants having a low level of knowledge of the hazards associated with e-cigarettes (47.2%), there is a pressing need for increased efforts to educate the public about the risks linked to utilising e-cigarettes. It emphasises the importance of raising public awareness about the risks associated with e-cigarettes.

Additionally, it was observed that withdrawal symptoms have consistently emerged as a significant factor associated with adverse mental health outcomes, including depression, anxiety, and stress, among e-cigarette users. Regular use of nicotine leads to dependence, and when e-cigarette users attempt to reduce or quit, they experience withdrawal symptoms due to the sudden lack of nicotine stimulation. This study found that withdrawal symptoms, such as sleepiness and frustration, were associated with nearly three times the likelihood of experiencing depression (Adjusted OR = 2.96, $p = 0.032$; Adjusted OR = 3.14, $p = 0.053$). It aligns with previous research suggesting that withdrawal-induced mood disturbances can exacerbate depressive symptoms due to the sudden lack of nicotine, which is often used to regulate mood (Korhonen et al., 2006).

Similarly, the presence of withdrawal symptoms had an even more pronounced association with anxiety, with individuals experiencing these symptoms being almost six times more likely to suffer from anxiety (Adjusted OR = 5.793, $p = 0.009$). This finding is consistent with previous research, which has shown that nicotine withdrawal can lead to significant increases in anxiety symptoms, contributing to the difficulty of smoking cessation (Hughes, 2007).

In terms of stress, the study revealed that symptoms like depressed mood, sleepiness, and frustration during withdrawal were significantly associated with higher stress levels (Adjusted ORs = 4.213, 3.529, and 4.912, respectively, all $p < 0.05$). These results are supported by earlier work showing that withdrawal symptoms can lead to heightened stress as individuals struggle with both the physical and emotional discomfort of quitting, contributing to the difficulty of maintaining smoking cessation (Piasecki et al., 1998). Overall, this underscores the potential dangers of e-cigarettes, as experiencing withdrawal symptoms could lead to dependence, making it challenging for users to break free from this cycle.

CONCLUSION

The study can aid policymakers in the need for stricter regulations on e-cigarette marketing and sales, especially to vulnerable populations like adolescents. Policies can include age restrictions, advertising bans, and warning labels about mental health risks. It is especially useful in the regulation of nicotine content. Policies regulating the nicotine content in e-cigarettes can help mitigate the risk of addiction and its associated mental health impacts.

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