Corporate Social Responsibility Communication in Sports-Related Social Enterprise

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Abstract: Socially responsible practices can improve customer trust and social recognition in addition to an organization’s reputation and image. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices can be utilized to maintain a mutually beneficial relationship with stakeholders; this topic warrants investigation. Sports can be considered entrepreneurial because it constantly adapts to changing societal needs. Effective communication with stakeholders is critical for organizations that undertake socially responsible practices to ensure stakeholders received the intended messages. Consumers’ purchase intention and customer citizenship behavior are primary concerns for businesses and organizations. Purchase intention and customer citizenship behavior are vital to the success of organizations. Thus, this study explored the impact of CSR communication on customer citizenship behavior and purchase intention in the context of a sports-related social enterprise. The research setting of this study was a nonprofit organization in Taiwan founded by a popular religious group. A pretest-posttest two-group between-subject experimental design was adopted. The participants were randomly assigned to either the experimental group (with CSR communication) or control group (without CSR communication). A total of 100 customers of the social enterprise were recruited through random sampling. The participants were randomly selected from a consumer database and sent an online survey. Two separate one-way analyses of covariance (ANCOVAs) were performed with one two-level between-subject factor (with or without CSR communication) for the two dependent variables (customer citizenship behavior and purchase intention). The one-way ANCOVA for customer citizenship behavior indicated a statistically significant result. Further examination of the independent variable (with or without CSR communication) revealed a significant difference in customer citizenship behavior. The experimental group exhibited higher mean scores in customer citizenship behavior than those of the control group. Moreover, the second one-way ANCOVA for purchase intention revealed a statistically significant result. Further exploration of the independent variable indicated a significant difference in purchase intention. The participants who received CSR communication exhibited higher mean scores in purchase intention than those of the participants who did not. Although the design may have been simple, this study is unique because it demonstrated that CSR communication through social media significantly affects customer citizenship behavior and purchase intention in the context of sports-related social enterprises. The managerial implications of this study may provide social entrepreneurs with scientific evidence regarding the effectiveness of CSR. In addition, this study made a theoretical contribution by enriching the literature on business communications and sports-related social entrepreneurship.

Keywords: consumer attitude, consumer communication, organizational citizenship, purchase intention

Conference Title: ICPESS 2023: International Conference on Physical Education and Sport Science

Conference Location: Tokyo, Japan

Conference Dates: July 17-18, 2023