Level of Awareness and Support of Bacolod Consumers to the CSR Practicing Enterprise

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Abstract

The study reported the level of awareness and support of Bacolod consumers to the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practicing enterprises. CSR efforts in an industry can influence society in four main areas namely, the environment, community, workplace and the marketplace. The descriptive research design was employed. The result showed that in the city of Bacolod, Philippines, the consumers are highly aware of the idea and practices of corporate social responsibility. Thus, the consumers show maximum support to CSR practicing business through their willingness to pay a higher price for their products/services. Though the respondents already manifest a high level of awareness, an advocacy program will still be relevant to increase their level of awareness about corporate social responsibility further. Aside from considering the economic policies and practices, there is also a need to focus and explore on other areas where the CSR is applicable especially in the areas of the workplace, marketplace, community, and environment.

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INTRODUCTION

The relation between business and society has always been a much-discussed topic. Since the mid-1950s scholars have been studying and investigating ideas and theories concerning the responsibilities of business in the community. To these social responsibilities of business, we refer to corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Secchi, 2007). Besides the plenty of literature on the topic, however, there have been formulated strong critiques on the concept of CSR (Eupen, 2009).

Concerns about corporate social responsibility (CSR) have developed significantly during the last two decades (Campbell, 2005; Ju, 2009). The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility is considered as difficult or worse, as a concept that has been neglected (Godfrey & Hatch, 2007; Nijhof & Jeurissen, 2006; Rowley & Berman, 2000).The most obvious gap in the existing literature relates to the limited number of studies on the link between CSR and firm performance from developing countries' perspectives (Moore & Spence, 2006).

In recent years, the concept of CSR has become an international phenomenon across all business areas (Ghasemi and Nejati, 2013). As Warren (2003) points out, the relationship between business and society is a complicated phenomenon (Eeva, 2012). In the literature, researchers found numerous reasons for this phenomenon. A first reason is the continuing addition of current concepts caused confusion and overlay, without developing the accuracy of the notion itself (Godfrey & Hatch, 2007; Kakabadse, Kakabadse & Rozuel, 2007; Rowley & Berman, 2000). It is interesting to observe that none of the definitions defines the social responsibility of

business, as so famously discussed by Milton Friedman (1970), but rather describe CSR as a phenomenon. This might be the cause of the definitional confusion: it is not so much a confusion of how CSR is defined, as it is about what constitutes the social responsibility of business (Dahlsrud, 2008).

A second reason is the industry and context specificity of Corporate Social Responsibility approaches, which makes the operationalization of the concept somewhat complex (Rowley & Berman, 2000). The malleability of the CSR concept makes it challenging to operationalize a definition that explains when a company is or is not socially, ethically, or politically responsible or acting by conflicting and confusing norms of society (Devinney, 2009).

Thirdly, many scholars critiqued this 'rational' approach of CSR, which leads to the general CSR rankings for example (Nijhof & Jeurissen, 2006). That this approach of CSR doesn't always work, was proved by business cases like Enron and Ahold, which were both considered as best practices because of high CSR ranking (Nijhof & Jeurissen, 2006). A too linear approach to the concept of CSR may stop up in handful categorization, but it gives us no insights into the underlying reality of how people make sense of CSR within the organization. It seems we have to take this uniqueness of CSR strategies more into account (Basu & Palazzo, 2008; Rowley & Berman, 2000; Smith, 2003). Smith (2003) also emphasizes the importance of this uniqueness: "Clearly, a firm's social responsibility strategy, if genuinely and carefully conceived, should be unique, despite the similarity of the increasing number of corporate reports on CSR. As well as a fit with industry features, it should display the individual company' s

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mission and values and therefore be different from the CSR strategy of even its closest competitors".

Over the years, the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) has continued to grow in importance and significance (Othman & Othman, 2014). The idea that business enterprises have some responsibilities to society beyond that of making profits for the shareholders has been around for centuries (Othman & Othman, 2014). Thus, corporate social responsibility is a commitment to improving community well-being through discretionary business practices and contributions of corporate resources (Gupta, 2014). CSR has become a vital part of the strategies of companies around the globe to promote sustainable development (Welford & Frost, 2006; Naem & Welford, 2009; Hameed, 2010). CSR shows new millennium challenges for the corporate world (Hameed, 2010). The challenge for corporate social responsibility (CSR) in developing countries is outlined by a vision that was derived in 2000 into the Millennium Development Goals—'a world with limited poverty, hunger and disease, numerous survival prospects for mothers and their infants, better educated children, equal opportunities for women, and a healthier environment' (UN, 2006; Visser, 2009).

However, the issue of corporate social responsibility (CSR) has been debated since the 1950s (Ismail, 2009). Latest analyses by Secchi (2007) and Lee (2008) reported that the definition of CSR has been changing in meaning and practice. The critique of the theories supports the knowledge of CSR that goes beyond its traditional meanings; therefore, CSR requires a multidisciplinary method in its viewpoint and practice. Since the recent meaning of CSR is complex, comprehending the theories

allows experts to have a better understanding about corporation-society connections, in which theories and applications of CSR are determined by various economic and non-economic as well as internal and external drives (Ismail, 2009).

In the Philippines, Francisco Roman (2007) cited the framework of Gisela Velasco in evaluating the evolution of CSR networks. The development of CSR networks starts with the decade of donations when companies primarily provided financial assistance to NGOs and charitable institutions. The second phase is the decade of organizations when corporations partnered with intermediaries or established their foundation to undertake CSR. The third phase is the decade of citizenship when companies "incorporated end-users in the design and implementation of the CSR programs." The fourth phase was the decade of continuous improvement when corporations internalized CSR programs in policy formulation. The current phase is the decade of engagement where corporations' CSR programs address the concerns of society in general. Although CSR is at varying levels of development in various Asian countries, CSR has followed a similar evolution in (Herrera, Roman, Alarilla, Jesus, & Uy, 2011). Also, the PBSP surveyed the existing CSR activities of corporations in the Philippines. The dominant practice was cash donations followed by in-kind giving, sponsorship of causes, employee giving, employee volunteering and fundraising from other sources outside of the company to add to their CSR activities (Harrison-Broninski, K., 2005). CSR in the Philippines faces some challenging realities for a while it is clear that CSR activities have positive effects, achieving the ultimate goal of "making life good, not for a few but everyone" (Santos, 2004). This may take several years, possibly

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decades. A solid national CSR agenda is therefore called for to optimize the efforts and collaborations of all (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, 2005).

On the other hand, consumer CSR awareness plays a vital role in reactions to the company (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004). The ability of CSR to produce positive consumer attitudes has been extensively investigated, particularly using an experimental approach in which consumer awareness represents the independent variable that is experimentally manipulated (Auger & Devinney, 2003; Brown & Dacin, 1997; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). Consequently, CSR awareness has played a major role in previous research into CSR beliefs (Sen et al. 2006). However, CSR awareness may not lead to favorable CSR beliefs because consumers' perceptions of the underlying motivations for company actions may drive their evaluations of that company and its beliefs. Ellen, Pam Scholder, Webb, & Mohr, Lois (2006) argue that consumers can attribute such a business with being motivated by both extrinsic and intrinsic motives. These two types of motivation can be considered of as extremes on a continuum where consumers locate the general balance of company motives in their CSR involvement.

A core focus of corporate sustainability is stakeholder relations, of which corporate social responsibility (CSR) can be one facet (Porter & Kramer, 2006; Soares, Marquis, & Lee, 2011). A company committed to CSR acts as a good corporate citizen, expanding the definition of success beyond profit maximization to also consider the organization's impact, both positive and negative, on the world (Mullerat, 2007; Soares et al., 2011). Globally, CSR activities can span four areas: the workplace, the marketplace, the community,

and the environment (Grosser, 2009; Soares et al., 2011). Leading companies go beyond compliance, approaching CSR proactively, taking voluntary actions in advance of stakeholder pressure (Grosser, 2010; Soares et al., 2011). Furthermore, Baker (2001) stated that CSR efforts in an organization could impact society in four main areas namely, the environment, community, workplace and the marketplace. Also, Raman, Lim, & Nair (2012), assert that concerning business quality, a firm (operated by profits) requires marking its impact on the marketplace, workplace, environment, and on the community. Besides the transparency and corruption issues related to scandals, scholars investigated the relationship of CSR to various social, environmental, economic and legal issues, rising from the expectations of various stakeholder groups (Carroll, 1979, 1991; Chen and Wang, 2011).

The researchers are passionate about CSR because they firmly believe that if well understood and practiced by more businesses, it can benefit all its stakeholders. It can promote policies and practices for the well-being of the employees, on meeting the needs of customers, in building a relationship with the members of the immediate community and more importantly, challenging companies to create initiatives for the preservation and conservation of the environment. Thus, many studies were reviewed, and it was reviewed that several benefits abound to organizations that practice corporate social responsibility; several advantages were identified; these among others include: enhanced brand and reputation, reduction in operation costs, attracting new customers, balances power with responsibility, discourages government regulation, improves a company's public image, promotes long run profit, improved relations with the investment community and better access to capital, enhanced

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employee relations, productivity and innovation and stronger relations within communities through stakeholder engagement (Asemah, Okpanachi, & Edegoh, 2013).

However, before business enterprises can be motivated to implement or enhance their CSR practices, they should first be provided with data as to how aware consumers are about CSR and whether or not they are willing to pay higher prices for the products of CSR practicing businesses. Hence, this study was being undertaken.

Objectives of the Study

To encourage more businesses to practice CSR, they have to determine the level of awareness of Bacolod consumers and the support they are willing to give to CSR practicing enterprises. In particular, the researchers aim to answer these problems:

1. To determine if Bacolod consumers are aware of the concept of corporate social responsibility.
2. To determine if Bacolod consumers are aware of the CSR practices.
3. To discover the level of awareness of Bacolod consumers on corporate social responsibility when grouped according to age, sex, educational attainment and the village where they belong and when taken as a whole.
4. To find out the criteria of Bacolod consumers use when patronizing products.
5. To ascertain if Bacolod consumers are willing to pay more for products and services provided by CSR practicing business enterprises.

FRAMEWORK

Corporate Social Responsibility comprises a wide range of practices as stated in CSR Framework by Bursa Malaysia (2006). It discusses the responsibility of corporation towards the marketplace, respect for the environment and community and also responsibility towards workplace issues (Yusri & Amran, 2012).

Besides theoretical developments on CSR, it has been an essential agenda for governmental and international commissions such as European Union, World Business Council for Sustainable, and World Bank. One of the commonly accepted definitions of CSR was put forward by European Commission as: "a concept whereby organizations combine social and environmental concerns in their business operations and their interactions among their stakeholders based on voluntarism" (Commission of the European Communities, 2010a). Also, many business and non-governmental organizations have produced frameworks, assessment systems to manage and measure corporate social responsibility (Business in the Community, 2010; AccountAbility, 2008; Global Reporting Institute, 2006; Commission of the European Communities, 2010b; International Organization for Standardization, 2010). For instance, BITC CR Index has been published by Business in the Community (nonprofit organization) as a voluntary benchmark system, which guides organizations while managing their corporate responsibilities in a well-organized way. The index defines four management areas such as the marketplace, workplace, environment, and community (Business in the Community, 2010). Marketplace activities refer to the business relations such as stakeholder management, supply chain activities, transparent business

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transactions. Workplace activities are mostly related to employee related issues like continuous improvement, equal opportunities, work-life balance, health & safety. Environmental activities mean responsible concerning climate change, carbon footprint, pollution, waste management, energy efficiency, etc. Social projects refer to the philanthropic contributions, voluntary actions, supporting local people and economy and community investments (Duman & Mcdermott, 2014).

Moreover, the focus of the CSR practices are mainly in four areas namely; community, environment, marketplace, and workplace with no order of priority since Bursa Malaysia acknowledged the diversity of those listed companies. Nevertheless, these guidelines are flexible and require minimum disclosure in their report (Yusri, & Amran, 2012).

Holme and Watts (2000) regard CSR as a commitment of business to contribute to sustainable economic development, working with employees, their families, the local community and society at large to improve their quality of life. Meanwhile, Joyner, Payne, and Raiborn (2002) noted that CSR is divisions of economic, legal, ethical and discretionary exercises of a business entity as adapted to the values and expectations of society. They also added that CSR is the fundamental expectations of the company concerning initiatives that take the kind of protection to public health, public safety, and the environment. In this notion, they explained that values and ethics influence the extent of a corporation's perceived social responsibility that is affected by societal activities, norms. CSR typically clarifies on how companies manage the business processes to produce an overall positive impact on society. The business process included

marketplace (comprising shareholders, customers, and financial analysts); workplace (involving unions and employees); community (local communities); and environment (comprising government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (Baker, 2004).

Crane, Matten, and Spence (2008) refer to four distinct, yet interrelated, CSR practices, namely, workplace, marketplace, environment, and community.

Workplace practices referring to the kinds and quality of products that a company produces, how and from where the resources for these products were procured and the impact of these products regarding health and safety on consumers and society. Markets include consumer markets, financial markets, and business-to-business markets (Crane, Matten & Spence, 2008; GTZ, 2009). A workplace also refers to the internal functioning of companies concerning workforce issues such as working conditions, health and safety, equal opportunity, remuneration and benefits, off-shoring and HIV/AIDS (Smit, 2013). It is also a variety of issues which employees and employers face while at work, this includes labor relations, personal and professional conflict issues, health and safety, discrimination and harassment (Fox and Stallworth, 2009). Moreover, Stallworth and dan Kleiner (1996) affirms that a well- design workplaces enhance the dissemination of information and networking regardless of job boundaries by allowing free communication among departmental areas.

Marketplace practices referring to the internal functioning of companies concerning workforce issues such as working conditions, health and safety, equal opportunity, remuneration and benefits, off-shoring and

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HIV/AIDS. (Crane, Matten & Spence, 2008; GTZ, 2009). Marketplace also involves the kinds and quality of products that a company produces, how and from where the resources for these products were procured and the impact of these products regarding health and safety on consumers and society. Markets include consumer markets, financial markets and business-to-business markets (Smit, 2013). Likewise, marketplace shows how companies and business conduct into practice and operation (Faisal, 2010).

The environment area includes the prevention of pollution, waste management, energy conservation and recycling, and also deals with corporate strategies towards climate change, biodiversity and resource security (Smit, 2013). Furthermore, the environment area is understood as the compatibility of the social activity of the company and the preservation of biodiversity and ecosystems. It includes an analysis of the impacts of social development of enterprises and their products regarding flow, consumption of difficult resources or slowly renewable resources, as regarding waste and emissions generation (DESUR, 2009). Environmental CSR initiatives can affect the levels of corporate structure like environmental disclosure, environmental policy, environmental impact and environmental performance (Clarkson, 1995).

On the other hand, the community includes the donations to good causes, e.g., community groups, educational initiatives, sporting associations, youth groups, health programmes and the arts, as well as involvement in local development initiatives. This kind of corporate giving is frequently linked to marketing and branding (Smit, 2013). Community activities include charitable donations or sponsorships in which

organization promotes economic development like efforts made to improve local infrastructure, community engagement and development, social welfare, security, community healthcare and education (Rotolo and Wilson, 2006). In connection, shared value is formed when corporate policies and operating applications intensify the competitiveness of a firm while concurrently advancing social and economic conditions in the communities where it works (Porter and Kramer, 2006).

Hence it is necessary to note that these four practices such as community, environment, marketplace, and workplace are associated with one another. For example, the people that a company employ might, at the same time, be coming from the community in which the company has its operations and the environmental conditions under which they either live / work might have an impact on their health or productivity (Smit, 2013). Figure 1 shows the framework advanced in this study.

Figure 1. Schematic Diagram

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METHODOLOGY

The descriptive type of research was employed. Respondents were consumers from the top 10 villages in Bacolod City based on the 2007 census (but released only in January 2010). Sampling technique utilized was the stratified random sampling using proportionate allocation. Content validity ratio and Cronbach's Alpha were used to establish the validity and reliability, respectively, of the survey questionnaire developed for the study. Data collection was done in the identified villages in the city. The data collected were statistically analyzed using the frequency, mean and standard deviation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

On the Awareness of Bacolod Consumers with the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility

Of the 399 respondents, 272 respondents or 68% are aware of the concept of CSR, and only 127 or 32% are not aware of the CSR concept in the city of Bacolod. It has been stated that consumer awareness of CSR is an exogenous construct susceptible to the political traditions, cultural, and economic development in a society, and likely varies from country to country (Singh et al., 2008). Moreover, consumer awareness of CSR describes whether consumers are aware of CSR activities (Pomering, and Dolnicar, 2009). Consumer awareness of CSR activities is defined as the understanding of a corporation's CSR activities by consumers, which includes consumers' ability to determine if a company is conducting CSR initiatives (Öberseder et al., 2013). Consumers will make purchase decisions based on their rational analysis of the corporation and product (Hill et al., 1997). If consumers

have a positive perception of CSR activities, their evaluation of the image of the company will improve. However, evidence shows that consumers have a low level of awareness about CSR initiatives (Pomering and Dolnicar, 2009). In this study, awareness is measured as a four-item construct, based on the definition given by Poemring and Dolnicar (2009), Salmones, Herrero, Bosque (2005), and Perez and Rodriguez del Bosque (2013).On the other hand, society is more affluent, and because of increasing level of awareness, the consumer is getting more attentive towards corporate actions, which eventually influence their buying decision behavior.

However, Society is more affluent, and because of increasing level of awareness, the consumer is getting more attentive towards corporate actions, which eventually influence their buying decision behavior (Bowen, 2013). McWilliams et al. (2006) points that a growing number of organizations and corporate leaders are aware of the importance of CSR practice due to the pressure from various stakeholders, such as employees, suppliers, community groups, non-governmental organizations, and government. Schuler and Cording (2006), the lack of consumers' awareness about CSR initiatives is a primary limiting factor in their capacity to answer to these initiatives. Likewise, McWilliams et al. (2001) debated that potential consumers must be fully aware of Corporate Social Responsibility components for CSR differentiation to be understood.

The more the consumers are aware of the CSR, the better they understand and comprehend about CSR activities (Lee and Shin, 2010). Hence, those consumers with a higher level of awareness or concern of CSR may show positive attitudes to the sponsoring business and its

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products, and a higher level of purchase intention (Lee and Shin, 2010). Also, Henri Servaes & Tamayo (2013) points that an interaction between advertising intensity and CSR activities is consistent with theoretical work suggesting that without awareness customers are unable to reward CSR involvement (Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001; McWilliams and Siegel, 2001). Also, it is consistent with the view that CSR efforts have to be aligned with the firm's prior reputation to create value, as articulated by Schuler and Cording (2006). Thus, the lack of awareness may limit consumer sensitivity to CSR and explain why CSR might not be recognized when appraising a corporation and its products (Maignan, 2001). In contrast, the higher the awareness of CSR, the better consumers understand CSR activities (Lee and Shin, 2010). Van de Ven, Polley, & Garud (2008) likewise stressed that lack of awareness of company's CSR practices does not allow a business to enjoy any benefits. Businesses have to inform consumers correctly about their CSR initiatives only then they will receive the benefits of their investments in CSR. Changing attitudes of customers have driven marketers to find new ways to make marketing relevant to society, dialogue–seeking, responsive and involving (Ptacek and Salazar, 1997). Consumers are demanding more for their money. Furthermore, association with a non–profit organization can generate positive media coverage, build a reputation of compassion and care for a company, enhance its integrity, enhance employees' motivation and productivity, and consumers' preferences (Duncan and Moriarty, 1997).

Based on the total number of respondents, 62% of the Bacolod consumers are familiar with the practices associated with corporate social responsibility while only 152 or 38% are not familiar with the CSR practices. The

familiarity or the degree of general user knowledge of a company resulting from their experiences with that firm and their loyalty may lead to conditioning the perception of corporate behavior. Customers" experience could allow them to develop strong beliefs and a more elaborate cognitive structure which implies possible reference schemes to make different appraisals, as compared to the customers at a lower awareness level (Maneet & Sudhir, 2011). Hence, familiarity with CSR practices of a corporation had a significant effect on the corporate identity, which in turn affected purchase intention (Prabu David, 2009). Also, good management can be a form of internal CSR. Examples of these are (but not limited to) complying with legal obligations, adhering to certain codes of conduct especially those practiced by the business community, providing an enabling working environment and environmental housekeeping (Bobadilla, 2005).

Businesses fail to effectively communicate their CSR actions thereby, producing a weak consumer response. Pomering and Dolnicar (2009) discussed that companies should feel responsible for the low CSR awareness among consumers. This challenges firms to create consciousness linkages among CSR ventures and corporate image (Kline & Dai, 2005). Nevertheless, consumers are in fact interested in discovering more about firms' CSR programs and seem to express support for firms that pursue CSR initiatives. It is then necessary to educate consumers to make them contextualize CSR programs minimizing difficulties in attaining and storing CSR related information. When consumers are less familiar with certain social issues related to these programs, it is even more important to assume the role of an educator on social issues to produce the desired effects on consumers (Auger et al., 2003).
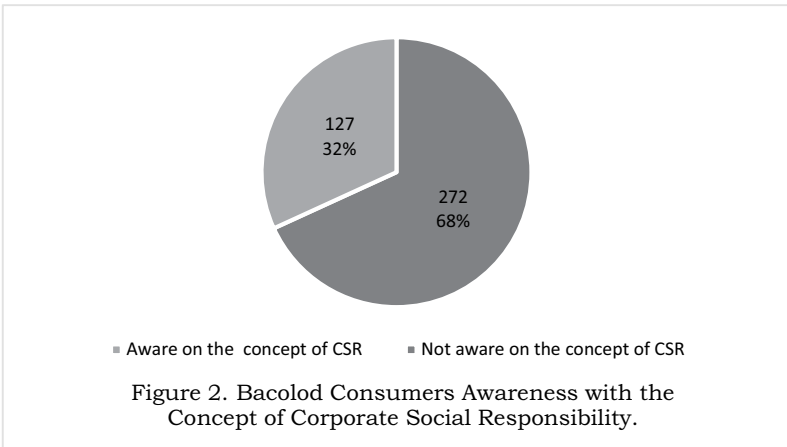
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127
32%

272
68%

▪ Aware on the concept of CSR   ▪ Not aware on the concept of CSR

Figure 2. Bacolod Consumers Awareness with the
Concept of Corporate Social Responsibility.

On the Awareness of Bacolod Consumers with the Corporate Social Responsibility Practices

As to the level of awareness of Bacolod consumers on the concept of corporate social responsibility when grouped according to age, sex, educational attainment, the villages where they belong and when taken as a whole, both the younger and the older groups signified a high level of awareness. Both the younger and the older groups and the male and female respondents considered the economic policies/practices as a CSR area where they are most aware of. These policies and practices come in the form of using customer satisfaction as an indicator of business performance and continuously improving the quality of their products and services.

247
62%

152
38%

▪ Aware with the practices of CSR

▪ Not Aware with the practices of CSR

Figure 3. To Determine if Bacolod Consumers are Aware with the
Corporate Social Responsibility Practices.

On the level of Awareness of Bacolod Consumers on CSR when grouped according to Age, Sex, Educational Attainment and the villages where they belong when taken as a whole

The younger and older groups were least aware of the marketplace policies and practices. These policies and practices ensure honesty and quality in all its contracts, dealings, labeling and advertising, having a procedure in place to ensure effective feedback, consultation and dialogue with customers, suppliers and other stakeholders, and lastly having a procedure in place to respond to every customer complaint. Young consumers would like to be informed about retailers' actions. This knowledge could enhance their purchase intentions toward CSR related products and strengthen their relationship with retailers.

In this investigation, the researchers examined the impact of CSR on consumers in a retailing context. So far, there is a little knowledge about consumers' perceptions of CSR, and especially about general consumer awareness of CSR actions (Maignan, 2001; Pomering & Dolnicar, 2008). Consumers' awareness is essential because it preconditions their ability to reward or punish firms (David, Kline & Dai, 2005). CSR awareness among consumers would also depend on retailers' efforts to communicate their CSR actions (Pomering & Dolnicar, 2009). Also, older consumers have a stronger sense of moral responsibility in their purchase behavior (Carrigan, Szmigin, & Wright, 2004).

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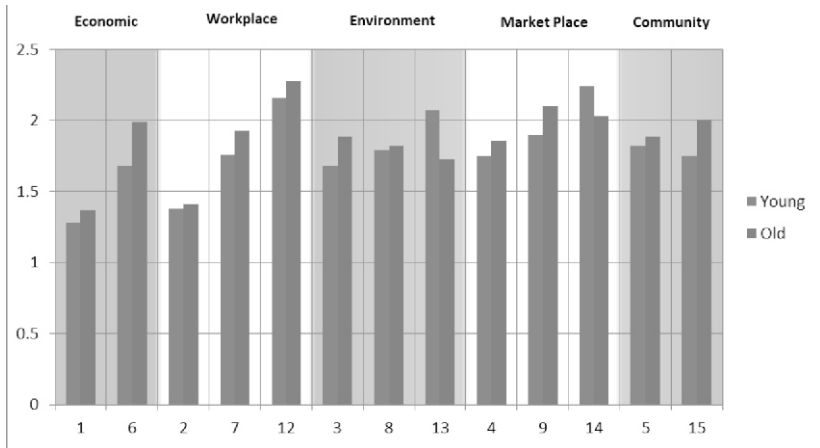Practicing Enterprise

Figure 4. Level of Awareness of Bacolod Consumers in the
Different CSR Areas, Based on Age

Both the male and the female respondents showed a high level of awareness. When based according to sex, both male and female respondents considered the environmental policies and practices as an area where they are least aware of. These policies/practices are providing clear and accurate environmental information of its products, services, and activities to customers, suppliers, and other stakeholders, considering potential environmental impacts when developing new products and services and trying to reduce their waste and has a good environmental program. Taken holistically though, the mean of means show that the respondents, regardless of age and sex have a high level of awareness in the different CSR areas, with the younger group and the female respondents showing a higher level of awareness compared to their older group and male counterparts. The studies indicate that a high consumers' awareness can lead to positive attitudes and stronger behavioral intentions toward buying from socially responsible companies (Mandmets, 2011).

Women place higher importance on CSR when making consumption decisions than men. However, this does not mean that they undervalue price and quality (Mandmets, 2011). Women and people with higher education and higher-income are more supportive of corporate CSR practices (Youn and Kim, 2008).
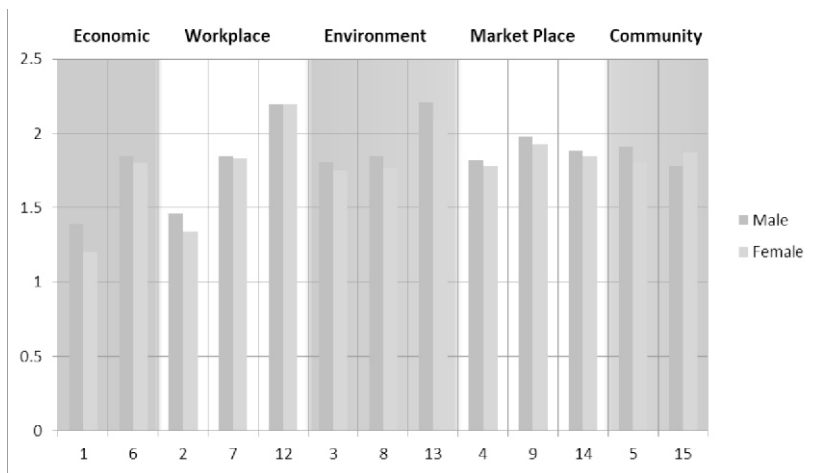

Figure 5. Level of Awareness of Bacolod Consumers in the
Different CSR Areas, Based on Sex

On the level of awareness based on educational attainment depends on their educational status it shows that the higher the educational status, the higher is the level of awareness. Except for the doctoral degree respondents who showed low mean scores, the mean score of the consumers who are master's degree holders is higher than that of a college graduate; the mean score of a college graduate is higher than that of respondents who graduated from a 2-year vocational/technical course. The mean score of the latter is higher than that of high school graduates. Based on educational status, the data shows that all 399 respondents have a high level of awareness of the concept of CSR. The results of this study were related

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to the study of Mandmets (2011), wherein university was named the main source of CSR-related information. This emphasizes the importance of educational institutions in raising awareness on the concept and practices of CSR.

The respondents are indeed aware of the importance of business enterprises having sound economic policies and practices as the only way they can sustain their business.   In the study of Ramasamy and Yeung (2009) on the "Chinese Consumers' Perception of CSR," results revealed that economic responsibilities are the most important while philanthropic responsibilities are of least importance. The nature of these differences is important for firms intending to use corporate social responsibility for strategic purposes. The CSR area of the workplace is likewise given importance by the respondents.   When a company has CSR initiatives, employees are more proud of and committed to the organization. This is because their identities are partly tied to the companies that they work for. A respondent was quoted saying "said, "If my company is saving the world, I am too, so my association with the company reflects positively on me and makes me feel good about the work I do for the company" (Rimando, 2012).

Jointly beneficial relationship with the host community is a major measurement of CSR success. A hefty 70% of the respondents said community acceptance is their main goal. Another 22% considered "unhampered operations" important. These usually refer to companies that have operations in poor communities, most of them in far-flung areas (Rimando, 2012).

The 399 respondents of this study unanimously considered economic policies and practices as the CSR

activity they are most aware of while the respondents considered environment policies and practices as a CSR activity they are least aware of. This result is similar with the view of Kardashian (2013) whose study showed that environmental efforts are receiving negative views from the consumer as the respondent consumer believes that environmental focus will affect retailer service to the customer. Also, consumer demographic variables (gender, age, income, and education) affect consumer CSR response. Consumers with different demographic variables have different responses to CSR behavior of multinational companies. Demographic factors are the fundamental pillar of marketing segmentation, making their study essentially important to better understand consumer response (Perez et al., 2013).
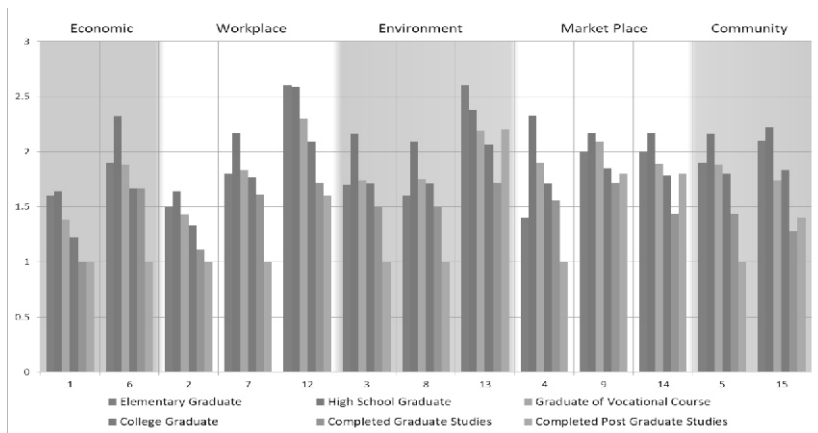

Figure 6. Level of Awareness of Bacolod Consumers in the Different CSR Areas, Based on Educational Attainment

Based on the village where they belong, when taken all together, they signify a high level of awareness. The top three villages are villages 6 (Estefania), 7 (Banago), 8 (Bata) and 3 (Mansilingan) while the three villages with the least mean scores are villages 4 (Tangun), 9

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(Handumanan) and 2 (Villamonte). As previously stated, earlier studies argue that there is a cultural dimension on how CSR is appraised (Maignan, 2001; Ramasamy & Yeung, 2009; Freeman & Hasnaoui, 2011). For these authors comparing young consumers across countries is appropriate to identify and categorize similarities and differences in their conceptions and perceptions of corporate social responsibility activities.

When taken as a whole, Bacolod consumers show a high level of awareness of the concept of corporate social responsibility. Thus, consumers with a higher level of awareness or concern of CSR are more likely to show positive attitudes to the sponsoring firm and its products, and a higher level of purchase intention (Lee and Shin, 2010).

On the Criteria of Bacolod Consumers Use When Patronizing Products

The top 3 criteria being considered by the respondents in their purchasing decisions are Quality, Brand, and Price This result is consistent with the research of Gigauri (2012) in the case of Georgian consumers. Her respondents choose products mainly by their quality and price. Though they are increasingly interested in the company's CSR, this is not always considered when purchasing products. Another study with the similar result is that of Arli and Lesmono (2010) whose findings state that in developing countries consumers choose products by its price and quality. In their study, the most critical factor considered by Indonesian consumers is price while their study in Tbilisi demonstrated that product quality is the primary determinant of consumers' purchasing decision. The

research findings suggest, that for consumers, the most important factors when buying products is quality and then price, compared to other factors. Thus, the data in this research, together with that of other similar studies (Giguari, 2012; Arli and Lesmono, 2010) showed that respondents pay less attention to the social responsibility of the company when buying products. CSR is not a key criterion for purchasing products. However, in cases wherein there is no difference in quality and price, then consumers choose products from companies that are engaging in CSR activities. Thus, the study result suggests that CSR can be a good strategy for companies operating in a competitive environment. In another study by Veersalu (2011), employee friendliness is the most important aspect of consumer purchasing decision. In general, like the studies above, her respondents, do not primarily consider the companies' social responsibility when buying its products or services. However, most of the Estonian respondents would rather pay more for a product or service by a socially responsible company than for a cheaper product or service from not so responsible company.

On Bacolod Consumers' Willingness to Spend More for Products and Services Provided by CSR Practicing Business Enterprises

Customers are still willing to spend more for products and services provided by companies implementing corporate social responsibility. In several studies encountered by the researcher, this question on the willingness of consumers to pay more for products or services by CSR practicing businesses is always present. In most cases, there is an overwhelming willingness from consumers to support socially responsible companies by

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patronizing their products. Thus, even if it means paying a premium price for its products and services (Ferreira, 2005, Garcia, 2009, Arli and Lesmono, 2010, Veersalu, 2011, Giguari, 2012, and Balanchandran and Malani, 2013).
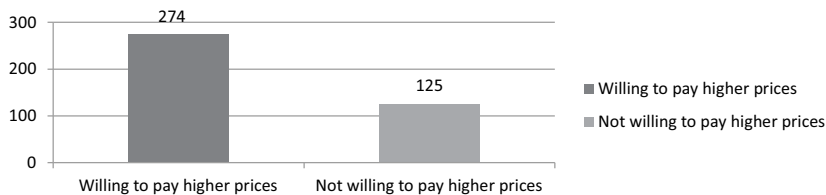

Figure 7. Willingness of Bacolod Consumers to Pay Higher
for Products of CSR Practicing Businesses

CONCLUSION

The researchers concluded that Bacolod consumers are aware of the concept and practices of corporate social responsibility. However, based on the different CSR areas, the consumers have the highest awareness of the economic policies or practices of business enterprises while the respondents have the least awareness on the companies' environment policies and practices. It shows that young and the female respondents manifest a high level of awareness compared to the older group and male counterparts. Moreover, educational institutions play a crucial role as a source of information about corporate social responsibility. The higher the consumers' educational status, the higher his/her level of awareness on what CSR is all about. When consumers were categorized based on their villages, it shows a high level of awareness. But different villages show different mean scores when their responses were grouped according to the different CSR areas.

Corporate social responsibility is not a priority factor as criteria used by consumers in their purchasing decision. However, if quality and price are the same, consumers would patronize companies who are CSR practicing. In fact, consumers in Bacolod city show great support to CSR practicing business through their willingness to pay a higher price for their products and services.

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