



Enhancing Services Industries Employees' Organizational Commitment through the practice of Ethics and Social Responsibility

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Abstract

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is frequently heard in the contemporary business administration since the recent four decades. The ever changing business environment has made CSR research an ever green research interest among the academics. The concept and importance of CSR are being widely accepted in the business context. On the same note, its roles in the services industries become prominent as human capital is the core of competitive advantage in the services industries. This paper studies the direct impact of Perceived Roles of Ethics and Social Responsibility (PRESOR) and Internal CSR towards employees' organizational commitment and the indirect effect of Internal CSR on organisational commitment. The findings reveal that PRESOR and Internal CSR have a positive impact on employees' organisational commitment while the indirect effect is not significant. The findings will complement the existing human resource management by incorporating the element of ethics and social responsibility to augment employees' organisational commitment to next level.

Keywords: Ethics and social responsibility; Internal CSR; organizational commitment; service industries.

1.0 Introduction

The traditional concept of CSR proposes that its responsibility is solely to the business's owners and shareholders. Nevertheless, organizations should apply a wider perspective of its responsibilities of CSR to a variety group of individuals which comprises of employees, investors, customers, suppliers, manufacturers, governments, local community and environmental groups (Kiran & Sharma, 2011). In Malaysia, to actively support CSR, the government manages it by reflecting in tax incentives, reporting and voluntary standards, and policy and regulation. This is because CSR are developing in a rapid scale and Malaysia is riding on this momentum (Belmonte, 2015). This shows that organizations in Malaysia are strongly encouraged to involve in CSR as part of their culture. Employee relations, employee engagement, in-role performance and most importantly employee organizational commitment tend to be increased when the organization is socially responsible (Babiak & Wolfe, 2009). Recently, Low (2015) added that the

focus of CSR had been expanded to internal stakeholder (i.e. employees).

An organization that takes interests in broader social issues or practices Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) can bring benefits such as customer relationships enhancement and cost savings. CSR refer to organization's initiatives in assessing and taking responsibility for the benefit of the environment, community and social well-being (Carroll & Shabana, 2010). In reality, organizations that implement CSR tend to be able to increase their long-term profits and sustain their business in the long run. This is because the opportunity of becoming a preferred or favourable firm in the eyes of customers increases when the public get to know about the effort they contribute in philanthropic activities such as volunteerism, social programs and monetary donations (Olajide, 2014). In fact, employees tend to work for a corporation that possess a good public image (Etheredge, 1999). This is because employees are more likely to engage to their jobs and are more productive when organizations are philanthropically minded. In other words, employees

who are engaged to the firm would stay longer and are more creative than employees that are disengaged. Consequently, it helps in creating a productive and positive environment where employees could thrive by instilling a strong culture of CSR within each and every employee in the firm (Yin, Singhapakdi, & Du, 2016). Moreover, organizations tend to provide a positive environment or workplace for their employees when they exhibit philanthropic behaviour (Mihaljevic & Tokic, 2015). This would enhance the level of connection between the employees and organizations as the employee is aware of their employer's commitment in bettering the local and global communities.

Hence, it is important to identify the factors of employees' job satisfaction and commitment towards the organization in order to retain and attract potential employees. However, there is still little research which focuses on the relationship among perceived roles of ethics and social responsibility (PRESOR), internal CSR and organizational commitment. This research attempts to address the insight of positive relationship among PRESOR, internal CSR and employees' organizational commitment in service industry from Klang Valley, Malaysia. Apart from that, this study also aimed to examine which dimension of the internal corporate social responsibilities (Internal CSR) has the most significant impact towards the level of employees' organizational commitment.

The scope of this research covers the relationship among PRESOR, internal CSR and employees' organizational commitment in service industry where organizations gain profits through offering intangible products and services. It could be categorized into few different types of activities including firms that are involved in transportation, food services, retailing, banking, financial services and other service-dominated businesses. The primary target for this research is employees who work as customer service representatives in financial institutions, telecommunication institutions and banking institutions.

The findings would be beneficial as organizations could have a better understanding on the perceived roles of ethics and social responsibility concept and they can determine the relationship of it with their CSR activities which then lead to the higher employees' organizational commitment. Besides that, high level of turnover rates in the industry could be reduced as the findings might help organizations to identify adequate CSR activities and are appropriate to be utilized to maximize customer service representatives' organizational commitment. Lastly, useful knowledge and information on PRESOR, internal CSR and employees' organizational commitment would be beneficial to other researchers who have interests on conducting research on the antecedent and consequences of internal CSR.

2.0 Prior Studies

2.1 The Concept of Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR)

According to Uddin, Hassan and Tarique (2008), the purpose of Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) is to make corporate business activity and corporate culture sustainable in three aspects: Economic aspects, Social aspects, Environmental and Ecological aspects. In fact, CSR is a procedure with the plan to grasp obligation regarding the organization's activities and to support a positive effect through its activities concerning stakeholders, shareholders, society and environment.

The expanded intricacy of worldwide markets and complexity of customers, the increased significance of social, and environmental and ecological effects have changed the way a successful organization focuses on what affects its primary concern (Zhu, Liu, & Lai, 2016). This happens when the economic aspect is still imperative or significant. Nowadays, to achieve long-term success, it is important to understand and be aware of the Triple Bottom Line, namely Economic aspects, Social aspects, and Environmental and Ecological aspects.

Among other reasons that organizations ought to have obvious CSR activities is because of the significance and popularity of online media or social network (Wesselink, Blok, Leur, Lans, & Dentoni, 2015). When an organization practices social responsibilities through raising funds or setting up employee giving projects, utilizing social media to elevate these activities, it creates a positive image environment and it is a good method to connect with the customers on a more profound level. Organizations that effectively promote their social responsibility conducts regularly would find a way to plug these endeavours through the media. Employees volunteering projects, organizations' funding or donations programs and other related CSR activities are intense branding device that can assemble publicity for firm (Crifo, Diaye, & Pekovic, 2016).

Most importantly, the best advantages of advancing social responsibilities in the work environment is the positive environment organizations establish for the employees (Wesselink, Blok, Leur, Lans, & Dentoni, 2015). Employees will be more committed when they know that they are serving a socially responsible organization. This can assemble a feeling of group and cooperation which unites everybody where this prompts to happier, better and more effective and efficient employees.

2.2 The Service Sector in Malaysia

As any economy develops, the service industry expects a growing share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). According to the Tenth Malaysia Plan for year 2011 to year 2015, service sector is required to develop at 7% every year until reaching the year of 2015. This would

raise its commitment to GDP to 61% before the Plan's time frame. With an expanding bit from Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), for service sector to achieve the focused GDP contribution, the evaluated new investment of RM 44.6 billion is needed (Tenth Malaysia Plan 2011 - 2015, 2010). The contribution from service industry in Malaysia's GDP is noticeable.

2.3 The Concept of Perceived Role of Ethics and Social Responsibility (PRESOR)

By being a socially responsible firm, employees start to view the organization in a more positive perception. This would also prompt the expanded profitability and commitment by the workforce (Choi, Ullah, & Kwak, 2015). Hence, employees will start to build in more positive feelings with the organization along with its increments of socially responsible conduct. There are many activities that can exploit socially responsible work practices, such as reduce the number of dispensable products in the working environment and lessen amount of waste. On the other hand, employees who trust in the significance of ethics and socially responsible conduct, the ethical implications of business choices ought to be more remarkable (Shafer, 2015). This would help in enhancing the level of employees' organizational commitment. Generally, an organization which practices role of ethics stimulates fair competition among employees. The business urges employees to compete with each other by empowering fair business strategies without directly attempting to weaken or undermine the performance of others (Godos-Díez, Fernández-Gago, & Martínez-Campillo, 2011). This helps the organization to accomplish a higher level of achievement and keeps a good team spirit in the working environment.

2.4 The Five Core Dimension of Internal CSR

CSR is identified as external CSR and internal CSR (Babiak & Wolfe, 2009). External CSR advances the quest for positive effects on society and the environmental and ecological from corporate programs and operations. It enhances transparency and openness through the reporting procedure it standardizes, which encourages social improvement. Meanwhile, internal CSR concentrates on what can be done in the organizations to enhance the prosperity of workforce, employees' lives and efficiency and additionally its effect on profitability at the "bottom line". The five core dimensions of internal CSR which are adopted from Albdour et al. (2010) consist of Health and Safety, Human Rights, Training and Development Work-life Balance, and Workplace Diversity.

2.4.1 Health and Safety

An efficient and effective work environment could improve employees' productivity and organizational commitment as employees are the most important asset for a firm. Employers have the obligations to take sensible consideration to secure the health and safety of all the individuals in the working environment (Gibbins

& MacMahon, 2015). According to Kunyk, Broadwith, Morris, Diaz, Reisdorfer and Wang (2016), this is also the most ideal approaches to retain employees and enhance their organizational commitment and lead to profitability maximization.

2.4.2 Human Rights

Human rights advocates explore asserted infringement of human rights far and wide and maintain for the discontinuance, counteractive action and cure of abuses. According to Laine (2015)'s study, organizations get the most advantage when they can recruit and preserve the best employees, and expand the potential and the execution of those employees. This is because biased strategies and policies might restrict organizations from recruiting great employees. Furthermore, it could lead to employees' dissatisfaction and lower the commitment with the firm (Laine, 2015). In general, employees must be treated fairly to avoid conflicts. A working environment that respects employees' human rights would develop a positive relationship towards the employees' organizational commitment.

2.4.3 Training and Development

Implementing training and development helps organizations to sustain adequately and also provides advantage to the employees in strengthening the competitiveness of firms. In addition, it will create an encouraging work environment and greater commitment by them (Neacșu, 2015). Employees could gain more fulfilment towards their organization as they feel they are respected, appreciated and valued by their firms. Through effective learning, employees can advance their productivity and resulting in improving of job satisfaction and motivation towards the organizations (Halpin, Curtis, & Halpin, 2015). This would certainly assist the employees to perform better and consider new thoughts that help them to exceed in their job.

2.4.4 Work-Life Balances

Work-life balance is one of the significant element in promoting employees' job satisfaction and engagement towards the organizations. It is the relationship between spaces and times for work and non-work life where a division is framed between an employee's career and personal life (Russo, Shteigman, & Carmeli, 2016). Moreover, work-life balance is accomplishing the desired mix of support in both work and different fragments of life. This mix does not stay stagnant but rather changes as an employee has changes in duties and obligations. Besides that, study also found that work obstruction with family life will decrease employees' work fulfilment and reduce the rate of job commitment (Dominika, 2016). Employees who have a superior work-life balance will have a more prominent awareness of organizational commitment (Kaliannan, Perumal, & Dorasamy, 2016). They will concentrate on their work and ultimately stay with the firms.

2.4.5 Workplace Diversity

Workplace diversity implies the disparity of employees within the same organization. Differences in qualities include race, sexual orientation, ethnic gathering, age, identity, subjective style, residency, hierarchical capacity, education, foundation and others (Enehaug, Helmersen, & Mamelund, 2016). Furthermore, diversity comprises of how employees see themselves as well as how they see others. Study also showed that there would be increment in the employees' organizational commitment within a diverse workplace (Abu-Febiri & Quinless, 2010).

2.5 The Concept of Employees' Organizational Commitment

Generally, organizational commitment indicates the bond between employees' involvement with their organizations. Comprehensively, employees who are committed to their firm would have a linkage with the organization. They have a feeling in becoming part of the organization and could comprehend the objectives of the organization. Furthermore, this additional element of such employees is that they have a tendency to be more attached to their work, indicate generally higher productivity and are more proactive in offering their assistance.

In this study, the researchers attempts to explain the concept of organizational commitment by using Mowday, Porter and Steers Model. According to Mowday, Porter and Steer (1982), organizational commitment is defined as "the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization and can be characterized by a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization and a strong desire to maintain membership of the organization." (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). Mowday et al. (1982) offered a description of organizational commitment which includes three segments: (1) a solid faith in and acknowledgment of organizational objectives and qualities, (2) an ability to apply impressive exertion for the benefit of the organization and (3) a powerful urge to keep up enrolment in the organization.

2.5.1 The Importance of Employees' Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is profoundly important. Many researches have shown that commitment greatly affects the performance level of the firm (Devecea, Marquésa, & Alguacil, 2016). This is where dedicated employees would relate themselves to the organization's objectives and expectations. Committed employees will show more noteworthy organizational citizenship conduct (Marques & Costa, 2016). This means that they are willing and have the ability to go beyond their required employment obligations. Indeed, numerous studies have discovered positive linkages between

employees' behaviour and organizational commitment (Tharikh, Cheah, Saad, & Sukumaran, 2016). If organization utilizes a great deal of assets to locate the right individuals for the employment, it is critical to have the capacity to keep them in the long-term period. Responsibility becomes the most significant factor in this procedure. Then again, it is vital to study commitment and get to know the elements influencing it as it has the potential to impact organizational efficiency and employees' welfare (Tharikh, Cheah, Saad, & Sukumaran, 2016).

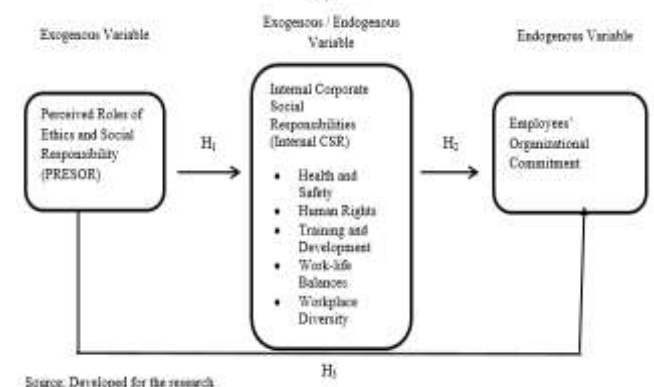
2.6 The Relationships between PRESOR, Internal CSR and Employees' Organizational Commitment

By focusing on employees' equity and great working conditions, the concept of CSR, which was originated from business ethics, plays an important role. Moreover, previous researcher stated that CSR could be differentiated into two parts (Futa, 2013). Firstly, the decisions made by organizations must not endanger its employees and stakeholders. Secondly, any negative results and damage brought about by the organization must be completely altered.

According to study by Prutina (2016), positive perception of CSR has a positive linkage towards the commitment of employees. Moreover, internal CSR (how the organization treats its workforce) as well as external CSR (projects and activities that influence external stakeholders) will impact the perceptions of employees towards the organization (Prutina, 2016). Researcher who has concentrated on this relationship discovered that the most negative impacts on employees' impression of the organization were brought on by corporate harm to nature and wrong conduct towards customers (Choi, Ullah, & Kwak, 2015). In addition, organizational commitment can be expanded through enlisting individuals whose qualities are adjusted to organization's qualities, additionally through training and development, where employees have an opportunity to learn or enhance their transferable aptitudes or abilities in regards to the organization (Ebeid, 2010).

2.7 Proposed Research Framework

Figure 2.0: Research Framework



2.7.1 Hypotheses Development

The following hypotheses are developed to examine the research questions:

H1: There is a positive relationship between perceived roles of ethics and social responsibility (PRESOR) and internal corporate social responsibilities (Internal CSR).

H2: There is a positive relationship between internal corporate social responsibilities (Internal CSR) and employees' organizational commitment.

H3: There is a positive relationship between perceived roles of ethics and social responsibility (PRESOR) and employees' organizational commitment.

H4: Internal corporate social responsibilities (Internal CSR) mediates the relationship between perceived roles of ethics and social responsibility (PRESOR) and employees' organizational commitment.

3.0 Research Methodology

3.1 Sample size and Response rate

Present research employs quantitative approach whereby questionnaire survey is used to capture the responses of targeted respondents. The non-probability judgemental sampling method was adopted in this research. An intercept survey by using self-administered questionnaire was sent to employees working in the services industries located in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. G*power 3.1 (Faul et al., 2007; 2009) software was used to calculate the sample size required to ensure the model tested is statistically sound. Based on a power set at 80% (Gefen et al., 2011), $f^2 = 0.05$ (small), $\alpha = 0.05$ and number of predictors = 3, the sample size required was 107. 300 sets of questionnaires were sent out and a total of 223 sets useable questionnaire were collected, yielding a 74.3% of response rate. Therefore, given that our sample size exceeds 107, and the minimum power required in social and behavioural science research is classically 0.8, thus the sample size is deemed sufficient. In addition, because previous studies have identified a threshold of 100 samples for PLS-SEM analysis (Akter, D'Ambra, & Ray, 2011; Reinartz, Haenlein, & Henseler, 2009), a sample size of 223 completed questionnaires are considered as adequate.

3.2 Research Tool: Questionnaire survey

The questionnaire was divided into 4 sections. Section A was used to gather respondents' personal details. Section B included information on PRESOR which the 6 items was extracted from Etheredge (1999). Section C consisted of Internal CSR items that were adapted from Al-bdour et al. (2010). Section D entailed questions to examine the employees' organisational commitment level in the service industry that were obtained from Mowday et al. (1982). Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with several

statements on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree.

3.3 Statistical methods for Data Analysis

Data collected was analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). PLS-SEM is the second generation of statistical methods that becomes the silver bullet of many social sciences research. Its' popularity is attributed to its ability to handle complex models that involve moderators and mediators as well as hierarchical component model. The data and model characteristics of current research made it relevant to utilise PLS-SEM for data analysis.

3.4 Common method bias

Common method bias describes the measurement error that is compounded by the sociability of respondents who tend to provide positive answers (Chang, v. Witteloostuijn & Eden, 2010). Present research endeavors to investigate the positive outcome of ethics and social responsibility, hence it is subject to common method bias. Statistical remedy as proposed by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, Podsakoff (2003) was used to address common method bias in this research. Harman's single factor test informed that the first-factor account for 33.2% variance which is less than the threshold level of 50.0% of the total variance explained (Podsakoff, et al., 2003). This concludes that present research does not suffer from common method variance.

4.0 Results and Discussion

The results of the direct relationships among the variables are reported in Table 1 while the indirect effect of internal CSR is reported in Table 2.

Table 1 : Direct relationships among the variables

Hypothesis	Original Sample	t value	p value	Decision
H1 : PRESOR - > Internal CSR	0.000	0.622	0.267	Not Supported
H2 : Internal CSR -> OC	0.877	4.253	0.000	Supported
H3: PRESOR - > OC	0.132	2.310	0.011	Supported

Based on the study, it is concluded that both internal CSR and PRESOR have significant positive relationship with employees' organizational commitment at a t value of 4.253 and 2.31 respectively and $p < 0.05$ or with 95% confidence level. In other words, H₂ and H₃ are supported. It has been discovered that the existence of internal CSR leads to higher level of employees' organizational commitment. This result is congruent with the findings of Al-bdour et al. (2010), Carson (2015) and Mazur (2015) which proposed that employees with good working environment, sufficient training and development and higher work-life balances

tend to exert full commitment to the organization. This study also confirms that the level of PRESOR made a difference in the employees' organizational commitment. Etheredge (1999) stated that employees would perform positive affective organizational commitment when firms are socially responsible. As such, it can be expressed that organizations who act ethically increased the job satisfaction of employees would enhance their overall organizational commitment. For instance, employees may increase their level of loyalty on account of the organization's socially responsible business practices. Similar findings found in studies by Choi, Ullah, and Kwak (2015).

In addition, it is important for organizations to embed CSR values among employees. According to Hameed, Riaz, Arain and Farooq (2016), organization communication on CSR activities is essential to increase employees' engagement and form organization identification. In consistent with the relationship that arises in this study between the five core dimension of internal CSR (health and safety, human rights, training and development, work-life balances, workplace diversity) with organizational commitment, it proved that employees that feel cared and valued by the organization are more likely to be committed to the organization in long-term.

However, there is no significant relationship between PRESOR and internal CSR as proposed in H1. It is interesting to find out that PRESOR is not significantly related to internal CSR. The result indicates organizations that put additional focus on PRESOR would not be expected to have an effect on the internal CSR. One possible explanation for this discrepancy is that the context of employees in the service industry represents a unique setting where perceptions of PRESOR have a minimal effect on internal CSR. In other words, both PRESOR and internal CSR can aid in building higher level of employees' organizational commitment. However, there is not much connection between these two variables.

Table 2: Indirect effects of internal CSR

Hypothesis	Standard Error	Standard Error	t value	p value	CI BC	CI BC
H4: Internal CSR mediates the relationship between PRESOR and OC	0.132	0.133	2.268	0.024	0.020	0.245

CIBC = Confidence intervals bias corrected

Table 2 above shows the results of the indirect effects of internal CSR obtained after the bootstrapping

procedure. The bootstrapping analysis shows that the indirect effect of internal CSR, $\beta = 0.132$ was significant at a t value of 2.268 with $p < 0.05$. Preacher and Hayes (2008) indicated that the indirect effect of 0.132, 95% Boot CI: [LL= 0.020, UL = 0.245] which does not straddle a zero in between indicating that Internal CSR mediates the relationship between PRESOR and OC. The result indicates that internal CSR intervenes the relationship between perceived roles of ethics and social responsibility (PRESOR) and employees' organizational commitment.

4.1 Implications on the Study

This study can stimulate level of loyalty on account of the organization's socially responsible business practices. This would also enhance the organization's reputation and profitability. Organizations which practice role of ethics stimulate fair competition among employees and this helps in keeping a good team spirit in the working environment (Assudani, Chinta, Manolis, & Burns, 2011).

Besides that, the findings suggest that the top management shall pay greater attention on the five core dimension of internal CSR. Organization could treat the employees fairly, provide safe working environment, offer sufficient amount of training, take care of their welfare and arrange team building activities of diverse workforce in the organization. All these internal CSR practices boost the level of employees' commitment towards the firms (Ebeid, 2010).

Further, the results of this study, there is a positive relationship between both PRESOR and internal CSR towards organizational commitment. Hence, instead of viewing PRESOR and internal CSR as a mere add-on, they should be installed at the core of an organization's ethos. Employees shall have the empowerment to be involved in the relevant initiatives. For instance, this may regularly include providing chances of career advancement, financial assistance for further study or giving employee time off work for them to support a charity event.

4.2 Limitations of the Research

This research could be conducted with a bigger population with longer time frame, such as studying the various service industry in Malaysia, as present study has only focused in Klang Valley Malaysia. Second, a cross-sectional analysis is used to investigate the relationship among PRESOR, internal CSR and employees' organizational commitment at one particular point of time. Questionnaires were only distributed to the targeted respondents. Therefore, the results are limit to the scope of the research (i.e. customer service representative) which does not represent the population in Malaysia. Moreover, the results also act as a limiting factor to the other industries as the target respondents are from service based organizations.

Further, the sample size for this study is relatively small due to insufficient funds and time constraint. 250 sets of questionnaires were distributed but only 223 sets were collected back to be used. A sample size that is small and tends to have higher margin of error and might render the study meaningless. Sampling errors could affect the interpretation and precision of the results.

Lastly, the structural model of this research focused only on PRESOR and internal CSR. The researcher has difficulty to accomplish a comprehensive study as there are many other factors that might affect the organizational commitment of employees. This means that other factors might also affect the employees' organizational commitment.

4.3 Recommendations for Future Research

It is recommended to replace cross-sectional study with longitudinal study. Similar to cross-sectional, a longitudinal study is observational where the researcher shall conduct a few observations of the same subjects over a period of time. Sometimes, this might takes up a few years. The advantage of a longitudinal analysis is that researcher can determine the changes or developments over time and yield to more accurate findings.

Future studies are recommended to target respondents from diverse range (i.e. other sectors in Malaysia) and locations (i.e. other states in Malaysia). A sufficiently large sample size could limit the influence of outliers and is more representative of the population (Lenth, 2001).

In order to obtain a more in-depth and clearer future research about organizational commitment, the variable (i.e. organizational commitment) could be replaced by different measures, for instance, organizational citizenship behaviour, job satisfaction, organizational financial performance, organizational sustainability and others. This might lead the researchers to determine more accurate findings on this field.

5.0 Conclusion

Based on the discussions above, it is crucial for organizations to conduct ethical business practices and be responsible for the needs of the employees. Nowadays, employees tend to look for meaning in their job and are not just worried about their pay check. Hence, organizational commitment among employees could be cultivated when business is ethical and there is involvement in CSR activities.

Besides that, based on the results of this study, one of the five core dimensions of internal CSR (i.e. Human Rights) has the highest beta value (0.290). This means that employees tend to behave in a favourable manner and develop positive attitudes in the organization once they feel they are treated fairly and being valued. This finding is supported by Hutchinson (2010)'s study that there is a positive relationship between trust and organizational commitment.

This study only focuses and explores on the relationship among PRESOR, internal CSR and employees' organizational commitment. It is difficult for the researcher to achieve a comprehensive research on employees' organizational commitment as there are other different variables that might affect the employees' organizational commitment proposed by other researchers which may lead for future research.

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