Examining the Role of CSR on Employee Attitudes in Sport and Recreation Organizations

Rammi N. Hazzaa, University of Saint Joseph
Brent D. Oja (Advisor), University of Northern Colorado

Management - Corporate Social Responsibility (Community Sport)  virtual asynchronous
20-minute oral presentation (including questions)  Session: Corporate Social Responsibility

Abstract 2020-102

In corporate social responsibility (CSR) literature, sport management scholars have highlighted the significant role of employees and called for the elusive “win-win” proposition for organizations and one of their key internal stakeholder groups (Babiak, 2010; Walker, Hills, & Heere, 2017). Employees are among an organization’s key stakeholders and, as such, are likely to be directly impacted by an organization’s CSR efforts. Scholars have found that high perceptions of CSR can lead to increased job engagement and satisfaction (Glavas & Kelly, 2014). Yet, absent from the CSR literature is an exploration as to how employees psychologically experience CSR (Rupp & Mallory, 2015). The shift in focus has given way towards focusing on the positive psychology of employees; particularly in sport (e.g., Kim et al., 2017; Swanson & Kent, 2016).

Thus, the primary objective of this study is to better understand the psychological mechanisms linking CSR to workplace positivity. Derived from positive organizational behavior, psychological capital (PsyCap), a higher-order construct of hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007), has been identified as a potential mediator between antecedents and employee outcomes (Avey, 2014). Given recent calls for more research on predictors, this study proposes favorable employee perceptions of their organization’s CSR will likely lead to positive workplace attitudes via their PsyCap. To address the knowledge gap, this study hypothesized that the mediating effect of PsyCap through sport employees’ perceptions of CSR and their job engagement (H1) and job satisfaction (H2).

Data were collected through an online survey from (N = 705) employees working for community sport and recreation organizations across the United States. The scales included measures for perceived CSR (Turker, 2009), PsyCap (Luthans et al., 2007), job engagement (Saks, 2006), and job satisfaction (Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, & Klesh, 1983). Hayes’ (2013) conditional process model was used to estimate indirect effects with 5,000 bootstrap samples and bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals. After controlling for age, gender, and organizational tenure, results revealed that PsyCap partially mediated the relationship between perceived CSR and job engagement (Indirect = .19, SE = .02, CI [.14, .24]) and job satisfaction (Indirect = .25, SE = .02, CI [.19, .30]). Thus, H1 and H2 were supported.

With the focus on sport and recreation employees’ workplace attitudes, the current study tested a model that showed significant indirect effects of PsyCap between CSR and job engagement and job satisfaction. The findings indicated the importance of developing employee-focused programming centered around socially responsible initiatives and psychological development opportunities. Additionally, making improvements to certain human resource management practices has the potential to elicit positive employee attitudes. This could be put into practice by investing in the development of employees’ positive psychological resources.