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Motivations for Corporate Social Responsibility Engagement: An Exploratory Study of Jordan University College in Morogoro Municipality, Tanzania

Abstract

Theoretical background: This study examines the motivations underlying Jordan University College's (JUCo) engagement in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives targeting public health. As CSR has gained global prominence, higher education institutions like JUCo play a vital role in addressing societal challenges, particularly public health, through community engagement. The study is grounded in institutional theory, which posits that organizational behavior is shaped by the broader social, cultural, and

regulatory environments in which it operates. Thus, JUCo's CSR engagement reflects its alignment with institutional norms and values, that enable the university to maintain legitimacy, enhance its reputation, and meet societal expectations.

Purpose of the study: The aim of the study is to explore the motivations driving JUCo's engagement in CSR initiatives, particularly those targeting public health in Morogoro Municipality, Tanzania. By understanding these motivations, the research seeks to provide insights into the broader dynamics influencing the adoption of CSR practices among educational institutions in the Tanzanian context, offering insights that can inform policy and institutional strategies.

Research methods: The study adopted a cross-sectional research design based on a mixed-methods approach to provide a comprehensive understanding of JUCo's CSR initiatives. Primary data were gathered from a sample of 100 respondents, selected through random sampling techniques to ensure representativeness. The data collection process involved careful coding, cleaning, and analysis using SPSS Version 25, with descriptive statistics employed to extract meaningful insights. This methodological rigor enhances the reliability and validity of the findings, providing a solid foundation for evidence-based conclusions.

Main findings: The findings reveal that JUCo's CSR initiatives are driven by multiple factors, including reputation enhancement, legal compliance, stakeholder expectations, and a genuine commitment to effecting positive societal change. Public health initiatives like disease prevention, healthcare access, and environmental health are prioritized. These results underscore the strategic alignment of JUCo's CSR activities with institutional and societal objectives, which could enhance both community well-being and the university's legitimacy.

Introduction

In recent years, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has gained widespread recognition and transformed conventional business practices worldwide (Khojaste-hpour, 2015; Eriksson & Svensson, 2017; Grimstad et al., 2020). CSR represents a company's commitment to embedding sustainable and ethical practices within its operations to benefit society and the environment (Mwanapara et al., 2022). This growing emphasis on CSR has garnered significant attention from scholars, policymakers, and business leaders, who are increasingly interested in understanding the motivations behind its adoption and implementation (Droppert & Bennett, 2015).

CSR is defined as voluntary actions taken by institutions to address the social, economic, and environmental impacts of their operations and meet stakeholder expectations (Carroll, 1991; Masum et al., 2020). The concept is rooted in the notion that businesses have responsibilities beyond profit-making, extending to contributing positively to society and the environment (Masum et al., 2020). CSR initiatives can take various forms, such as philanthropy, employee volunteering, ethical business practices, and environmental sustainability. In the Tanzanian context, CSR involves conducting activities in an ethical and society-friendly manner that benefits the surrounding community in terms of development (Mwanapara et al., 2022; Ismail, 2009).

The increasing interest in CSR practices has also made developing countries crucial areas for examining the drivers behind CSR engagement (Nwobu, 2021). These countries face unique challenges and opportunities, making the exploration CSR motivations within their contexts particularly pertinent. One example is Jordan University College (JUCo), a prominent educational institution in Morogoro Mu-

nicipality, which has embraced various social and environmental initiatives (JUCO, 2023; Msambali & Mwonge, 2023). Additionally, universities in Tanzania, including JUCo, play a crucial role in promoting public health through research, education, and community engagement initiatives (Mwanapara et al., 2022). These, institutions possess the resources and expertise needed to contribute significantly to public health efforts, serving as models for implementing effective health policies and practices. Previous studies have underscored the importance of universities in enhancing health literacy, fostering community engagement, advocating for health, and conducting public health research (Laverack & Labonte, 2000; DeMarco et al., 2018).

Public health involves organized efforts and informed choices to prevent disease and promote health at the population levels (CDCF, 2021; WHO, 2021). JUCo's CSR initiatives related to public health include services provided by a campus hospital, health education through seminars and workshops, and community outreach programs such as health fairs and clinics aimed at disease prevention and health promotion.

The purpose of this study is to explore the motivations driving JUCo's engagement in CSR within Morogoro Municipality of Tanzania. Through an exploratory study, the study aims to uncover the factors that motivate JUCo's CSR practices and to shed light on the dynamics that influence its approach to societal and environmental issues. Understanding these factors is crucial, as it offers valuable insights into the evolving landscape of higher education institutions globally. JUCo's CSR activities reflect broader global trends in education, sustainability, and responsible business conduct. By analyzing the motivations and dynamics at play, this study not only deepens the understanding of how universities are adapting to contemporary challenges but also provides transferable knowledge that can guide policymaking, inspire best practices in the education sector, and inform businesses, governments, and other stakeholders striving to foster sustainable development and responsible corporate citizenship in an increasingly interconnected and environmentally conscious world.

Through this investigation into the motivations behind CSR adoption within JUCo, this study aims to enrich the academic discourse on CSR in developing countries and provide practical guidance for fostering sustainable development and creating a positive social impact within the Morogoro Municipality and beyond. By understanding these motivations, stakeholders can further enhance CSR practices, thereby contributing to societal and environmental betterment.

The subsequent section of this paper provides the theoretical framework that underpins the study. Section 3 outlines the research methodology, including data collection procedures, sample selection, and analytical techniques. Section 4 presents the findings of the study, elucidating the key drivers that influence JUCo's engagement in CSR initiatives. Section 5 discusses the implications of the findings and offers practical recommendations for JUCo and the broader academic community in Tanzania. Section 6 concludes the paper by synthesizing the key insights, while section 7 provides a description and information about the research direction of the university, as well as the CSR programs in which the JUCo is involved.

The theoretical framework

This study is grounded in the institutional theory which posits that organizations and individuals are significantly shaped by the social, cultural, and regulatory environments in which they operate (Scott, 1995). According to this theory, institutions – comprising laws, norms, and beliefs – play a crucial role in shaping organizational behavior, structures, and practices, thereby influencing their decisions and actions (Fransen, 2012). The primary objective of institutional theory is to understand how institutions create stability and coherence within a society and how organizations respond to and adapt to these institutional pressures to gain legitimacy and ensure their survival in specific contexts (Brammer et al., 2012). This theory emphasizes the importance of analyzing the broader institutional context when examining organizational behavior and outcomes.

In the context of higher education institutions, the theory suggests that universities operate within a broader institutional environment that shape their behavior and actions. Consequently, it implies that JUCo, as a university, conforms to institutional norms and values related to CSR to maintain its legitimacy and reputation (Brammer et al., 2012). Through active engagement in CSR initiatives, particularly in areas such as public health, JUCo enhances its reputation and legitimacy, which can attract greater support from stakeholders and provide a competitive advantage (Scott, 1995).

This study, which investigates the motivations behind JUCo's engagement in CSR focused on public health, adopts institutional theory as its theoretical framework. By utilizing this theory, the study seeks to understand the behavior of JUCo, concerning CSR and public health. Institutional theory posits that JUCo is not an isolated entity but is influenced by the broader institutional environment within which it operates (Barley, 2007). This environment comprises various norms, values, and expectations that shape the behavior and actions of universities – JUCo in this case (Fransen, 2012; Jermier et al., 2006).

Thus, the study utilizes the institutional theory to acknowledge that JUCo, as a university, is subject to institutional pressures (Barley, 2007). In the context of CSR and public health, JUCois likely to conform to institutional norms and values emphasizing social responsibility's significance and engagement with public health issues (Jermier et al., 2006). This conformity enables JUCo to maintain its legitimacy and reputation within the broader institutional environment. Therefore, by engaging in CSR activities related to public health, such as partnering with local healthcare organizations or conducting research on public health challenges, JUCo can enhance its reputation and demonstrate its commitment to societal well-being (Brammer et al., 2012). Consequently, this can result in increased support from stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff, and the local community, and provide JUCo with a competitive advantage in terms of attracting resources and talent.

Material and methods

This section offers a comprehensive overview of the research methodology and techniques adopted in this study. The research was conducted in Morogoro Municipality, with JUCo serving as the case study for investigating the motives behind its engagement in CSR activities focusing on public health. JUCo was chosen for its dedication to providing quality higher education opportunities in Tanzania and beyond, offering relevant academic and professional programs that cater to the community's needs. Considering the typical case, where JUCo represents a standard or common instance of higher education institutions in the region, provides a foundational understanding of CSR motivations in the local context. One of JUCo's objectives aligns with the Tanzania Development Vision 2025, which emphasizes contributing to the local society and promoting the country's development, particularly in the realm of health promotion (JUCO, 2023).

To conduct this study, a cross-sectional design was employed, utilizing a mixed approach for its cost-effectiveness, time efficiency, and ability to gather substantial information within a relatively short timeframe. This design permits the collection of data from diverse individuals or respondent groups simultaneously, allowing for a snapshot of CSR motivations and practices at a specific moment, which is particularly valuable for understanding the current state of affairs at JUCo (Mwonge & Naho, 2021). To ensure a representative sample, a multistage sampling technique was employed, which is known for its effectiveness in collecting primary data from a wide geographical area while remaining cost-effective, time-efficient, and flexible (Mwonge & Naho, 2021). In this study, a multistage sampling technique involved two stages. Firstly, two wards surrounding JUCo, namely Kichangani and Tungi, were purposefully selected. Secondly, 50 respondents were randomly chosen from each ward, resulting in a total of 100 respondents for this study.

Both primary and secondary data were utilized in this research. Primary data collection involved semi-structured interviews and structured questionnaires. Secondary data were obtained through documentary reviews of academic journals, college hospital annual reports, and government documents focused on CSR and public health. The collected data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Software Version 25, with descriptive statistics used to describe the data presented as frequencies and proportionate counts.

Results

The study sought to determine the motives of JUCo's engagement in CSR initiatives that target public health. Understanding the motives behind a university's CSR efforts was crucial for evaluating the potential impact on public health. According to Porter and Kramer (2006), when institutions align their CSR initiatives with

their core business strategies, they are more likely to create sustainable value and positive social impact. According to Matten and Moon (2008), altruistic motives are woven into the corporation's character as part of its intrinsic institutional values and environment. Strategic motives, however, are considered more of a business investment, where university contributions are expected to yield a profitable return (Lantos, 2001). Whatever the motives, CSR has undoubtedly become an essential tool for measuring a university's reputation and public image (Ellen et al., 2006). Thus, identifying JUCo's motives for engaging in public health-focused CSR allows us to determine whether these initiatives are driven by genuine concern for public health or if they are primarily aimed at achieving business objectives or improving the university's image. Therefore, understanding JUCo's motives for engaging in public health-focused CSR, the study contributes to a more comprehensive evaluation of the impact of CSR initiatives on public health outcomes, helping to inform policy-making and corporate strategies for promoting public health.

Awareness of JUCo's CSR in public health

To assess the role of awareness in shaping perceptions of JUCo's motives, respondents were asked to indicate whether they were familiar with JUCo's CSR activities targeting public health. By assessing respondents' knowledge of JUCo's efforts in public health CSR, the study aimed to evaluate the extent of public knowledge regarding JUCo's CSR efforts and determine whether the university's motives are rooted in a genuine commitment to public health or primarily driven by the desire to enhance its public image. This analysis was essential for comprehending the underlying motivations guiding JUCo's CSR practices and their alignment with the institution's core values and societal impact. Table 1 presents the study results.

Table 1. Awareness of JUCo's CSR in public health

Variables	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Aware	81	83.5%	83.5%	83.5%
Not aware	16	16.5%	16.5%	100.0%
Total	97	100.0%	100.0%	

Source: Authors' own study.

The study results from Table 1 reveal that 81 (83.5%) respondents were familiar with JUCo's CSR initiatives targeting public health, while 16 (16.5%) were unaware of them. These results have significant implications for understanding the impact of CSR efforts on public health in two distinct ways. Firstly, the high percentage (83.5%) of respondents who knew about JUCo's CSR initiatives indicates that the university's endeavors in public health have gained substantial recognition among the general public. This recognition implies that JUCo's CSR activities have effectively raised awareness and visibility, potentially enhancing their capacity to positively

impact public health. By being widely acknowledged, JUCo's initiatives possess the potential to promote positive behaviors and attitudes toward public health and establish the university's reputation as a socially responsible institution. Secondly, the study results raise questions about the motives driving JUCo's engagement in CSR targeting public health. With a notable portion of respondents (16.5%) expressing their lack of awareness about JUCo's initiatives, it becomes crucial to investigate whether the university's CSR practices stem from a genuine dedication to public health or are primarily driven by a desire for favorable public perception. Hence, the study delved into the underlying motivations and assessed the alignment of JUCo's CSR initiatives with its core values and the actual impact on public health outcomes. Understanding these motives is crucial for evaluating the effectiveness and sustainability of JUCo's CSR activities and their potential to contribute to long-term improvements in public health.

The motives of JUCo engagement in CSR initiatives that target public health

This study aimed to investigate the motivations driving JUCo's engagement in CSR initiatives focused on public health. By examining the respondents' awareness and perceptions of these motivations, the study sought to uncover the factors influencing JUCo's commitment to public health-related CSR activities. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement regarding perceived improvements associated with these initiatives using a Likert scale: *Strongly Agree* (SA), *Agree* (A), *Undecided* (U), or *Disagree* (D). This analysis was pivotal for understanding the university's intentions, objectives, and values, and for evaluating the effectiveness and societal impact of its CSR efforts in the public health domain. The findings are summarized in Table 2.

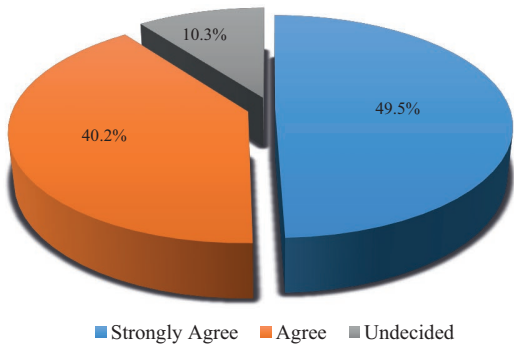**Table 2.** Motivations for JUCo to engage in CSR activities

Variables	SA		A		U		D		Statistics	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	Mean ()	SD ()
Improving the university's reputation	48	49.5	39	40.2	10	10.3	0	0	1.61	0.670
Legal and regulatory requirements	30	30.9	40	41.2	27	27.8	0	0	1.97	0.770
Meeting the expectations of stakeholders	32	33.0	30	30.9	31	32.0	4	4.1	2.07	0.904
Demonstrating corporate responsibility	52	53.6	24	24.7	16	16.5	5	5.2	1.73	0.919
A desire to make a positive impact on society	62	63.9	31	32.0	4	4.1	0	0	1.40	0.571
Increasing employee morale and engagement	32	33.0	35	36.1	30	30.9	0	0	1.98	0.803
Attracting new customers	21	21.6	30	30.9	38	39.2	8	8.2	2.34	0.912

Source: Authors' own study.

Improving the university's reputation

The study revealed that a significant portion of the respondents, accounting for 48 individuals or 49.5% of the total, strongly agreed that the university's engagement in CSR activities was primarily aimed at improving its reputation. Additionally, 39 respondents (40.2%) agreed with this viewpoint, while 10 respondents (10.3%) remained undecided or neutral. These findings suggest that by actively participating in CSR initiatives, such as supporting local communities, promoting sustainability, and investing in social causes, the university can enhance its image and position itself as a responsible and socially conscious institution. Furthermore, aligning its values with those of the wider society, JUCo aims to attract more students, faculty, and funding opportunities, thereby strengthening its position and positively influencing its overall reputation within academic and business communities. It is important to note that statistically, the study yielded a mean of 1.61 with a standard deviation (SD) of 0.670, indicating a relatively consistent pattern among the respondents in terms of their agreement with the university's CSR activities for reputation improvement. The same information was presented on the pie chart as shown in Figure 1.

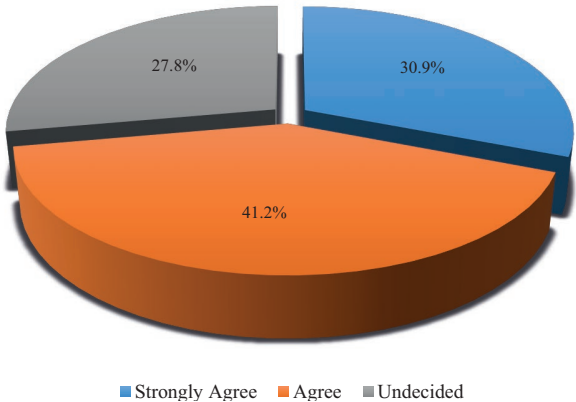**Figure 1.** Improving the university's reputation

Source: Authors' own study.

The findings are consistent with several related studies (Porter & Kramer, 2006; Ellen et al., 2006; Olatunji, 2013; Asemah et al., 2013) that have reported the benefits of CSR in terms of building a favorable reputation, gaining a competitive edge, and enabling organizations like JUCo to contribute to societal well-being. It is widely acknowledged that a thriving university relies on a healthy society. Furthermore, Porter and Kramer (2006) proposed that implementing CSR strategies within higher education institutions, such as JUCo, is crucial for achieving a genuine competitive advantage and fostering a positive reputation.

Legal and regulatory requirements

The findings revealed that 30 respondents (30.9%) strongly agreed that JUCo should participate in CSR activities as a legal obligation. Additionally, 40 respondents (41.2%) agreed, while 27 respondents (27.8%) remained undecided. These results indicate that JUCo effectively operated responsibly and avoided legal penalties or reputational damage by complying with relevant laws and regulations, encompassing areas such as environmental protection, labor standards, consumer rights, and other social and ethical considerations. Moreover, JUCo recognized that aligning its CSR initiatives with legal requirements not only helped mitigate risks but also bolstered its reputation, fostered trust among stakeholders, and contributed to long-term sustainability. Statistically, the study found that the respondents' average agreement rating was 1.97 (mean), with a standard deviation of 0.770 indicating that this alignment emphasizes JUCo's dedication to ethical practices and societal well-being. The same information was presented on the pie chart as shown in Figure 2.
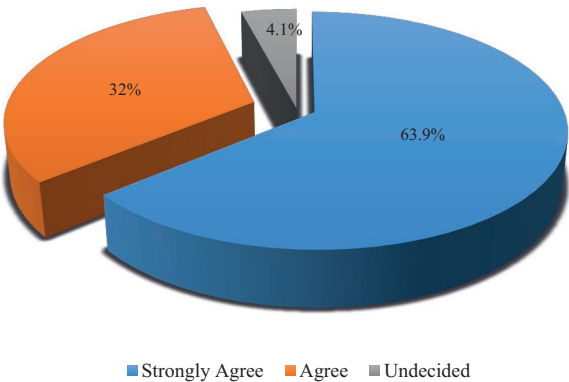

Figure 2. Legal and regulatory requirements

Source: Authors' own study.

The study result is in line with the findings of Asemah et al. (2013) which reports that universities have to pay attention to the areas like legal responsibility and ethical responsibility which show that a university is socially responsible to its employee and the surrounding society. Furthermore, the study results are corroborated by stakeholder theory, which identifies the various groups and individuals associated with a corporation. This theory also provides insights into how JUCo, can effectively address the interests of each party through management practices.

A desire to make a positive impact on society

The desire to make a positive impact on society was identified as a key factor influencing JUCo's engagement in CSR activities. Among the respondents, a significant proportion of about 62 individuals, accounting for 63.9% of the total, strongly agreed with this notion. Additionally, 31 respondents (32.0%) agreed to some extent, while 4 respondents (4.1%) remained undecided. These findings indicate that JUCo's motivation to participate in CSR activities originates from its deeply ingrained aspiration to create a positive influence on society. Consequently, recognizing its role as a corporate entity capable of driving social change, JUCo acknowledged its responsibility to extend beyond its primary business operations and contribute to the well-being of communities and the environment. By embracing CSR initiatives, JUCo aimed to address societal challenges, promote sustainability, support local communities, and foster a culture of ethical and responsible business practices. These efforts were guided by the fundamental objective of making a meaningful and enduring difference in society. Furthermore, the study's statistical analysis revealed a mean score of 1.40 and a standard deviation of 0.919. The same information was presented on the pie chart as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. A desire to make a positive impact on society
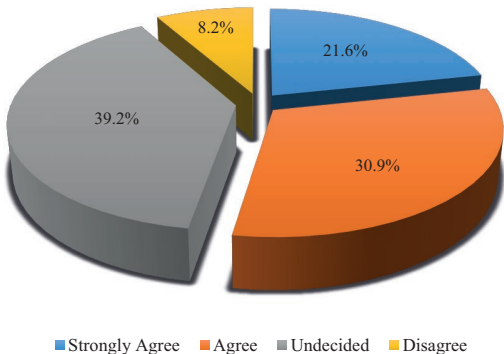
Source: Authors' own study.

Moreover, during the data collection phase, one respondent highlighted the proactive measures JUCo takes in its commitment to CSR, stating: "we also collaborate with local organizations and experts to develop preventive programs, utilizing our expertise to tackle this issue effectively. Furthermore, JUCo advocates for policy changes aimed at enhancing child protection" (KF2).

This statement underscores JUCo's dedication to making a positive impact on society, particularly in the realm of public health and child welfare. Thus, JUCo's engagement in CSR initiatives is not merely a strategic endeavor aimed at enhancing its

reputation; it reflects a genuine commitment to addressing pressing societal issues. Through the collaboration with local organizations and experts, JUCo leverages its academic resources and knowledge to create effective preventive programs that target specific community needs. This collaborative approach not only amplifies the impact of its initiatives but also fosters a sense of shared responsibility and community involvement. In addition, JUCo's advocacy for policy changes related to child protection illustrates its recognition of the broader systemic issues that affect vulnerable populations. Therefore, by actively participating in discussions and initiatives aimed at reforming policies, JUCo positions itself as a leader in social responsibility, demonstrating that it is not only concerned with immediate outcomes but also with long-term societal change. This dual focus on direct intervention through preventive programs and advocacy for systemic change exemplifies a comprehensive approach to CSR that seeks to create sustainable improvements in community well-being.

Attracting new customers

The study's findings regarding JUCo's motivation to actively participate in CSR initiatives revealed that attracting new customers is considered a significant driving factor. Among the respondents, 21 individuals, accounting for 21.6%, strongly agreed that attracting new customers is crucial for JUCo. Additionally, 30 respondents (30.9%) agreed with this perspective, while 38 (39.2%) remained undecided. Furthermore, the study's mean score was calculated to be 2.34, with a standard deviation of 0.912, indicating that when JUCo aligns its values and actions with socially responsible practices, it can attract new customers who prioritize ethical and sustainable business practices. The same information was presented on the pie chart as shown in Figure 4.
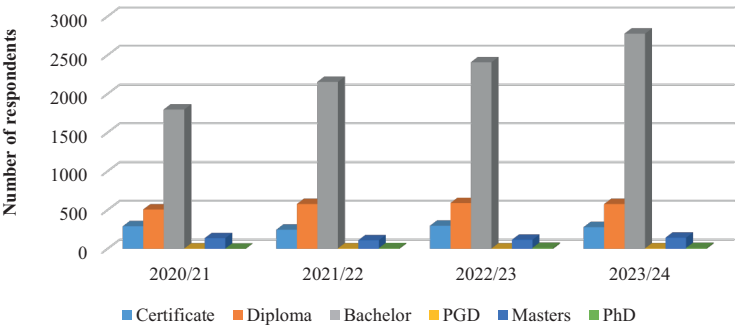

Figure 4. Attracting new customers

Source: Authors' own study.

Based on the study findings presented in Figure 4 above, it is evident that JUCo has improved its brand reputation and sets itself apart from public and private universities by showcasing a dedication to ethical practices, environmental sustainability, and social welfare. Hence, by actively participating in CSR initiatives, JUCo establishes a positive public image (perception), builds trust with prospective customers (particularly students), and enhances loyalty among its current customer base.

Furthermore, JUCo's engagement in CSR initiatives has notably impacted its student enrollment across various academic programs, including certificates, diplomas, bachelors, masters, and doctoral degrees. This increased engagement underscores the alignment between JUCo's CSR efforts and the values upheld by prospective students and their families. Specifically, there has been a 38.5% increase in student admissions from the academic years 2021/2022 to 2023/2024 (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Enrollment data for admission, academic year 2020/21–2023/24

Source: (JUCO, 2024).

The data illustrated in Figure 5 shows the increasing number of admissions and reflects JUCo's substantial commitment to societal challenges and sustainability. This commitment is evident in the university's ability to provide high-quality education while addressing social concerns through CSR activities. Such alignment between JUCo's mission and the ethical considerations of potential students has fostered a compelling institutional narrative that significantly enhances its appeal. The observed increase in applications indicates that JUCo's CSR strategies effectively contribute to a positive institutional image, thereby attracting a student demographic that prioritizes ethical engagement and social impact in their educational decisions. This study underscores the growing influence of CSR on prospective students' decision-making processes within the contemporary higher education landscape.

Specific public health issues that JUCo's CSR initiatives will address

In examining the motives behind JUCo's engagement in CSR initiatives that focus on public health. The study asked respondents about the specific public health

issues that JUCo's CSR initiatives will address. Thus, by asking respondents' opinions on targeted public health issues, the study aimed to gain insights into the underlying motivations and priorities of JUCo in their CSR approach, enabling a comprehensive understanding of their commitment to public health and the alignment between JUCo's CSR activities and the identified public health concerns. Table 3 presents the study results.

Table 3. Public health issues that JUCo's CSR initiatives should address

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Access to healthcare services	35	36.1%
Disease prevention and control	24	24.7%
Nutrition and healthy eating	7	7.2%
Mental health	10	10.3%
Environmental health	16	16.5%
Health campaign	5	5.2%
Total	97	100.0%

Source: Authors' own study.

Access to healthcare services: The study results from Table 3 provide important implications for the impact of CSR on public health considering that public health focuses on promoting healthcare equity, quality, and accessibility (CDCF, 2021). The findings reveal that the majority of respondents 35 (36.1%) believe that JUCo's CSR initiatives should address the issue of access to healthcare services. This indicates a recognition of the significant role that healthcare plays in promoting public health and the need for JUCo to contribute to improving access to healthcare services for the communities it operates. These study results align with the findings of Asemah et al. (2013), which suggest that universities can implement CSR practices by providing healthcare services. Therefore, by prioritizing healthcare services, JUCo's CSR efforts can directly enhance public health outcomes by addressing barriers to healthcare access.

Disease prevention and control: Another notable result is that disease prevention and control was identified as a priority by 24 (24.7%) of the respondents. This suggests a recognition of the importance of proactive measures to prevent and control diseases to safeguard public health (Nwobu, 2021). JUCo's CSR initiatives in this area could involve supporting programs that focus on promoting vaccinations, implementing disease surveillance systems, and raising awareness about preventive measures such as hygiene practices and lifestyle modifications. By prioritizing disease prevention and control, JUCo can contribute to reducing the burden of diseases and improving overall public health.

Environmental health: The study revealed that 16 respondents, accounting for 16.5% of the total, identified environmental health as a significant public health concern for JUCo's CSR initiatives. This finding suggests that, in addition to education provision and other social responsibilities, the public expects JUCo to address
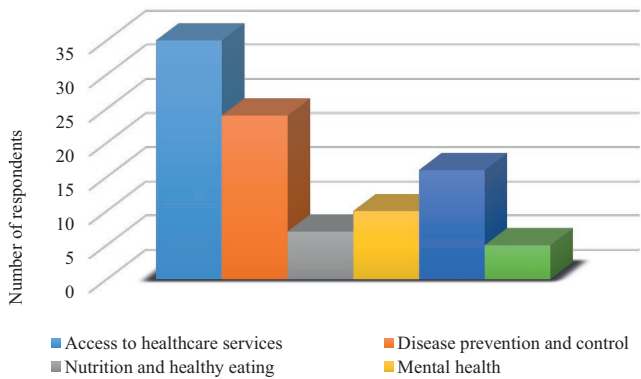
environmental factors that impact health, such as pollution, climate change, and resource conservation. By practicing CSR in the field of environmental health, JUCo enhances public well-being by promoting sustainable practices and mitigating environmental risks that affect health. This study supports Freeman's stakeholder theory, proposed in 1984, which considers stakeholders as individuals or groups who can influence or be influenced by an organization's objectives, specifically in the case of JUCo's implementation of CSR activities (Freeman, 1984). Given that the host community is a stakeholder of JUCo, the university's activities, and operations have an impact on people and the environment (Droppert & Bennett, 2015), resulting in social and environmental implications (Nwobu, 2021).

Mental health: It was found that 11 (10.3%) respondents emphasized the importance of JUCo's CSR initiatives in addressing mental health. This finding signals a growing recognition of mental health as a critical public health concern. JUCo's engagement in mental health initiatives would help to reduce stigma, promote awareness, and support access to mental healthcare services, positively impacting public mental well-being.

Nutrition and healthy eating: While only 7.2% of respondents highlighted nutrition and healthy eating as a priority, it still signifies the relevance of JUCo's CSR initiatives in promoting healthy lifestyles and combating nutrition-related issues. Therefore, by focusing on initiatives that encourage healthy eating habits and nutritional education, JUCo can contribute to preventing chronic diseases and improving overall public health.

Health campaigns: Although selected by a relatively smaller percentage (5.2%) of respondents, the inclusion of health campaigns as an identified issue indicates the value placed on awareness-raising efforts. JUCo plays a significant role in disseminating health-related information, promoting preventive measures, and driving behavior change through its CSR initiatives.

Hence, the aforementioned findings suggest that there is a recognition of the diverse aspects involved in public health, highlighting the necessity for comprehensive strategies that address different factors influencing well-being. JUCo's CSR initiatives align with this understanding by engaging in activities that target these concerns. These initiatives include promoting mental health awareness, supporting environmentally sustainable practices, advocating for healthy eating habits, ensuring access to healthcare services, preventing and controlling diseases, addressing environmental health issues, and conducting health campaigns to educate and empower individuals and communities. By addressing these multifaceted concerns, JUCo can make a substantial contribution to enhancing public health outcomes as a whole. This information is also, visually represented in Figure 6, where a bar graph illustrating the distribution of JUCo's CSR activities across the different focus areas.

Figure 6. Public health issues that JUCo's CSR initiatives should address

Source: Authors' own study.

Overall, the study results suggest that JUCo's engagement in CSR initiatives related to public health should prioritize access to healthcare services and disease prevention and control. However, JUCo needs to consider a comprehensive approach that encompasses other significant public health issues as well, such as mental health, environmental health, nutrition, and health campaigns. By aligning its CSR activities with the identified concerns of the community, JUCo makes a meaningful impact on public health and contributes to the well-being of the population it serves.

Discussion of the findings (implications and practical recommendations)

Implications of the findings

The study identifies several key motives behind JUCo's engagement in CSR initiatives, particularly those targeting public health. First and foremost, reputation building emerges as a primary driver. By actively participating in CSR activities related to public health, JUCo aims to position itself as a socially responsible institution. This strategic engagement not only enhances its reputation within the academic and business communities but also attracts more students, faculty, and funding opportunities. The study suggests that different universities can leverage CSR initiatives to strengthen their image and reputation.

Another critical factor motivating JUCo's participation in CSR activities is legal compliance. The study highlights that adherence to legal and regulatory requirements is essential for the institution. By aligning its CSR initiatives with relevant laws and regulations, JUCo not only avoids legal penalties but also fosters trust among stakeholders and enhances its overall reputation. This underscores the importance of integrating CSR activities with legal responsibilities to ensure long-term sustainability. Additionally, JUCo's commitment to making a positive impact on society is

a significant driving force behind its CSR activities targeting public health. JUCo recognizes its role as a corporate entity in addressing societal challenges and promoting sustainability through active contributions to public health initiatives. This finding illustrates how universities can play a vital role in driving social change and cultivating a culture of ethical and responsible practices through their CSR efforts.

Finally, the study points out that attracting new customers is another important motivation for JUCo's involvement in CSR initiatives. By aligning its values and actions with socially responsible practices, JUCo appeals to customers who prioritize ethical and sustainable business practices. This suggests that CSR activities can directly influence customer loyalty and brand perception, further highlighting the strategic importance of such initiatives for universities.

Practical recommendations

JUCo has the opportunity to strengthen its corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts, specifically targeting public health, to positively impact society's well-being while simultaneously enhancing its reputation and stakeholder engagement. To achieve this, several practical recommendations should be implemented.

Firstly, JUCo should focus on reputation management by consistently participating in CSR activities that highlight its role as a socially responsible institution. Effective communication of these efforts and active engagement with stakeholders can build a positive image, attracting more students, faculty, and donors to the institution. Additionally, integrating legal compliance is crucial; ensuring that CSR activities align with relevant legal and regulatory standards will help JUCo mitigate risks and bolster its credibility as a responsible and ethical college.

Moreover, JUCo should address specific public health concerns identified in study findings by focusing on access to healthcare services, disease prevention, and control. While these areas are important, JUCo should also adopt a comprehensive approach by incorporating other significant public health issues, such as mental health, environmental health, nutrition, and health campaigns. To enhance the effectiveness of its CSR initiatives, JUCo should establish clear metrics and evaluation frameworks for regular assessment. This continuous monitoring will provide insights into the outcomes of the efforts and inform any necessary adjustments improvement.

In addition, the collaboration with stakeholders is another vital component of effective CSR, thus, JUCo should work closely with local communities, government agencies, and healthcare organizations to design and implement initiatives that are aligned with the needs and priorities of the communities it serves. Lastly, JUCo should view CSR as a long-term commitment rather than a short-term strategy. Sustained engagement in CSR activities related to public health will result in a more substantial and lasting impact on community well-being and enhance the university's reputation over time.

Conclusions

The theoretical framework employed in this study provides a comprehensive understanding on the motivations behind JUCo's engagement in CSR initiatives targeting public health. Institutional Theory, provides a robust lens through which to how JUCo navigates external pressures, norms, and expectations, thereby emphasizing the critical role of institutional factors in shaping CSR motivations. This theoretical perspective elucidate that JUCo engage in CSR activities not solely out of a genuine commitment to social responsibility but also due to the imperative to conform to established institutional norms, fulfill legal and regulatory obligations, and demonstrate corporate responsibility. Such actions are essential for gaining legitimacy and enhancing organizational reputation within the broader societal context.

The findings of this study, which delineate JUCo's CSR motivations and the salient public health issues it addresses, offer significant insights for both academic scholars and practitioners in the field. By providing a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted nature of CSR, the research highlights a confluence of motives – including reputation enhancement, legal compliance, stakeholder expectations, and authentic commitment – that collectively inform JUCo's CSR practices. This comprehensive analysis is particularly enlightening for practitioners who are tasked with designing CSR strategies that not only align with organizational objectives but also resonate with societal well-being. For practitioners, these findings can be particularly enlightening when designing CSR strategies that align with both societal well-being and institutional objectives. The study suggests that CSR activities must be strategically planned to balance ethical commitments with the necessity to meet legal, reputational, and market-driven goals. This balanced approach not only enhances the credibility and sustainability of CSR efforts but also fosters long-term stakeholder trust and engagement. Moreover, the emphasis on public health as a CSR focus area reflects a broader trend in which organizations, particularly educational institutions, are increasingly called upon to play a proactive role in addressing critical societal challenges. The study underscores the potential for CSR to serve as a bridge between organizational goals and broader social impact, reinforcing the importance of integrating CSR into the core strategic vision of institutions.

Overall, this study provides a deeper understanding of how and why JUCo engage in CSR activities. It opens avenues for future research to explore how these motivations evolve over time and under different socio-political contexts, as well as how it might influence the effectiveness of CSR initiatives in achieving desired social outcomes. By advancing both theoretical and practical knowledge, this study contributes to the ongoing discourse on the role of CSR in promoting sustainable development and institutional legitimacy.

Research direction of the university and CSR programs

JUCo is strategically positioned to advance research that addresses pressing societal challenges, particularly in the fields of public health, education, economics, law, and community development. The university's research direction emphasizes interdisciplinary collaboration, integrating insights from various academic disciplines to foster innovative solutions that are responsive to local and global issues. By prioritizing research that aligns with the Tanzania Development Vision 2025, JUCo aims to contribute to the sustainable development of the region, focusing on enhancing the quality of life for its communities. This commitment to impactful research is reflected in the university's initiatives that seek to engage faculty and students in projects that not only advance academic knowledge but also translate into practical applications that benefit society.

In line with its research objectives, JUCo is actively involved in several CSR programs that aim to promote public health and community well-being. These initiatives include strategic partnerships with local organizations to develop preventive health programs, which effectively leverage the university's academic expertise to address specific health challenges faced by the community. Furthermore, JUCo's advocacy for policy reforms aimed at enhancing child protection exemplifies its recognition of the broader systemic issues that impact vulnerable populations. By actively participating in policy dialogues and initiatives, JUCo positions itself as a leader in social responsibility, demonstrating a commitment that extends beyond immediate outcomes to embrace long-term societal transformation. The university's CSR programs are designed to foster community engagement, promote sustainability, and support local development, thereby reinforcing its identity as a socially responsible institution dedicated to making a meaningful impact on society. Through these concerted efforts, JUCo not only enhances its institutional reputation but also cultivates a culture of ethical responsibility and social engagement among its students and faculty, thereby contributing to the broader discourse on corporate social responsibility in higher education.

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