

# The Myanmar JOURNAL

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## Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

Myanmar and Korea have many similarities and are complementary relationship. Therefore, we believe that research exchange will expand mutual understanding between Myanmar and Korea, and will be the cornerstone for mutual development.

KOMYRA and YUE have co-published The Myanmar Journal since August 2014. So far, many scholars have published numerous papers through the journal, and We are sure that this journal has helped many people understand Myanmar and Korea more clearly and closely.

The Myanmar Journal covers various issues in Myanmar and Korea. It covers various topics that can promote bilateral development and mutual understanding, not limited to specific topics such as economy, industry, society, education, welfare, culture, energy, engineering, healthcare, and agriculture.

We hope that this journal will continue to promote understanding of the current status and potential capabilities of Myanmar and South Korea and promote in-depth international exchange and cooperation.

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to the editorial board and YUE and KOMYRA for their valuable support in The Myanmar Journal publication.

August 30, 2020

Youngjun Choi *yj choi*

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT The Myanmar Journal**

The Myanmar Journal (ISSN 2383-6563) is the official international journal co-published by Yangon University of Economics (YUE) and Korea Myanmar Research Institute (KOMYRA).

This journal aims to promote the mutual cooperation and development of Myanmar and Korea through intensive researches in the entire field of society, economy, culture, and industry.

It will cover all general academic and industrial issues, and share ideas, problems and solution for development of Myanmar.

Articles for publication will be on-line released twice a year at the end of February and August every year on the Myanmar Journal webpage.

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## The Effect of Corporate Social Responsibility on Organizational Identification and Work Engagement of Tour Operators in Yangon: Moderating Effect of Personal Social Responsibility

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**ABSTRACT:** This study aims to examine the effect of perceived CSR of tour operators on their organizational identification, to determine the moderating effect of individually held personal social responsibility on the relationship between their perceived CSR and organizational identification, and to realize whether tour operators' self-identification with the organization impacts on their attitude and behavior in terms of work engagement in tour company in Yangon. The analyses are conducted based on the responses of 326 tour operators who are middle level managers working at 326 tour companies in Yangon. The results illustrate that the CSR activities towards community, employee, and customer have a positive impact on organizational identification of the tour operators. In addition, the results reveal the moderating effects of personal social responsibility of tour operators on the relation between perceived CSR towards community and customer and organizational identification. Moreover, self-identification with the company has effects on work engagement of the tour operators. The results of the study contribute the practical implications for tour companies to design their CSR programs in order to promote organizational performance and strengthen their competitiveness in highly competing tour industry.

**Key words :** *Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), personal social responsibility (PSR), organizational identification, work engagement, vigor, dedication, absorption,*

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## **I. Introduction**

The concept of Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has long been recognized as a strategic imperative for organizational sustainability. CSR has become a practice of modern business organizations as a pillar of triple bottom line: (economic, social, and environmental performance). Carroll (1999) asserted that CSR is a fulfilling obligation of a business to various stakeholders including customers, suppliers, employees, communities, and shareholders in conducting business activities. Among several stakeholders of any business organization, employees are considered as the most important internal stakeholders since their work-related attitude and behavior largely impact on organizational effectiveness.

Business activities in compliance with CSR values have meaningful impact on employees since such CSR activities make them have a higher degree of identification with their organization and feel prouder about their organization membership. Studies also illustrated the moderating effect of personal social responsibility (PSR) of employees between their perception on CSR and organizational identification. When socially responsible persons work for organizations that engage in CSR activities, they are more likely to find such organizations attractive and to identify with them.

High degree of organizational identification, in turn, reinforces employees' willingness to perform better and stronger engaging at work. He & Brown (2013) supposed that strong organizational identification of employees leads to enhancement of their work engagement characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption.

### **1. Rational of the Study**

Tourism sector has long been recognized as an attractive smokeless industry for the economic growth of the country with a large stream of revenues through related businesses of offering goods and services and employment opportunities. However, after 2015, inbound tourist has drastically decreased due to political consideration related to ethnic group tensions in Myanmar. Even though tourist arrival rate has gradually improved after 2016, the number of tourist arrival has not reached the level of 2015. In addition, average spending per day and average length of stay (night) also steadily declined since 2016. During the same period, the numbers of tour company has progressively increased year by year. (Table-1) The factors highlight the struggling of tourism related businesses for their sustainability.



Table 1. Tourist Arrival, Expenditure, Length of Stay & Licensed Tour Company (2015-2019)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Tourist Arrival	4,681,020	2,907,207	3,443,133	3,551,428	4,364,101
Average Expenditure per Day (US\$)	171	154	153	122	108
Average Length of Stay (Night)	9	11	9	9	6
Licensed Tour Company	1946	2453	2593	2712	3188

Source: Myanmar Tourism Statistics, MHT (Various Issues)

According to the nature of service industry, attracting and retaining customers mainly depend on the dedicated service personnel. Moreover, new tour companies attract skilled tour operators for expanding their businesses. Thus, under the context of increasing market competition, tour companies are facing the challenges of attracting talented employees and retaining their skilled staff especially marketing executives and service personnel. It leads tour companies to spend more time and budget for recruiting, training and developing their human resources. In order to retain their talented and experienced service personnel and promote their performance, tour companies have to find out the ways to enhance their perceived value of the organizations and to boost the identification of employees themselves in terms of membership in the organization. In addition, under the intense competition, work engagement of tour operators has become a determinant of organizational success. People devotes their engagement behavior in organizations which CSR practices bolster their self-esteem, enhance their self-image, and strengthen their self-respect through identification with organization.

Although there are several researches related to the effect of employee perception on CSR on their organizational identification and performance in tourism industry, it is still a gap in the context of Myanmar. Thus, this study is a step to fulfill this gap in tourism sector in Myanmar through identifying the employee perception on CSR activities of tour companies, and its impact on organizational identification and work engagement of the tour operators located in Yangon. Moreover, personal social responsibility is relatively new concept, this individually held social responsibility may be one of the determinants on what extent the perceived CSR affect organizational identification of the tour operators.

## 2. Objectives of the Study

This paper mainly aims to study the effect of CSR practices on organizational

identification and work engagement of tour operators. To reach this aim, this study specifies the following objectives:

- o To identify the effect of perceived CSR of tour operators on their identification with the organization in tour companies in Yangon;
- o To examine whether personal social responsibility of tour operators moderates the relationship between perceived CSR and organizational identification of tour operators;
- o To analyse the influence of organizational identification of tour operators on their work engagement in tour companies in Yangon.

### **3. Expected Outcomes**

This study is expected provide the better understanding on the linkage between perceived CSR and organizational identification and work engagement of the employees. Moreover, it anticipates that individually held social responsibility will determine the extent of organizational identification due to the perceived CSR of employees. By providing comprehension on the impact of CSR activities on organizational identification and work engagement of employees, this study can provide an effective way to retain their dedicated and talented tour operators and thereby enhance organizational performance and strengthen their competitiveness in a contestable market.

## **II. CSR Practices of Tour Company in Myanmar**

Although the term of CSR is relatively new, Myanmar people have been practicing philanthropic acts for a long time even before the term CSR became common. Than Hlaing Oo (2016) described that the motivation of engaging CSR activities is mostly related to moral/ personal values and the needs within the community that is influenced by Myanmar culture and traditions of philanthropic giving although business motives can be found in lesser extent. Philanthropic traditions of Myanmar mainly influence CSR activities that can create impacts at grassroots levels (Welford & Ziegler, 2013). Moreover, Myanmar tour companies embrace the concept of sustainable tourism and many CSR activities focus on the area of consumer preferences for socially and environmentally responsible tourism products (Bohdanowicz, 2008; Rodriguez, 2007).

CSR activities in tourism industry can be categorized into social-related activities and environmental-related activities. Generally, Myanmar tour operators are enthusiastic to participate in social activities such as taking care of monks, looking after the vulnerable people, involving in charitable donations like blood donations, in-kind donations,

highlighting the cultural influences to engage CSR.

Social-related activities includes community-related activities, employee-related activities, and customer-related activities. Among them, community-related activities are the most common types of CSR of tour companies due to the Myanmar tradition and Buddhist teachings to help others. The most common CSR practices of tour companies is charity to the community including emergency response programs as Myanmar prone to natural disasters which affect a large percentage of its people. Moreover, with the aim to support local businesses, community-based tourism programs are considered beneficial for both tour operators and the community. It is beneficial for tour companies by attracting tourists who want to see the natural lives of local people whereas it creates a source of income for local community to sell their goods and services. Regarding employee-related CSR, Myanmar tour companies mainly conduct trainings for skill development, taking caring of staff's health and well-being, employing staff with disability and recognizing and rewarding the staff. In terms of customer-related CSR, the activities includes encouraging customers to taking care of waste and plastic bags, asking customers to follow hotel green theme to safe energy, encouraging them to spend more money locally, giving advice who may wish to make donations in needed areas, and urging foreign investors to invest responsibly. Environmental-related CSR is relatively less emphasis and the activities mainly related to their internal system such as waste reduction and recycling, water and energy saving, and using recycle products. In addition, tour companies contribute to environmental-related issues such as reforestation, tree plantation and heritage conservation. (Than Hlaing Oo, 2016).

### **III. Theoretical Background**

Engagement of employee at work is a predecessor of achieving goals and targeted performance of the organizations. Work engagement, in turn, can be enhanced when employees have the passion at work and identify themselves as a part of well-reputed and high-status organizations whereas reputation and status are the collective results of organizational practices that protect and enhance the well-being of the society as a whole along with the benefit of the organization.

#### **1. Corporate Social Responsibility**

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is evolving and a multi-dimensional concept related to different stakeholders, including communities, employees, consumers, and the

environment. For the sake of avoiding confusion, this study adopts the concept of Waldman, Siegel & Javidan (2006) that CSR is the organizational behavior to protect or promote the welfare of society beyond the direct interests of corporations and their stakeholders as stipulated by law.

Scholars asserted that practicing CSR affects employees' attitudes and behaviors through enhancing their social identification with organization. However, the effects of CSR on organizational identification and work behavior of employees can be differed with their perception on CSR. Different perceptions of employees on CSR activities of an organization lead to difference in prosocial attitudes of employees toward the organization. Moreover, the extent of personal social responsibility of individuals can also differ the effects of CSR activities on their organizational identification

## **2. Personal Social Responsibility**

Personal social responsibility (PSR) refers to the daily life behavior of the individual, as a member of the society to have positive impacts on his/her environment. Verghese (2015) defined individual social responsibility as prosocial actions to do good for society by people in their personal capacities. Alfaro-Barrantes (2012) supposed that when individuals who are socially responsible persons work for organizations that engage in CSR activities, they are more likely to find such organizations attractive and to identify with them. Thus, personal social responsibility is a possible determinant for the extent of individual's organizational identification. Therefore, this study proposes that personal social responsibility of individuals have moderating effect on the impact of perceived CSR on organizational identification.

## **3. Organizational Identification**

Organizational identification is a precursor for different work behaviors of organization members. It can be defined as a form of social identification in which the individuals define themselves in terms of their membership in the organization. According to social identity theory (SIT) developed by Tajfel & Turner (1979), positive social identity is aroused when employees identify with their current group confidently and satisfactorily due to the unique and favorable aspects of the group. Based on SIT, firm's involvement in social issues and reputation through CSR have a direct effect on organizational identification of employees as they try to keep positive social identity (Aberson et al., 2000). The stronger an individual's identification with their organization, the more likely they will act in accordance with the organization's goals and expectations and will be willing to stay with the organization (Dutton, 1994; Reade,

2001). In this sense, organizational identification has an impact on individual's willingness to perform the job and their engagement at work.

#### **4. Work Engagement**

Scholars supposed work engagement as an indicator of affective-motivational state of work-related state of mind of an employee (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002; Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter & Taris, 2008). The engaged employees are characterized with high level of energy, strong mental resilience, willingness to invest their effort, perseverance, passion, and self-importance at work. These characteristics can be grouped as vigor, dedication, and absorption. Vigor represents high level of energy and mental resilience at work, willingness to contribute with high effort and persistence in completing the job. Vigor is mainly stimulated by the content of the job that employee performed. Dedication is characterized with strong psychological involvement such as enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and high commitment to organization with great work ethic. Absorption refers to being highly concentrated and well absorbed in work and thereby, forgetting everything else around and passing time quickly. Absorption can be happened in work situations with high challenge and/or skill utilization (Schaufeli et al., 2002).

Based on above mentioned theories and empirical studies, this study proposes that the employees' perception on CSR of an organization have a direct impact on organizational identification of the employees and their self-identification with the organization lead to psychological states of engaging at work that, in turn, lead to achieving organizational goals. Moreover, the study makes a new proposition that personal social identification of employees can have moderating effect on the relationship between perceived CSR and organizational identification of the employees.

### **IV. Empirical Analysis**

#### **1. Methodology and Data**

To examine the effect of perceived CSR on organizational identification and work engagement and the moderating effect of personal social responsibility of tour operators, the study is conducted based on the responses of 330 tour operators who are working at middle level management at tour companies in Yangon. The sample size is determined by using sample size calculator of raosoft.com at 95 percent confidence interval. Three hundred and thirty respondents are selected from total of 2325 tour

companies registered at Ministry of Hotel and Tourism and located in Yangon with simple random sampling method.<sup>2)</sup>

Employees' perception on CSR are examined with 8-item CSR scale adopted from Turker (2009) that include CSR practices towards four stakeholder groups: community, employee, customer, and environment. PSR is analyzed by developing 6-item scale that cover socially responsible practices towards social, ethical, environmental issues. Organizational identification is measured by 6-items adapted from Ashforth & Mael (1989). Work engagement is identified with the shortened version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale. Responses are gathered through self-administered questionnaire designed with a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The demographic variables of respondents include age, gender, education, functional area, and length of service in current organization.

## **2. Data Analysis**

Statistical analysis is performed using SPSS 22.0 software including reliability analysis and multiple linear regression analysis to examine the effect of perceived CSR and the moderating effect of PSR on organizational identification and work engagement of tour operators in Yangon. Reliability of the collected data is firstly investigated using Cronbach's  $\alpha$ .

## **3. Empirical Results**

Out of 330 questionnaires fully filled for the purpose of the analysis, 326 valid questionnaires are used. The respondents' profile is presented in Table-1. The majority of respondents (59.5 percent) are within the age between 36 and 45 years old. Males are 44.2 percent and 55.8 percent are female. Among the respondents, 97.2 percent have a degree in which 8 percent possess post-graduate education and only 3.7 percent hold diplomas and certificates. In terms of functional area, nearly half of the respondents are from marketing department, followed by 36.8 percent from operation department and the remaining are from general function and other areas. The majority of respondents (55.8 percent) have less than 4 years length of service working in the current organizations (Table-1).

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2) Ministry of Hotel & Tourism (2019)

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Sr. No.	Demographics Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1	<b>Age:</b> 25 or younger	56	17.18
	26 – 35 years	96	29.45
	36 – 45 years	98	30.06
	46 – 55 years	54	16.56
	Older than 55 years	22	6.75
2	<b>Gender:</b> Male	144	44.17
	Female	182	55.83
3	<b>Education:</b> Diploma	12	3.68
	Bachelor	288	88.34
	Master & above	26	7.98
4	<b>Department:</b> General	48	14.72
	Marketing	145	44.48
	Operations	120	36.81
	Others	13	3.99
5	<b>Service Year at Current Organization:</b>		
	Less than 2 year	74	22.70
	2 to 4 years	108	33.13
	4 to 6 years	60	18.40
	6 to 8 years	42	12.88
	8 to 10 years	38	11.66
Over 10 years	4	1.23	

Source: Survey Data (January, 2020)

The mean value, standard deviation and Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of each variable are described in Table-2. The variables measuring of CSR, PSR, Organizational identification, and dimensions of work engagement can be considered reliable as the value of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  more than 0.70 criterion.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Mean	Std. Div.	Cronbach's $\alpha$
PSR towards: Social	4.27	0.75	.800
Ethics	4.20	0.78	.804
Environmental	3.60	0.86	.808
CSR towards: Community	4.14	0.73	.789
Employee	4.08	0.73	.790
Customer	4.17	0.77	.790
Environment	3.89	0.83	.787
Organizational Identification	3.47	0.75	.785

Work Engagement: Vigor	3.43	0.89	.808
Dedication	3.48	0.83	.788
Absorption	3.40	0.91	.802

Source: Survey Data (January, 2020)

As presented in Table-2, among PSR variables, PSR towards social issues have the largest mean value followed by those of ethical issues that reflects the influence of Myanmar culture, religious belief, and traditions of philanthropic contributions to the society. CSR variables also show the same direction with PSR. CSR towards community has the largest mean values and followed by CSR towards customers. Both PSR and CSR towards the environmental issues have the lowest mean scores highlighting the low awareness and less concern on environmental issues in Myanmar. Among three dimensions of work engagement, dedication has the largest mean values followed by vigor and absorption. High score of dedication suggests the devotion of tour operators to their company through high commitment and enthusiasm.

To determine the effect of perceived CSR on organizational identification and to examine whether personal social responsibility of tour operator can enhance the effect of their perceived CSR on organizational identification, this study conducts 2 steps. At first step, organizational identification was regressed with tour operators' perception on CSR towards community, employee, consumer, and environment. At second step, the product terms of independent and moderating variable (each Perceived CSR × PSR) are entered into the model. To find out the influence of organizational identification on work engagement, each type of work engagement was regressed with organizational identification. The results are presented in Table-3 and Table-4.

Table 3. The Effect of Perceived CSR on Organizational Identification and The Moderating Effect of PSR

	Model-1			Model-2		
	B	SE	$\beta$	B	SE	$\beta$
CSR towards:						
Community	.186**	.047	.205	-.646	.371	-.697
Employee	.120*	.053	.123	.992*	.399	.964
Customer	.143*	.057	.138	-.213	.513	-.199
Environment	.108	.061	.104	.186	.446	.171
PSR				.133	.088	.099
Interaction Effect:						
Community * PSR				.194*	.096	1.223
Employee * PSR				-.233	.095	-1.441
Customer * PSR				.079*	.127	.478
Environment *				-.004	.111	-.024



PSR			
R <sup>2</sup>	.198		.225
Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	.191		.202
△ R <sup>2</sup>			.225
F-Statistics	26.044**		9.911**

Source: Survey Data (January, 2020)

Note: \* \* Significant at 1% level, \* Significant at 5% level

All regression models can explain about the variation of perceived CSR since the value of adjusted R-square is around 20 percent.<sup>3)</sup> The overall significance of the model, F-value, is highly significant at 1 percent level in all models, thus, it ensures the valid of the models.

As presented in Table-3, the results of the Model-1 highlight that perceived CSR towards community, employee, and customer have significant direct effect on organizational identification of tour operators. According to the Model-2, personal social responsibility of tour operators has moderating effects between the relations between perceived CSR towards customer and community and organizational identification. The results suggest that high personal social responsibility of tour operators supports to enhance their self- identification with organization which practiced CSR towards customer and community.

Table 4. The Influence of Organizational Identification on Work Engagement

	Vigor			Dedication			Absorption		
	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	B	SE	β
Autocratic	1.791**	.192		1.926**	.191		1.047**	.147	
R <sup>2</sup>	.147			.134			.405		
Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	.145			.132			.404		
F-Statistics	73.303***			65.303***			288.595***		

Source: Survey Data (May, 2019)

Note: \* \* Significant at 1% level, \* Significant at 5% level

The results in Table-4 shows that all coefficients of organizational identification are significant at 1 percent level. It implies that tour operators' identification themselves with their organization can enhance the all types of work engagement of the operators in tour company in Yangon.

3) In social science predicting human behavior, according to Gary (1986), the low R-square value does not imply that the model is not fit and conclusions can be done based on the significance of coefficient regardless of R-square value.

## **V. Conclusion**

The analyses are conducted with the aims to examine the effect of tour operators' perception on CSR activities on their organizational identification, to analyze the moderating effect of personal social responsibility of individuals on relationship between their perceived CSR and organizational identification, and to find out whether tour operators' self-identification with the organization impacts on their attitude and behavior in terms of work engagement in tour company in Yangon.

### **1. Summary of Findings**

The results of the study support the research objectives. Firstly, employees' perception on CSR of an organization towards community, employee, and customer have a positive impact on organizational identification of the employees. It suggests that the firm's involvement in social issues and reputation earned from CSR practices make employees to bolster their self-esteem and enhance their self-image through identification with organizations. Moreover, their self-identification with the organization promote motivation and psychological states of engaging at work for the better performance of the organization. Another factor illustrated by the results is moderating effect of personal social responsibility of tour operators. It indicates that when a socially responsible person works in an organization that engages in CSR activities, he or she have the feelings of some attachments with the organization and invest their time and effort for the betterment of the that organization. Moreover, the results demonstrate the positive influence of organizational identification on all types of employee engagement. It suggests that high personal identification with organizations leads to promote physiological or psychological states of tour operators, and thereby, higher level of engagement at working environment.

### **2. Implications**

The results of this study contribute to the literature as well as practical implications. This study provides the better understanding on the linkage between perceived CSR and organizational identification and work engagement of the employees. Moreover, personal social responsibility is also a determinant for the extent of individual's organizational identification. It implies that when socially responsible persons work for the tour company that engage in CSR activities, they are more likely to find such company is attractive and to identify with them. The stronger an individual's identification with their organization, the more likely they are willing to stay with the

organizational and engaging at work for the benefits of organization in terms of organizational objectives and performance.

This comprehension on the impact of CSR activities on organizational identification and work engagement of employees can support the tour companies to design an effective strategy to retain their dedicated and talented tour operators and thereby enhance organizational performance and strengthen their competitiveness in highly competing tourism industry.

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