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A Study on the Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on the Organizational Attractiveness to Employment among Gen Z

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Abstract

This research examines the relationship between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and an organization's attractiveness, especially among Gen Z. Nowadays, companies need to understand how their CSR efforts influence the ability to attract young talent as Gen Zor Gen Z is a new wave to join in the job market. Attaining the desired organizational objectives may depend on the capabilities of human resources and recruitment managers so that their employees can endure in a growing industry. In the exposure of technology and information era, an organization's commitment to CSR directly impacts its attractiveness to the newest generation that joins the employment market, leading organizations facing the great challenge of enticing this new wave of talent. The objective of this research is to determine whether CSR dimensions, which include economic, legal, ethics, and philanthropic are significantly influenced the organization's attractiveness. The chosen sampling technique for this study is using stratified random sampling (SRS), and the quantitative method approach is utilised to analyse the data collected. The findings of this research shows that economic dimension has significant positive relationship and as a main factor with organizational attractiveness while the other dimensions appear not significant. The findings of this study highlight the need for policies and inducements that foster meaningful CSR practices among organizations for policy makers. Thus, the implication of this study provides valuable insights to organizations that pursuing to draw and retain new talent of Gen Z and organizations is strongly encouraged to include CSR into their business practices to achieve competitive advantages.

Keywords: *corporate social responsibility; Gen Z; organizational attractiveness; Carroll's Model*

INTRODUCTION

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Gen Z has brought a significant transformation in the talent recruitment process and estimated a shortage of highly educated and skilled workers by 2020, leading to an intensified global competition for talent (Tarigan et al., 2020). Achieving the desired organizational objectives may rest on the capabilities of Human Resources and recruitment managers so that employees can remain in an industry (Wardlaw, 2019). Thus, globalization has caused numerous firms to increase their operations on a global scale, emphasizing that employees, who function as valued intangible assets can substantially contribute to their competitive advantage (Zahari & Puteh, 2020).

Through the exposure of technology and information availability, an organization's commitment to CSR directly affects its attractiveness to the newest generation that joins the employment market; leading organizations to face a great challenge of attracting this new wave of talent (Magano et al., 2020). According to Soleha et al. (2024), this new generation creates a major challenge for business in terms of employing capable talent that is customised to the demands of the job market. The exact dates of Gen Z can vary depending on the author, and the common focus in the studies is those who were born between 1995 and 2010. Gen Z are also known as “Gen Z”, “post-Millennials”, or “iGen” (Benítez-Márquez et al. 2022). Therefore, the respondents selected for this study were born between 1996 and 2006 and will be between 18 and 28 years old, indicating a new cohort of talent entering the workforce.

Additionally, the study of Gen Z job pursuers’ expectations and job pursuit intentions in transition and emerging economies further deepens our understanding of their specific prospect’s potentials and contemplations within the job-seeking process according to Thang et al. (2022). The interviews organised in the study discovered that they had a thorough understanding of CSR, its related programs, and the possibility benefits for businesses. There was a common understanding that participating in such activities could absolutely influence their prospect of applying for job positions established on the findings of the research. Hence, CSR influences how attractive an organization is perceived as a prospective employer. Besides, they were grown in a technologically superior world that showed them to accessible information which has different job requirements and ideal businesses from former generations (Soleha et al., 2024). The Employer Brand Research 2024 Malaysia emphasizes that 43% of Gen Z are hopping jobs to pursue fulfilling and meaningful jobs with their selected corporations early in their careers.

According to Arpita Agnihotri & Saurabh Bhattacharya (2021), the studies promote to the understanding of CSR alignment and its potential impact on organizational attractiveness for job seekers. In contrast, Jones et al. (2014) discovered that employees perceived a high organizational fit when CSR practices were associated with community care or environmental sustainability. However, Agnihotri & Bhattacharya (2021) argue that this alignment does not consistently result in positive perceptions among potential job applicants due to a lack of CSR fit with the core business operations of the firm. However, the research conducted by Benraïss-Noailles et al. (2021) indicates that forthcoming employees may not exhibit the estimated level of sensitivity towards Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) aspects. The findings suggest that graduates are more likely to be attracted by the anticipated working conditions specific to the position rather than general CSR practices. Notably, the study reveals that

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the perceived CSR commitment of a potential employer does not significantly influence the intentions of management master's students, regardless of whether they are from French or Moroccan universities.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) positively influences organizational attractiveness, and reputation emerges as a key component for Gen Zs' intention to apply (Soleha et al., 2024). This research aims to investigate how CSR can be an aid in organizational attractiveness to employment, especially within the competitive market based on their perception. In addition, there is a notable gap in the existing studies regarding the factors that attract this generation to employment in organizations and numerous studies focus on the preceding generation. Therefore, this study endeavours to fill this gap and offer valuable insights for employers seeking to engage with Gen Z talent in Malaysia.

As the business world today is changing rapidly with the involvement of Gen Z as the newest generation in the industry, recruiting the finest employees who are suited for the organization is a difficult task. This has become a main concern to organizations and the revolution of the future workforce (Zahari & Puteh, 2023). Over the past few years, there has been a growing recognition of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as a strategic instrument for companies to improve their public perception, interact with stakeholders, and cultivate a commitment to ethical responsibility (Ali et al., 2023). Hence, organizations must understand the preferences of this generation as they enter and dominate the job market to facilitate the plan and development of ensuring competitive advantages. The issue of this study is related to the complex relationship between CSR initiatives and the organizational attractiveness of Gen Z preferences when making decisions about their employment.

Furthermore, the Gen Z perspective has been significantly impacted by a socio-cultural environment marked by global connectivity and a heightened awareness of social and environmental issues, where their entry into the workforce has proven to be challenging due to the disruptions caused by a pandemic, economic downturn, and the associated social led to labour implications (Magano et al., 2020). According to Ali et al. (2021), they have grown up in crises of psychological warfare, terrorism, worldwide retreat and environmental change. They are affected by a perception that companies typically utilize and show concern for employees only when their services are required. According to Malaysia’s Employee Brand Research 2024, 41% of Gen Z identify as

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minorities and experienced inequality in the workplace. Certainly, Gen Z have no hesitation in switching jobs frequently throughout their careers since the industry greatly values their skills and abilities, and they continue to have high expectations for their jobs despite these downturns.

According to Mahapatra et al. (2021), 56% of adults between the ages of 18 and 24 intend to shift jobs in the upcoming years. The Employer Brand Research 2024 Malaysia mentioned that 29% of Gen Z are most likely to leave their jobs when they lose interest in their careers. Gen Z young professional employees tend to shift their jobs three times more than other generations in the workplace. According to Zahari & Puteh (2023), Human Resources practitioners face the challenge not only of attracting the new generation but also of strategically directing their efforts towards providing them with the necessary elements to retain them within the company. Further, some organizations are wary of hiring job hoppers since they are likely to shift jobs once more in the future and may bring valuable information, skills, and expertise to the new organization, which may indirectly harm the current one. The impact of job hopping on an organization extends beyond money, time, and resources.

Gen Z enter the professional field with elevated expectations regarding their work and a desire for clearly defined career development plans (Magano et al., 2020). Despite limited research on the factors that appeal to this generation in terms of company preferences, it is suggested that this generation is attracted by aspects such as workplace flexibility and achieving a balance between their professional and personal lives (Benítez-Márquez et al., 2022). These experiences have fostered a robust sense of corporate ethics and social responsibility among Gen Z that significantly shape their decision-making regarding employment choices (Twenge, 2017). Consequently, companies are confronted with the challenge of aligning their aspirations to find their ideal job with opportunities to expand their skill set as they are entrepreneurial, surpassing Generation Y in this aspect (Magano et al., 2020). If this issue were not addressed thoroughly, Malaysia would scarcely encounter skills shortages or talent constraints in the industry.

Based on the Demographic Statistics Malaysia (DSM), the highest population is 3,042,009 as of 2023 from the age of 20-24, and the age falls under the working age (15-64 years old). Hence, the population data provides a segment of the workforce entering or actively participating in the job market. In the context of Malaysia’s rapidly

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growing economy and evolving job market, understanding the needs of Gen Z is crucial for organizations seeking to attract and retain top talent. There is a lack of study regarding how the job market adapts to meet the demands and expectations of post-millennials, which necessitates further study (Benítez-Márquez et al., 2022). The desire for career progression, higher income, fulfilling work, and a supportive team collectively contribute to their overall job satisfaction and commitment to their organizations, highlighting the importance of understanding and addressing these multifarious factors to foster a motivated and dedicated workforce (Magano et al., 2020). Hence, they possess a heightened awareness and knowledge of global affairs compared to preceding generations and have also demonstrated financial consciousness. The most common way companies respond to the demand of Gen Z is by providing a welcoming work environment, keeping updated with technology, ambassador programs, internships, benefits, and CSR initiatives.

In summary, it is crucial to conduct a comprehensive investigation into the impact of CSR on organizational attractiveness among Gen Z in perceiving a job to contribute to a deeper understanding of the evolving employment era. This study seeks to bridge the gap between CSR literature and the specific needs and expectations of Gen Z employees in Peninsular Malaysia, thereby offering valuable insights to organizations seeking to attract and retain this vital segment of the workforce. Hence, the problem revolves around uncovering the significant relationship between CSR and organizational attractiveness to employment to provide actionable insights for companies striving to engage this generation effectively in the workforce. Thus, the objective of this study is to examine the relationship between CSR dimensions (economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic) and organizational attractiveness among Gen Z in Malaysia.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

As the business world today is changing swiftly with the participation of Gen Z as the latest generation in the industry, recruiting the excellent employees who are competent for the organization is a challenging task. This has become a focal concern to organizations and the uprising of the future workforce (Zahari & Puteh, 2023). Over the past few years, there has been a raising recognition of CSR as a strategic means for companies to increase their public perception, interact with stakeholders, and foster a commitment to ethical responsibility (Ali et al., 2023). Hence, organizations must value the inclinations of this generation as they participate and dominate the job market to

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enable the plan and development of ensuring competitive advantages. The issue of this study is related to the complex relationship between CSR initiatives and the organizational attractiveness of Gen Z inclinations when making choices about their employment.

Furthermore, the Gen Z perspective has been significantly obstructed by a socio-cultural environment manifest by global connectivity and a keen responsiveness of social and environmental issues where their entry into the workforce has demonstrated to be stimulating due to the disruptions caused by a pandemic, economic downturn, and the associated social led to labour implications (Magano et al., 2020). According to Ali et al. (2023), they have grown up in catastrophes of psychological warfare, terrorism, worldwide retreat and environmental change. They are concerned by a perception that companies normally utilize and show apprehension for employees only when their services are required (Scholz, 2019). According to Malaysia’s Employee Brand Research 2024, 41% of Gen Z identify as minorities and suffered inequality in the workplace. Surely, Gen Z have no hesitation in changing jobs regularly throughout their career since the industry greatly values their skills and abilities and they remain to have high hopes for their job despite these downturns.

Gen Z join the professional field with higher expectations involving their work and a longing for clearly identified career development plans (Magano et al., 2020). Despite limited research on the factors that appeal to this generation in terms of company preferences, it is recommended that this generation is fascinated by aspects such as workplace flexibility and attaining a balance between their professional and personal lives (Benítez-Márquez et al., 2022). These encounters have encouraged a robust sense of corporate ethics and social responsibility among Gen Z that significantly shape their decision-making considering employment selections (Twenge, 2017). They are distinguished by traits such as high ambition and self-confidence. Therefore, companies are threatened with the challenge of aligning their goals to find their ideal job with prospects to grow their skill set as they are entrepreneurial, surpassing Generation Y in this aspect (Magano et al., 2020). If this concern were not addressed absolutely, Malaysia would scarcely confront skills shortages or talent constraints in the industry.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational Attractiveness and the Generation Z Workforce

Organizational attractiveness is defined as the perceived benefits that potential employees associate with working for a specific organization. This concept significantly impacts various employee attitudes, including motivation, job satisfaction, commitment, loyalty, and retention. Furthermore, adequate employer branding enhances a company's appeal to future graduates, highlighting the importance of these perceptions in shaping organizational attractiveness. As the entry of millennials and Gen Z into the workforce intensifies global competition, organizations grapple with the challenges of the war for talent. Gen Z, referring to individuals born between 1995 and 2010 who recently entered the workforce, are the generation most used to technology and have strong ties to social media. They value lively work environments, good rapport with coworkers, instant feedback, transparency, and non-monetary incentives like career growth alongside work-life balance. Therefore, organizations must enhance organizational attractiveness to secure the best talent from this cohort.

According to Ali et al. (2023), organizations confront numerous challenges in the recruitment of qualified and potential job seekers in this contemporary business era. They seek to address gaps in the research country and Companies Act by conducting a study in India, a rapidly developing country where CSR is now a legal mandate. The study aligns with the evolving nature of CSR in India, emphasizing the legal and economic dimensions mandated by the Companies Act of 2013 and the Companies (CSR Policy) 2014. The Company’s Act of 1956 is replaced by the Companies Act 2023, introducing significant changes and fostering a paradigm shift in organizations' attitudes toward CSR. Mandatory CSR spending, while initially perceived as a hindrance to profit, is recognized for its potential to provide long-term solutions to pressing challenges and contribute to ethical business practices. According to Bahta et al. (2021), CSR enhances enterprise performance through mechanisms such as brand loyalty, managerial interpretation, and client satisfaction. Thus, it is a key strategy that helps SMEs' competitiveness by increasing customer loyalty and satisfaction, and high employee motivation. Furthermore, CSR initiatives have been identified as positively contributing to bridging the labour gap and meeting the demand for a skilled workforce in the country.

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Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Carroll's Framework

Over the past few years, CSR has been increasingly recognized as a strategic instrument for companies to improve public perception, interact with stakeholders, and cultivate a commitment to ethical responsibility. Carroll's (1991) CSR pyramid serves as a comprehensive framework widely used in theoretical and empirical research, encompassing economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic dimensions. The economic dimension emphasizes an organization's commitment to productivity, profitability, and shareholder remuneration, aiming to generate acceptable profits. The legal dimension pertains to adherence to government regulations and other legal frameworks, guiding organizations to pursue objectives within established boundaries. The ethical dimension underscores the importance of right, proper, and correct business operations aligned with a societal value system. Finally, the philanthropic dimension involves an organization's commitment to sustainable development and being an exemplary corporate citizen.

Carroll's (1991) CSR pyramid, encompassing economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic dimensions, serves as a comprehensive framework widely used in theoretical and empirical research. In the economic dimension, organizations demonstrate a commitment to productivity, profitability, and shareholder remuneration, aiming to generate acceptable profits from their business operations. The legal dimension pertains to adherence to government regulations and other legal frameworks, guiding organizations to pursue their economic objectives within established legal boundaries. The ethical dimension emphasizes the importance of conducting business operations in a morally upright and correct manner, reflecting societal and community values. The philanthropic dimension signifies a commitment to sustainable development, portraying the organization as an exemplary corporate citizen. Carroll's four-dimensional CSR pyramid has become widely recognized and applied in theoretical and empirical research across various domains, establishing itself as one of the most cited frameworks in CSR literature (Carroll, 1991).

The economic dimension emphasizes an organization's commitment to productivity, profitability, and shareholder remuneration, aiming to generate acceptable profits from its business operations. In the context of organizational attractiveness, Ali et al. (2023) explore the effects of CSR on job seekers' perceptions in India. Their study delves into how CSR initiatives, particularly those aligned with economic

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considerations, influence the attractiveness of organizations to potential employees. Legal dimensions, as outlined by Carroll (1991), encompass adherence to legislation imposed by the government and regulatory bodies. Thang et al. (2022), provide insights into Gen Z job seekers' expectations in transition and emerging economies, shedding light on how organizations navigate the legal landscape while striving to meet economic objectives within established legal frameworks.

The ethical dimension underscores the importance of right, proper, and correct business operations aligned with a societal value system. Agnihotri and Bhattacharya (2022), investigate the concept of CSR fit and its impact on organizational attractiveness for job applicants, exploring how ethical considerations play a role in shaping the perception of organizations as desirable workplaces. Finally, the philanthropic dimension involves an organization's commitment to sustainable development and being an exemplary corporate citizen. Sharma et al. (2025) empirically study the impact of CSR perceptions on employer attractiveness, providing valuable insights into how philanthropic endeavours contribute to organizational appeal from an employer branding perspective.

The Intersection of CSR and Organizational Attractiveness

CSR positively influences organizational attractiveness, and reputation emerges as a key component for Gen Zs' intention to apply. Job seekers among Gen Z in emerging economies regard CSR as both symbolic and instrumental, and companies that provide favourable CSR signals will enhance their job pursuit intention. Furthermore, CSR initiatives have been identified as positively contributing to bridging the labour gap and meeting the demand for a skilled workforce. However, there are significant discrepancies in CSR factors for companies in developed and developing countries. Firms in developing countries often emphasize the interests of powerful external stakeholders, including foreign purchasers and regulatory agencies, while developed countries focus heavily on sustainability disclosure driven by investors and environmental activists. The perceived CSR commitment of a potential employer must therefore align with the specific values and expectations of the target workforce.

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Several previous studies perceived CSR as a symbolic organizational attribute, whereas Gen Z job seekers in Vietnam regard it as both symbolic and instrumental. Companies that provide favourable CSR signals in economic, environmental, ethical, legal, and philanthropic responsibilities will enhance their job pursuit intention result (Thang et al., 2022). In addition, there are significant discrepancies in CSR factors for companies in developed and developing countries (Ali et al., 2017). Shareholders, regulators, investors, and environmental activists heavily influenced companies in developed countries to provide sustainability disclosure. Firms in developing countries emphasize the interests of powerful external stakeholders, including foreign purchasers, media, offshore investors, and regulatory agencies (Ahmad and Islam, 2018).

According to the research conducted by Hira et al. (2021), the entry of millennials into the workforce has intensified global competition, where organizations grapple with the challenges of the "war for talent" amid a diminishing workforce in the contemporary job market. While millennials and Gen Z share certain traits, like a strong entrepreneurial spirit, a desire for leadership, and a value for work-life balance, they behave differently because of the significant events that are taking place in their environment (Gabrielova and Buchko, 2021). According to Shehzad et al. (2020), predict that the pandemic poses a greater threat to the labour market than the GFC, particularly affecting the careers of millennial, especially recent graduates. Addressing the impending "career shock" induced by the pandemic requires organizations to redefine their strategies (Zacher et al, 2023). In Malaysia, where millennials or Gen Z constitute 46% of the workforce and are expected to control 75% within the next decade, organizations face challenges in attracting and retaining tech-savvy millennials. The study underscores the importance of enhancing organizational attractiveness (OA) to mitigate the challenges of millennial unemployment. However, organizations' readiness to meet millennials' expectations becomes crucial in securing the best talent, particularly in the context of Malaysia, where youth unemployment remains a longstanding concern.

Gen Z in this study refers to individuals who were born between 1995 and 2010 and recently entered the workforce (Mahapatra et al., 2022). They are the generation most used to technology and have strong ties to social media. According to Turner (2015), Gen Z came amidst an economic crisis, increased unemployment, and fast expansion of mobile and Internet technologies. According to Lanier (2017), many scientists endorse the idea that they are digital and mobile natives since they are

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frequently referred to as such. Concerns have also been raised regarding the potential impact of heavy smartphone use on human interactions and the consequent need to develop social skills (Priporas, 2017; Tang et al., 2020). In addition, Chillakuri (2020) stated that Gen Z share the preference for instant feedback and transparency in their work environments. Along with additional motivators like work-life balance, job security, a sense of autonomy in their work, and open communication, Gen Z also values lively work environments, good rapport with coworkers, and non-monetary incentives like career growth and advancement (Sharma et al, 2025).

In a study conducted by Benraïss-Noailles et al. (2021), organizational attractiveness is defined as the perceived benefits that potential employees associate with working for a specific organization. This concept has far-reaching effects on a company's workforce, influencing elements such as compensation systems, where potential employees may be willing to accept lower salaries if the employer has a positive. Moreover, organizational attractiveness significantly impacts various employee attitudes, including motivation, job satisfaction, commitment, loyalty, and retention. Studies have demonstrated its influence on the intention to apply, job offer acceptance, applicant-to-hire conversion rate, time to fill a position, and the quantity and quality of applicants. Potential applicants rely on diverse information sources, such as word-of-mouth and social media, to gather insights about employers, with empirical research emphasizing the attractiveness of companies with a strong employer brand equity. Adequate employer branding has been shown to enhance a company's appeal to future graduates, highlighting the importance of these perceptions in shaping organizational attractiveness (Muhammad Zamri et al, 2023).

According to Duarte et al (2014), employer attractiveness is characterized by the perceived advantages of a job within an organization. In other words, an employer is considered attractive when it actively strives to be viewed as an excellent workplace by potential candidates. Additionally, Berthon et al. (2005) defined employer attractiveness as the anticipated benefits that employees expect to experience while working for a particular organization. This implies that the attractiveness of an employer is linked to the positive expectations that employees have regarding their employment within that organization.

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Theoretical Foundation: Stakeholder Theory

According to Freeman (1984), a stakeholder is any group or individual who can affect, or is affected by, the achievement of a corporation's objectives. Stakeholder theory suggests that the ability of an organization to survive depends on its ability to retain its stakeholders, and the regulatory structure must take these concerns into account. The various stakeholder groups possess features that make them valuable in helping the organization achieve its main goals, making cooperation and coordination essential. Dunham (2007) provided a precise description, defining stakeholders as a group the firm needs to exist, specifically encompassing customers, suppliers, employees, financiers, and communities. In the realm of CSR, this theory highlights the importance of investing in relationships with stakeholders and forming organizational responses that take their needs into account. Hence, this study focuses on potential employees among Gen Z as primary stakeholders whom the organization needs to attract by aligning with CSR dimensions.

Moreover, stakeholder theory is the ability of an organization to survive depending on its ability to retain its stakeholders (,) and the regulatory structure that governs how businesses operate needs to take these concerns into account (Kamal, 2021). According to Perrini et al. (2011), the managerial branch implies that the organization can manage stakeholder interactions and engagement more broadly by facing demands from stakeholders in a more proactive (anticipatory) way rather than responding to them. According to Jang et al. (2019), the various stakeholder groups possess features that make them valuable not just on their own but also in helping the organization achieve its main goals. Stakeholders and organizations should cooperate and coordinate their efforts as they complement each other (Ghezal, 2024).

In the realm of CSR, the stakeholder theory of business highlights the importance of investing in relationships with stakeholders and their role in the organization (Singh and Mittal, 2019). It also assists firms in identifying key stakeholders, assessing the significance of each stakeholder group, evaluating the needs and expectations of each stakeholder group, and forming organizational responses that take the importance and needs of stakeholders into account. A more precise description of stakeholders was provided by Dunham (2007), who defined them as "a group that the firm needs to exist, specifically customers, suppliers, employees, financiers, and communities". Hence, this study focused on the potential employees among Gen Z as

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stakeholders for an organization which needs them to align with the CSR dimensions for its attractiveness.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is grounded in Stakeholder Theory, positioning Generation Z job seekers as critical prospective stakeholders whose employment intentions are influenced by the organization's fulfilment of its CSR obligations. Drawing upon Carroll's multi-dimensional model, the framework visually posits that the four dimensions of CSR act as independent variables shaping the dependent variable: organizational attractiveness.

Hypotheses

Based on this theoretical foundation, the following hypotheses are explicitly stated:

- **H_1:** The economic dimension of CSR has a significant positive relationship with organizational attractiveness among Generation Z.
- **H_2:** The legal dimension of CSR has a significant positive relationship with organizational attractiveness among Generation Z.
- **H_3:** The ethical dimension of CSR has a significant positive relationship with organizational attractiveness among Generation Z.
- **H_4:** The philanthropic dimension of CSR has a significant positive relationship with organizational attractiveness among Generation Z.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, a cross-sectional design will be employed to achieve the objectives of this study. The unit of analysis for this study refers to individuals belonging to Gen Z, born between 1996 and 2006, falling within the age range of 18 to 28 years. This generation is a key focus in exploring their perceptions of organizational attractiveness toward CSR and how it influences their evaluation in the employment context. In addition, it is geographically divided into four regions in Peninsular Malaysia: North (Kedah, Pulau Pinang, and Perlis), West (Perak and Selangor), East (Kelantan, Terengganu, and Pahang), and South (Johor, Melaka, and Negeri Sembilan). In this

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study, the information will be collected from Gen Z with a total of 400 respondents in Peninsular Malaysia. The application of stratified random sampling (SRS) in this investigation involves the division of the population members into specific strata or groups. Stratified random sampling serves to emphasize subgroups within the population. In this study, the population members, who are Gen Z residing in Malaysia, will be categorized into strata based on age, ranging from 18 to 28 years old. Subsequently, respondents will be randomly chosen from these strata. Hence, the study will adapt the existing measures used by Ali et. al (2023). A questionnaire serves as a research instrument, comprising a series of questions and prompts designed to collect information from respondents.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The data screening and cleaning process is an essential step in ensuring that the dataset is accurate, reliable, and relevant for analysis. Before proceeding with the main analysis, the data was carefully examined to identify any errors, inconsistencies, or missing values. In this study, the process of screening and cleaning involved several steps, including identifying missing data and outliers, which were systematically performed to meet the requirements of the analysis.

Table 1:
Demographic profile

Details	Frequency	Percent (%)
Male	220	49.3
Female	226	50.7
Age		
18 – 28 years old	421	94.4
29 – 30 years old	11	2.5
≥30 years old	14	3.1
State		
North	106	23.8
West	111	24.9
East	106	23.8
South	114	25.6
Education		
SPM	16	3.6
Diploma	19	4.3
Degree	384	86.1
Master	23	5.2

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PhD	2	0.4
Professional qualification	2	0.4
Working Experience		
≤ 1 year	360	80.7
1-5 years	65	14.6
≥ 5 years	21	4.7

Our study included a total of 421 respondents, with an almost even split between genders: 220 individuals identified as male (49.3%) and 226 as female (50.7%) in Table 1. The sample was predominantly young, with the vast majority (94.4%) of respondents, 421 individuals, falling between 18 and 28 years old. Only a small fraction of the sample was older, with 11 respondents (2.5%) aged 29-30 and 14 respondents (3.1%) over 30 years old.

The geographical distribution of our respondents across Peninsular Malaysia was fairly balanced. We collected data from 106 individuals in the northern region (23.8%) and 111 from the western region (24.9%). The eastern region also had 106 respondents (23.8%), while the southern region was represented by 114 individuals (25.6%).

Regarding educational background, a significant majority of our participants, 384 individuals (86.1%), held a bachelor's degree. A smaller group of 23 respondents (5.2%) had a master's degree, while 19 individuals (4.3%) had a diploma. The smallest groups were those with SPM qualifications (16 individuals, 3.6%), professional qualifications (2 individuals, 0.4%), and PhD holders (2 individuals, 0.4%).

The findings also show that our sample is largely composed of individuals in the early stages of their careers. A substantial majority, 360 respondents (80.7%), had less than one year of work experience. The remaining experience levels were represented by 65 respondents (14.6%) with one to five years of experience and a small group of 21 individuals (4.7%) with more than five years of experience.

The reliability test results show that all variables met the acceptable threshold, with Cronbach’s Alpha values above 0.6. The normality test was evaluated by examining the skewness and kurtosis values, which should fall between the range of +2 and -2, confirming that the data assumed a normal distribution. A linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between the CSR dimensions and

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organizational attractiveness. The results of the analysis indicate a significant linear relationship between organizational attractiveness and all CSR dimensions. The model was found to be statistically significant (p<0.001).

Table 2:
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.727	.529	.524	.38241	1.761

Table 3:
ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	66.044	4	16.511	112.906	<.001[b]
	Residual	58.787	402	.146		
	Total	124.830	406			

Table 4:
Multiple Regression

Variable	Beta	t	Sig.	Tol.	VIF
(Constant)	.586	2.946	.003		
IV 1	.429	8.715	<.001	.555	1.800
IV 2	.027	.275	.783	.162	6.167
IV 3	.382	3.500	<.001	.113	8.856
IV 3	.025	.299	.765	.165	6.056

A linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable, organizational attractiveness. The overall model was found to be statistically significant, as shown by the ANOVA results (F ([112.906],[4]) = [112.906], p<0.01). The model has a moderate predictive power, with an R2 value of 0.529, indicating that the independent variables collectively explain 52.9% of the variance in organizational attractiveness.

Prior to interpreting the individual predictors, several diagnostic checks were performed. The Durbin-Watson statistic was found to be 1.761, which suggests a minor issue with autocorrelation in the residuals, as the value is slightly outside the ideal range of 2 to 4. Additionally, the analysis revealed potential multicollinearity issues, with three independent variables having tolerance values below 0.3 and Variance Inflation

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Factor (VIF) values above 4.0. These results suggest that the multicollinearity may affect the precision of the individual predictor coefficients.

Furthermore, the analysis revealed potential multicollinearity issues, with three independent variables having tolerance values below 0.3 and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values above 4.0. While this does not invalidate the overall predictive power of the regression model ($R^2 = 0.529$), it does indicate that several CSR dimensions most likely the ethical and philanthropic dimensions are highly correlated in the perceptions of the respondents. This intersecting variance can inflate the standard errors of the coefficients, making it statistically difficult to isolate the distinct, independent effect of each predictor on organizational attractiveness. Thus, the precision of the individual predictor coefficients may be compromised. To mitigate this in future analyses, researchers should consider refining the variable set by conducting an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to combine highly correlated CSR dimensions into a single, composite variable, or by employing regularization techniques such as ridge regression.

Despite these diagnostic findings, the results of the regression analysis revealed a statistically significant relationship between organizational attractiveness and both the economic and ethical dimensions ($p<0.01$). The economic dimension emerged as the most influential factor, with the highest standardized beta coefficient ($\beta=0.429$), indicating a strong positive effect on organizational attractiveness.

Interpretation of Findings

The findings of the regression analysis revealed a statistically significant relationship between organizational attractiveness and both the economic and ethical dimensions of CSR. The economic dimension emerged as the most influential factor, indicating a strong positive effect on organizational attractiveness. This suggests that Gen Z job seekers heavily prioritize an organization's commitment to productivity, profitability, and prevailing market salaries. While Gen Z values social and environmental issues, their expectations for higher income and career progression contribute heavily to their overall job pursuit intentions. Additionally, the significance of the ethical dimension demonstrates that conducting business operations in a morally upright manner aligned with societal values strongly resonates with this cohort. Conversely, while the overall regression model was significant, the independent impact

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of the legal and philanthropic dimensions may be perceived by Gen Z as baseline operational requirements rather than key differentiators for employer attractiveness.

The dominance of the economic dimension, coupled with the lower significance of the philanthropic dimension, offers a unique contextual finding for Peninsular Malaysia. It is highly plausible that in an emerging economy context, young professionals entering a challenging labour market prioritize foundational economic stability, competitive compensation, and legal compliance over higher-order corporate philanthropy. For a cohort navigating the rising cost of living and post-pandemic economic recovery, an organization's philanthropic activities may be viewed as a secondary bonus rather than a primary driver of employment choice. However, because this study relies solely on quantitative data, the exact rationales behind these preferences remain interpretive.

Theoretical Contributions

This study significantly contributes to the existing body of knowledge by explicitly linking Stakeholder Theory with organizational attractiveness in the context of Generation Z. By treating prospective Gen Z employees as primary stakeholders, the research expands the managerial branch of Stakeholder Theory, which posits that organizations must proactively manage stakeholder demands rather than merely responding to them. Furthermore, the study validates Carroll's four-dimensional CSR pyramid within the context of a developing economy such as Malaysia, successfully linking the gap between CSR literature and the specific employment expectations of post-millennials.

Managerial Implications

The implications of this study offer human resources (HR) practitioners’ critical insights into the evolving preferences of Gen Z job seekers. Organizations are strongly encouraged to include CSR into their business practices to achieve competitive advantages and foster long-term retention. HR practitioners should develop recruiting strategies that specifically highlight the economic stability and ethical values of the firm, recognizing that prioritizing these dimensions makes the organization more likely to attract Gen Z candidates. Effectively integrating CSR into core operations ensures that these efforts are not just superficial marketing strategies, but rather a robust

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foundation that builds trust and a positive corporate reputation. Ultimately, embracing CSR as a fundamental aspect of corporate identity allows organizations to successfully appeal to this demographic, thereby reducing the costs associated with hiring and job shifting.

CONCLUSION

Organizations must evolve to remain attractive and competitive as Gen Z continue to enter the workforce with unique values and aspirations. The findings highlight the growing need for organizations to align their practices with the values and expectations of this cohort, in which the economic dimension is an important factor in building positive perceptions and choices. Hence, it provides valuable insights for future studies and research into the evolving relationship between CSR and workforce engagement in a rapidly changing employment context. Organizations that fail to align with their value tend to lose highly skilled and motivated Gen Z talent, as this cohort prioritizes prevailing salary with the current market. Other than organizations appearing more attractive, it also will contribute to the long-term retention of this cohort in the workplace. Moreover, integrating CSR into core business operations builds a strong reputation, employee loyalty, and long-term competitive advantage. Ultimately, organizations that embrace CSR as a fundamental aspect of their identity allow them to appeal to this demographic, which can reduce the cost of hiring and job shifting. As the job market continues to evolve, prioritizing CSR will not only benefit employees but also contribute to an organization’s growth, innovation, and long-term sustainability. The study provides valuable insights for organizations to establish initiatives that are aligned with their values, improving their ability to recruit and retain top talent by identifying specific CSR dimensions that relate to this generation. This is especially important in a competitive employment market in which CSR efforts can differentiate an organization as a preferred employer for socially and environmentally conscious cohorts.

The findings underline the importance of integrating CSR into the practice of organization. Organizations that prioritize economic dimensions may be likely to attract job seekers among Gen Zs. Its finding is the higher influence on organizational attractiveness. However, other dimensions are also important to foster positive perceptions among them and attract them to employment. Additionally, organizations can design their recruitment and retention strategies by recognizing the growing

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significance of sustainability and ethical dimensions to ensure they meet the values and expectations of post-millennials. Therefore, it led to a loyal and positive reputation for the long term. Moreover, there is limited study of the CSR impact on organizational attractiveness to employment among post-millennials. Hence, this study provided a deep understanding of how this approach influences Gen Z on job preference. Lastly, the study encourages organizations to practice CSR initiatives, as they can attract and retain talent for long-term sustainability.

This study has limitations which should be addressed to provide a clear context for the findings and suggestions for further research. Firstly, the study's sample was limited to Gen Z from Peninsular Malaysia. This geographical and demographic constraint may not fully represent the preferences, perspectives, or expectations of other generations or individuals from different regions. Additionally, the study relied entirely on quantitative research methodologies. They may not represent the full breadth and complexity of people's perspectives and experiences with CSR, although these methodologies are useful for discovering trends and linkages. Additionally, the study's exclusive reliance on quantitative research methodologies restricts the depth of its findings. While the survey effectively captured the statistical prominence of the economic dimension, it cannot fully explain why the ethical or philanthropic dimensions were deemed less significant by this specific Malaysian cohort. The absence of qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews or focus groups, means the study lacks the nuanced viewpoints required to truly understand the underlying motives of these job applicants. Future research must incorporate qualitative depth to capture the lived experiences and detailed rationales of Gen Z job seekers. Conducting interviews would allow researchers to probe the why behind the survey responses, providing a richer, culturally contextualized understanding of how Malaysian youth weigh distinct CSR dimensions when evaluating potential employers. Lastly, the study used a cross-sectional research design which collects data at a single point in time and does not account for any changes in perceptions or preferences over time. A longitudinal study may provide useful insights into the way job seekers' attitudes about CSR and organizations' attractiveness change over time, especially when societal norms and priorities have changed.

Future research should strive to address the study's limitations by broadening to other generations to further develop the understanding of CSR's influence on organizational attractiveness. Future research might include different cohorts, such as

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Generation Alpha, in addition to post-millennials. Researchers can gain significant information about the generational differences and similarities in their expectations and preferences for corporate social responsibility initiatives. The comparison of these groups would enable organizations to develop strategies that are adapted to the needs of each generational group, promoting a more inclusive approach to managing employees. Furthermore, widening the geographic area across Sabah and Sarawak might provide a more comprehensive understanding of cultural and socioeconomic factors that could influence the perspectives of CSR. Conducting research in different locations or nations would provide insight into the influence of cultural norms, economic situations, and regulatory contexts on the efficacy of social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. These findings might be important to multinational companies that want to implement globally relevant yet locally resonant CSR initiatives. Finally, incorporating qualitative research methods, such as interviews or focus groups, would also add depth to the understanding of job seekers' motivations and expectations regarding CSR. Unlike quantitative methods, qualitative methodologies enable researchers to investigate nuanced perspectives and experiences of individuals. These insights could complement current quantitative data, providing a broad view of how CSR affects company attractiveness.

Implications of the study will offer human resources (HR) practitioners' critical insights into the evolving preferences and expectations of Gen Z job seekers. As this generation places increasing importance on an organization's commitment to social and environmental responsibility, understanding the role of CSR in attracting and retaining top talent becomes crucial. HR practitioners can develop recruiting and retention strategies that are aligned with the Gen Z values and goals by identifying the factors that may impact their employment decisions. This research will also help organizations in determining the specific effective CSR dimensions with Gen Z, giving them better knowledge on how to appeal more to these job seekers. Hence, it will provide organizations with guidance regarding the best way to effectively integrate CSR into their core operations, ensuring that these efforts are not just superficial marketing strategies but have a strong foundation in the company's culture and policies, while also building trust with Gen Z employees, who are more likely to be attracted to and stay with organizations that genuinely align with their values. This will eventually contribute to higher staff retention, a solid business culture, and increased brand recognition, which are essential for long-term success and growth in an increasingly competitive business environment. Finally, policymakers and regulators may benefit greatly from understanding how the corporate social responsibility dimensions affect organizational

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attractiveness among post-millennials. This knowledge may help policymakers and standards makers promote ethical, sustainable, and socially responsible corporate practices. Recognizing the rising importance of CSR in the recruitment and retention of top talent enables policymakers to establish legislative frameworks that encourage organizations to adopt more socially conscious practices. This may result in a more sustainable and equitable economy in which organizations and employees gain from a shared commitment to ethical practices.

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