

University Social Responsibility

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University Social Responsibility (USR) enhances educational development and the impact of universities on society. As a stakeholder in USR, it is imperative to develop a comprehensive literacy scale that reflects the development of students' citizenship in social engagement.

university social responsibility

literacy-based

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1. Introduction

University Social Responsibility (USR) plays a critical role in enhancing educational development and facilitating the community's quality of life owing to their education, research, and social actions ^{[1][2]}. The concept of USR is an extension of the spirit of corporate social responsibility (CSR), which is based on the pursuit of knowledge and truth, the cultivation of civic awareness, and the long-term development of society. The essence of a university is to assume social responsibility, and teachers, students, and administrators must respond through teaching, research, and public affairs participation so that the university can become a place of hope for future development ^{[3][4][5]}. Moreover, USR believes that university institutions should be involved in regional and global community services, sustainable economic development, ecological, social, environmental, and technical societal development. Responsible management of the academic learnings must implement the methods that affect labor, environmental development, teaching, research, service, and interaction with community and business environments.

An example of university social responsibility is the community regeneration of the beautiful but remote and declining traditional Paiwan indigenous tribe in eastern Taiwan. Through the integration of university and tribal resources, the cooperation and participation of university teachers, students, and residents to change the long-term disadvantage situation of the tribe in terms of the cultural, economic, and social parameters. University took care of the local community as their USR direction and combined traditional ecological and environmental wisdom into modern mountain and forest leisure activities. It creates experiential tours as a management method for economic development; the tribal residents have expectations for economic development and strive to preserve their culture and assist in the operation of tourism activities. Cooperation between the two parties established tribal tourism that benefits the tribe and the environment, and the tribe's income has increased. This collaboration between the university and the tribe directly impacted the tribal tourism industry, resulting in indigenous people who had to work in other places to return to their hometowns and allowing foreign tourists to come into the tribe to understand the culture and environment. On the other side, students in the USR project could gain more professional learning experience by exploring local problems and needs, collecting data and brainstorming, and proposing solutions to solve the problem, thereby developing community-caring literacy of citizenship ^[6]. There was a similar example of

university social responsibility in Malaysia. The university helped the neighborhood reduce social problems by providing facilities and services, and thereby enhanced their research energy and competitiveness [2].

A socially responsible university should design its vision and mission to benefit its environment and University Social Responsibility plays a critical role in enhancing educational development and facilitating the community's quality of life owing to their education, research, and social actions [4][7]. Regarding the effectiveness of USR implementation, universities should construct student performance assessments to reflect the emerging needs of society in the context of globalization. However, the application of social responsibility in various industries is not the same, and stakeholders perceive the concept's meaning of USR differently [8]. Therefore, different instruments are essential to measure the impact or change of a particular university's social responsibility.

1.1. The Theoretical Basis of Literacy-Based Citizenship Developed in the USR Participation

Literacy is the internal quality that individuals develop and accumulates in their entire life. The manifestation of literacy as the external factor is indispensable from the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of a healthy individual to meet the needs of life situations [9]. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, European Union, and The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development have proposed the concept of core literacy, including lifelong learning, participation in society, and civic responsibility. Core literacy aims to develop high-quality citizens, promoting individual and social development; therefore, the concept is an important educational goal that universities must emphasize [9][10]. Dewey proposed that opportunities for experiential learning should be combined with teaching to enhance reflective action and allow individuals to continuously improve their knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop new methods to deal with life's complex problems [11][12]. Knowledge and skills could be acquired through teaching. However, attitudes are influenced by social interactions, including the people we encounter, historical experiences, and the cultural context in which we live, all of which are determinants of behavior [13][14][15].

This research is based on the social learning theory, which assumes that students acquire knowledge and skills, change attitudes, and develop civic literacy through participation in USR. Social learning refers to learning from interactions in a social context and is often used as the theoretical basis for attitude development [16]. Cognition plays a vital role in learning. People can learn by observing others and cognitively manipulating their social experiences to improve their intellectual skills. The internal insight process may influence attitudes and adaptive behavior [17]. Unlike the theory of rational behavior, which assumes that behavior is based on the control of an individual's will, the theory of planned behavior (TPB) proposes a central principle for the internal process of insight, stating that their planned behavior determines an individual's intention to act. In addition to attitude and subjective norms, TPB adds perceived behavioral control, which involves an individual's ability to control their external environment, highlighting their experience and expected barriers that affect their perceptions and assessing the ease or difficulty of behaviors [18]. In this regard, universities must emphasize the importance of providing opportunities for social participation and experiential learning to develop their civic responsibility.

Literacy-based citizenship can be fostered through facilitating students' social participation, nurturing the young workforce, and strengthening civic responsibility in volunteering services to corporations and the community [4][19]. Therefore, students are encouraged to participate in local community service-learning programs to promote health and well-being in rural and remote areas to reduce inequality in access to medical resources. Students will tackle challenges in a social context, improve critical thinking, problem-solving ability, resilience, self-efficacy, and emotional competence [4][20][21]. The mechanism of attitude change can be referred to as self-generated persuasion based on reflective practice through social participation in the courses, which promotes personal development [22]. Therefore, researchers identified four explicit attitudes factors, namely consciousness of self, relationship with others, intellectual abilities, and citizen's responsibility attitude, as instructional objectives of the USR curriculum, which must be examined in understanding students' development.

1.2. The USR Project and Curriculum in the Present Study

The USR Manifesto was launched in 2017 by the Higher Education Sprout Project in universities in Taiwan. This USR project aims to encourage universities to come up with humanities-oriented projects that consider local needs, provide local benefits for local connections, develop the local environment, solve problems facing the world, and improve the quality of life [7][20]. Five major themes were developed: Local Action and Connection, Industrial Collaboration, Environmental Sustainability, Food Safety, Long-Term Care, and other Social Practices. In 2017, Chung Shan Medical University launched the USR project of "Livable Shigang, Sustainable Health". Shigang is a remote community in Taichung city in central Taiwan with a history of prosperity. Presently, the community faces population migration, aging, and unequal medical resources. In this project, researchers believe that through interdisciplinary teamwork, the medical service capacity provided by the medical university can provide preventive medical services for the community, health promotion, and achieve sustainable development goals (SDGs) [23]. With particular emphasis on SDGs in "no poverty", "good health and well-being", "quality education", "responsible consumption and production", "life below water", and "life on land" to bring about positive changes to the community.

The USR project allows students to develop caring actions and connections in participation, learn to work altruistically with professionals in different disciplines, serve others, and achieve their learning goals by acquiring practical experience. In response to the community's health issues and developing students, the College of Medicine integrates courses from different departments, including Nursing, Nutrition, Public Health, and Psychology, to develop academically participatory learning programs that educate students on how to contact the residents and participate in the community practice. These courses attempt to develop students' literacies toward social responsibility in the community through physical, mental, and health promotion.

1.3. Developing the Assessment of Literacy in USR

An important issue of social responsibility research is measuring the effectiveness by examining stakeholders' quality of life and the social impact created by the USR program [20][24]. In response, educators have explored theoretical and structural concepts or models that can be integrated with participatory curriculum to enhance

students' understanding of social responsibility, attitudes, awareness, and environmentally sound decision-making [25][26][27][28]. However, as stakeholders, students' participation experience and literacy development in USR are equally important outcome indicators, but they have not been assessed in relevant research and must be addressed first [4].

Developing an integrated literacy scale is imperative to evaluate students' civic learning by considering closeness, fairness, and integrity [29]. Currently, survey instruments, such as the self-report attitude scale, are widely used to evaluate students' civic learning [4]. However, the USR curriculum is designed to augment in-depth comprehension of the subject matter and foster students' awareness of complex social issues. Contrary to the community service that tends to be ill-defined, USR curriculums target specific course objectives, which link academic coursework with community service. USR curriculums also reflect the self role, active service, and professional skills to promote human and living creatures [1]. The experience acquired from USR would continue to retain, reproduce, and motivate students to social participation. Students could benefit from participating in USR civic learning, including improving their communication, learning motivation, engagement, and satisfaction. Therefore, college students' civic literacy and social awareness development are critical parts of USR.

Due to the missions and educational goals of universities differences, a valid and reliable psychometric scale is crucial for a specific curriculum in a university. Thus, a questionnaire must undergo a robust development and validation process to ensure the credibility of the research findings. According to researchers knowledge, there is no relevance scale validated in Taiwan. This justifies developing and validating a new Health Promotion Literacy-based Scale in USR (HPLS-USR).

2. Dimensions of the HPLS-USR

Dimensions of the HPLS-USR are part of factor analysis. The first factor, which is Personal Growth, based on the learning acquired, measures attitudes and awareness of individuals participating in USR health promotion field learning. A high score on this component indicates a stronger intention and greater likelihood of performing the target behavior in USR when the opportunity arises. USR curriculum can help students to broaden their knowledge, experience, and improve their ability to understand others and health problems. According to TPB, this aspect may come from self-awareness regarding the ability to control the external environment question "am I able to do it?", thereby motivating (intention), improving ability (behavioral control), and enhancing behavioral achievement [30]. Previous reports suggested that if there were apperceived additional benefits of attendance in the class, students would engage in the learning process [30][31]. This factor is consistent with past studies that focus on the factor associated with social service-learning [32][33].

The second factor, Responsibility of Citizenship, consisted of items that described individuals who participated in field activities, and were sensitive to health problems and the community's health. A high score on this factor indicates a high level of responsibility towards the community. Consistent with the expectations of college students from society, the responsibility of citizenship is an important attitude that must be developed in the social participation of USR curriculums [34][35]. Responsibility of citizenship comprises students' active civic duties and

skills needed to care for the community. This concept also focuses on the values of social justice, such as attitudes to poverty, social problems, and public policy, required by the service recipients [36]. However, the current study lacks such items in the scale, which must be supplemented in follow-up research.

The third factor, Social Interaction, consists of the items that highlight personal attitudes towards social caring, social responsibility, participation in public affairs, and respect for diversity. The items are based on two primary concepts: reciprocity and collaboration. A high score on this factor indicates that the learners perceive a relationship of equality and reciprocity with the residents of the community, in which both parties share responsibility, work together, and share results [37][38]. The USR curriculums provide students with meaningful community service participation and reflection. These also allow learners to have opportunities to connect academic learnings, civic roles, and to use their skills and knowledge to develop plans and strategies in addressing specific community problems and becoming actively contributing citizens. The association of social interaction and USR participation is consistent with much of the studies [32][33][36]. This factor is beneficial as it enhances social interaction skills, which is an important foundation for college students' psychosocial development, self-identification, and a specific indicator of the students' participation in USR.

The fourth factor, Intellectual Growth consists of items relevant to the individual's cognitive learning, intellectual growth, and mental inspiration within the health promotion of the service-learning process. High scores on this factor recognized the knowledge and skills acquired in the USR curriculum. This factor is different from many outreach service-learning courses in USR curriculum as it facilitates the development of emotional attitudes, assists students to perceive cognitive learning, and enhances professional-related practical knowledge and skills. Based on the theory of social cognitive learning, the observation of good role models in social situations from teachers, peers, and residents will generate new behaviors [17]. Thus, the intellectual growth factor was stressed in USR curriculum especially in the Asian context [1][39].

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