



**Multi-Knowledge Electronic Comprehensive Journal For  
Education And Science Publications( MECSJ )**

**Issues 75 ( 2024)**

**ISSN: 2616-9185**

## **Appraising The Influence of University Social Responsibility on University Performance: The Mediating Role of Brand Equity in Lebanon**

Name: Wissal Hassan Moussa

Email: wissalmoussa94@gmail.com

Job description: Senior project manager

### **Abstract**

This paper investigates the function of USR in the link between University Performance and Brand Equity since it is becoming increasingly popular as higher education institutions match their objectives with society's requirements. Based on a quantitative data collection technique, three hundred students from Lebanese institutions made up the sample for which statistical techniques like multiple regression and mediation analysis were used. The findings urge social responsibility programs to be included in institutional strategic objectives since they demonstrate how important they are to improving university performance. Furthermore, Brand Equity is an important mediator that, using efficient brand management techniques, magnifies the influence of USR on university performance. The report advocated for funding in brand-building projects and stakeholder involvement and offers university administrators and legislators a road map to improve institutional performance and social impact. Universities that match institutional procedures with society demand not only to strengthen their market position but also to achieve their goals of innovation, knowledge transfer, and societal improvement.

**Keywords:** University Social Responsibility (USR), University Performance, Brand Equity.

### **1. Introduction**

As universities emphasize their responsibilities beyond academic achievement to solve societal, environmental, and organizational concerns, USR has gained traction worldwide (Makki, 2023; Dostilio, 2017; Compagnucci & Spigarelli, 2020). Formerly centred on charity, USR today



includes more extensive duties, including moral leadership and environmental care (Kaplan, 2015). Because USR concepts have recently been integrated into Lebanon, universities' responsibilities in a quickly changing society are being re-evaluated (Makki, 2023).

The issue statement emphasizes how important University Social Responsibility (USR) is becoming worldwide and how Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and their social responsibilities must be re-evaluated. In Lebanon, it is important, but mainly unknown, to comprehend the particular effects of USR in light of cultural quirks, historical settings, and societal expectations (Rodriguez et al., 2024). With an eye on social, organizational, cognitive, and environmental effects, the study seeks to close this gap by examining the efforts made by Lebanese universities to attain USR. The study also tries to determine how vital stakeholders—especially academics and students—view the efficacy of USR programs. Furthermore, it examines how Brand Equity mediates the connection between USR and university performance.

With the growing awareness of universities' potential as agents of change beyond conventional academic success indicators, the idea of University Social Responsibility (USR) has emerged internationally (Makki, 2023; Dostilio, 2017; Compagnucci & Spigarelli, 2020). Originally, USR was related to charity and has evolved into a multifaceted responsibility, which includes moral management and environmental responsibility (Kaplan, 2015). The case of introducing USR in Lebanon calls for reconsidering the roles of universities in the context of a changing society (Makki, 2023).

While USR is a global phenomenon, little is known about the effects of USR in Lebanon in general and more so when viewed within the lens of its cultural context, history, and social norms and expectations as proposed by Rodriguez et al. (2024). This study will fill this knowledge gap by examining the strategies adopted by Lebanese universities to address their USR and the perceived relevance and efficiency of these programs by academics and students. Furthermore, it discusses how Brand Equity partially explains the effect of the USR implementation on the performance of the university.



The central research question guiding this investigation is: “How does the extent and implementation of university social responsibility affect university performance in Lebanese universities and to what extent does brand equity moderate this relationship according to the students’ perceptions?”

Therefore, based on the findings on the social, organizational, cognitive, and environmental impacts of USR adoption in Lebanese universities, this study aims to offer prescriptive suggestions to strengthen social responsibility programs in Lebanese higher learning institutions (Al-Abdin et al., 2018).

This paper examines the social, organizational, cognitive, and environmental effects of USR adoption at Lebanese institutions. Using opinions from professors and students and Brand Equity mediation analysis, it seeks to offer customized suggestions for improving social responsibility programs in Lebanese higher education.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Thesis Theoretical Background**

#### ***2.1.1 Four-Part Model***

The four-part models developed by Carroll are among the most widely used and acknowledged approaches to characterizing Corporate Social Responsibility practices (Carroll, 2008). Within Carroll and Shabna's (2021) four-stage conceptualization model for Corporate Social Responsibility are economic, regulatory, ethical, and discretionary obligations. With economic obligations at the bottom and discretionary responsibilities at the summit of a pyramid, these four elements are the cornerstone for all other types of Corporate Social Responsibility. Carroll moves in his 1991 article from discretionary to charitable.

#### ***2.1.2 Corporate Social Performance (CSP)***

Theoretical frameworks on CSP have lately emerged in abundance. Applications and results of corporate social responsibility are related to these paradigms. Orlitzky et al. (2003) cite Wood's model (Wood, 2010) as one of the most essential and comprehensive conceptualizations of



Corporate Social Performance; Suhartini (2022) developed a model based on the core ideas of corporate social responsibility but focused on obtaining findings from social efforts. Her ideas were social behavior, social responsiveness as a technique, and social responsibility. The author suggests that the topics be studied collectively rather than separately to understand the outstanding information better. This model brings it all together. The Corporate Social Performance model distinguishes three groups of "principles of Corporate Social Responsibility": legitimacy, public obligation, and management discretion (Wood, 2010).

## **2.2 University Social Responsibility**

USR includes, despite difficulties in quantifying their effect, university initiatives in value creation through ethical, ecological, and social concerns (McWilliams et al., 2006). Universities, which have to balance their legal, ethical, and charitable obligations, are among the entities driven by stakeholder demands towards Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) (ibid). Higher education institutions go beyond their conventional responsibilities to include social responsibility in their goals and day-to-day activities (Oliver Su et al., 2018). Part of this development deals with environmental effects, such as lowering carbon footprints and encouraging sustainability (Hosny et al., 2015). The efficacy of USR programs varies.

Nevertheless, obstacles, including unclear objectives and inadequate administrative standards, impede advancement (Calva & Vasquez, 2014). Globalization presents universities with additional difficulties interacting with communities, which calls for a fully defined USR framework that aligns with institutional procedures (Cabedo et al., 2018). Working with internal and external stakeholders, effective USR addresses societal concerns and encourages long-term learning (Chile & Black, 2015). The capacity to spread processes in domains like community involvement and social problem awareness sets apart responsible conduct in institutions (Hopson et al., 2016). To address different social and environmental concerns, universities in industrialized nations like the US have set up USR offices and programs (Vázquez et al., 2013). The broad spectrum of USR initiatives worldwide highlights the significant influence of universities on society and the environment (Brusca et al., 2018). Ensuring morally and socially acceptable activities at universities is primarily the responsibility of management (Haque & Yamoah, 201). Beyond



education, USR supports interdisciplinary cooperation among many stakeholders to support economic, legislative, and social growth (Domanski et al., 2017). Ultimately, USR provides universities with a structure to carry out their responsibilities to society while promoting social justice, education, and ethical advancement.

**Table 1: Conceptions of USR**

Conception Of USR	USR Implications	Representative Authors
Curriculum	Ethical behavior of institutions that attempt to address the demands of society via comprehensive civic and professional training by transforming their curricula and pedagogical approach.	Bryant et al. (2012) Vasilescu et al. Othman and Othman (2014) (2010) Stubbs and Schapper (2011)
Political	A combination of personal, societal, and organizational ideas and ideals upon which regulations influencing university culture administration and development are founded. There has been a gradual shift in university society's individual and collective behavior toward civic engagement.	Esfijani et al. (2012), Kimberly “A. Kline (2008)” Reybold (2008),
“University extension”	“The” University's operational “axis” achieves its responsibility to educate holistic moral experts. It permits it to answer social and cultural needs by developing engagement activities with its surroundings.	Latif (2018) López et al., (2015b) Tetřevová and Sabolová (2010),
Sustainable development	In line with UNESCO's aim of developing integrated specialists capable of creating a sustainable future, the University's Social Responsibility is designed to promote ethical consumption practices that extend	“Tetřevová and Sabolová (2010) Geboers et al. (2013),”

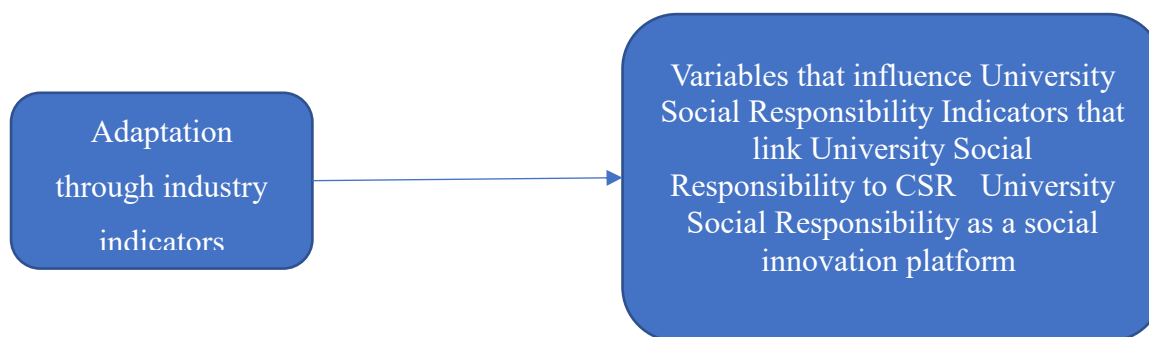


	beyond the University walls and into the community. It involves a study that promotes sustainability.	
Training for Civic Education	It was incorporated into instructional approaches to encourage socially responsible conduct founded on quality, relevance, and equality concepts. Where “communication and” information management are the cornerstones of decision-making success.	“Leveson and Joiner (2014), Baumgartner and” Winter (2014), Bryant et al. (2012)

**2.3 Analysis of USR Activities**

Despite increasing obstacles faced by industry partners and community demands, higher education institutions have the necessary resources to become socially conscious companies. The fundamental parameters connected to directors' and teachers' views on USR will be investigated in this field. As such, a continuous arrangement of the shown elements was discovered, which helped to assess the materialistic resource USR and may serve as a guide for higher education institutions when setting up their methods (Larrán Jorge et al., 2015).

In recent decades, sustainability issues in higher education institutions have received more and more attention from the public and governmental bodies (Calva & Vasquez, 2014). These papers examine the main elements that might help assess how urgently school sustainability projects should be implemented (Domanski et al., 2017). Figure 2 shows the sub-themes that were found in the main topic.



**Figure 1 - USR Activities**



### **2.3 USR Implementation and University Performance**

Many approaches are used to assess university performance, including standard assessment, accreditation, audit, benchmarking, ranking systems, and Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) (Peixoto et al., 2020). Evaluations usually concentrate on program quality, curriculum, institutional operations, particular topics, student enrollment, reputation, and financial success (Abbas, 2020). Accreditation guarantees adherence to predefined criteria and aims to improve institutional performance (Rahman et al., 2020). Audits strongly focus on responsibility and evaluate the efficiency of quality assurance procedures (Alsughayer, 201). Best practices are highlighted, and benchmarking makes performance comparisons easier (Epper, 1999). Though their approaches and efficacy are contested, ranking systems offer a comparative evaluation of university performance (Albalawi et al., 2020). Multiple input and output variables are utilized to assess relative efficiency using the linear programming method known as DEA (Kocher et al., 2006). It includes university-level cost-effectiveness, research output, and overall efficacy (Tarurhor, 2024; Azizi & Sassen, 2023). Regression and other analyses that compare departmental teaching and research performance are complementary to DEA (Makki, 2023; Suhartini et al., 2022; Nazari-Shirkouhi et al., 2020), and ranking systems are frequently included in DEA models (Cui et al., 2022; Hnatenko et al., 2020; Kusmuriyanto & Susilowati, 2020).

### **2.4 The Influence of University Social Responsibility on Brand Equity**

As universities increasingly understand how they may improve society, university social responsibility (USR) has become more well-known. The complex link between USR components and brand equity is examined in this literature review in the particular setting of the thesis, "The Impact of Implementing University Social Responsibility in Lebanese Universities." Knowing how university social responsibility programs affect brand equity is essential to understanding how their activities affect stakeholders' views and institutional standing more broadly.

A university's active contribution to society's well-being is the Social Impact component of USR. According to studies by Benitez et al. (2020) and Mahmood and Bashir (2020), a university's social responsibility programs and improved brand image correlate positively. Participating in socially conscious activities by universities, like community outreach programs, scholarship programs, and



social welfare projects, encourages stakeholders to have good connections with the brand, which raises brand recognition.

Organizational impact studies a university's internal governance and moral standards. Higher Brand Equity universities often have robust ethical governance procedures and open decision-making processes, according to research by Benitez et al. (2020) and Zhang et al. (2020). Internal stakeholders are influenced, and the external brand image is shaped by the organizational integrity portrayed via responsible governance.

Contributions of a university to education and knowledge are included in the Cognitive Impact component. Alsharari and Alshurideh (2020) highlight the cognitive links universities create in stakeholders' minds. It improves the cognitive effect on teachers and students when institutions include social responsibility in their courses, carry out research tackling societal issues, and promote critical thinking. This favourable psychological effect becomes a part of the brand image and raises brand recognition and loyalty.

The initiatives of a university to reduce its ecological impact are the main topic of the Environmental Impact component. According to a study by Li et al. (2022), brand impressions are favourably impacted by universities' environmentally friendly activities. Stakeholders increasingly value institutions dedicated to environmental care, and these programs help set a brand apart and promote good relationships.

Based on the literature, the following hypotheses are generated:

H1: University Social Responsibility has a direct statistical influence on Brand Equity at a p-value less than 0.05.

H2: Brand Equity Positively Impacts University Performance.

H3: University Social Responsibility positively impacts University Performance dimensions.

H4: Brand equity has a statistically significant mediating effect on USR and university performance.

As such, the research model in this paper attempts to clarify the intricate connections between university social responsibility (USR), brand equity, and university performance, which are three essential factors. Using Brand Equity as a mediating variable, this model provides the theoretical





foundation for studying the effects of USR programs on several aspects of university performance. The model captures, in the setting of Lebanese universities, the complex dynamics and interdependencies among these concepts.

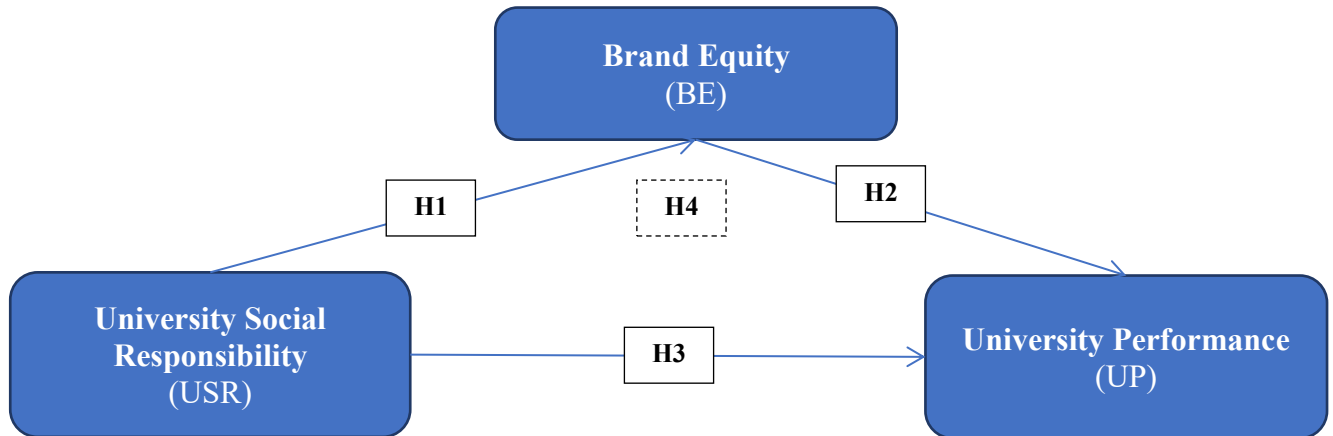


Figure 2: Research Model

### 3. Research Methodology

A quantitative methodology is used in Lebanese universities' framework of University Social Responsibility (USR) research. This choice is in keeping with the study's positivist philosophy and logical methodology and the particular research goals of evaluating theories on how USR affects university performance and brand equity. With quantitative techniques, such as surveys and statistical analysis, researchers may quantify variables, investigate correlations, and derive statistical conclusions from the data. The study uses a quantitative methodology to generate objective, trustworthy, and generalizable results that further our knowledge of USR empirically in the context of higher education. Therefore, the quantitative methodological option is appropriate for answering the study's goals and research questions.

This study aims to inquire about USR imitation in Lebanon. Thus, to gather a sizable number of perspectives on USR projects among Lebanese participants, a self-administered survey was sent to Lebanese students enrolled at particular institutions. Time and instructions were given to the participants so they could complete the survey coolly. As was already said, buyers in Lebanon



participated in this survey. “Between April and May of 2023,” the information was obtained. The information gathered from the respondents will be subjected to statistical analysis and the theories presented in this questionnaire.

The Table below lists the concepts and measurements of variables and the measuring method based on the model and analytical assumptions.

**Table 2: Variables Definition and Measurement**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Conceptual Definition</b>	<b>Operational Definition</b>
USR	USR provides a framework for how universities impact and relate to society and, more specifically, what knowledge students need to have to address societal issues after graduation (Wang et al., 2016).	“Number of Items are four. Measured on a 5-point Likert Scaling ranging from 1 “Strongly Agree” to 5.” “Strongly Disagree”
University Performance	It is measured by multiple items, including, for example, Student satisfaction builds self-confidence, which helps students become more confident, develop valuable skills, and acquire knowledge in a virtuous cycle (Dean et al., 2012).	The number of items is four. “Measured on a 5-point Likert Scaling ranging from 1 “Strongly Agree” to 5 “Strongly Disagree”
Brand Equity	University brand equity is constituted by various constructs, including students' perceived quality, awareness of the brand, trust, loyal and brand association (Wang et al., 2016).	The number of items is four. “Measured on a 5-point Likert Scaling ranging from 1 “Strongly Agree” to 5 “Strongly Disagree”

The research participants of this study are Lebanese students enrolled in different institutions in Lebanon. Three hundred individuals randomly chosen from several national institutions make up the sample. These students thoroughly investigate views and attitudes toward University Social Responsibility (USR) inside Lebanese institutions since they represent a varied cross-section of the student body in Lebanon.



A sample of Lebanese students improves the validity and generalizability of the results. Convenience sampling and snowballing allowed the researcher to get a representative sample of Lebanese students enrolled at various universities. The latter made it possible to thoroughly investigate views and attitudes toward USR in the higher education setting in Lebanon.

**Table 3 - Number of Students Across Universities**

University	Number of Students
Jinan University	40
Lebanese International University	72
American University of Beirut	26
Lebanese American University	29
USE	56
NDU	63
USJ	14

## **4. Results**

### **4.1 Descriptive statistics for variables**

A brief description of the data is given by descriptive statistics, which also include measures of variability and central trend (Saunders et al., 2019). While Table (7) goes into additional detail on factors associated with university performance and CSR, Table (6) shows minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation measurements:

- Mean values of variables associated with CSR are closer to 4, with 0.966 as the standard deviation and lowest and maximum values of 1 and 5, respectively. It suggests that respondents generally concur that auditing CSR-related factors is essential for university success.
- A standard deviation of 1.181 and lowest and maximum values of 1 and 5, respectively, are other university performance-related variables with mean values closer to 4. The latter



implies that the respondents generally agree on the significance of variables associated with university achievement.

- Reputation showed a mean value of around 4, with a standard deviation of 1.130 and lowest and maximum values of 1 and 5. Most respondents concur with the need for a university reputation regarding university performance.

**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Variables**

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
USR-Related Variables	1	5	3.4100	.96625
University Performance-related variables	1	5	3.4050	1.18190
Brand Equity	1	5	3.4229	1.13051

#### **4.2 University Social Responsibility \* University Performance**

Known by another name, as many regressions as possible, multiple linear regression is a statistical technique that forecasts the result of a response variable by using several explanatory variables. The goal, as stated by Saunders et al. (2019), is to demonstrate the linear relationship between the response variable (dependent variable) and the explanatory variable (independent variable). With an adjusted R square of .461, as shown in Table (5), 98 percent of the variation in the dependent variable (UP) can be explained by a change in the independent variable (USR), and the remaining 2 percent "by other variables not included in the model."

**Table 5: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.625	.442	.439	.6437

An ANOVA test is used to ascertain the significance of survey or experiment results. Put otherwise, they help you decide whether to accept the alternative hypothesis or reject the null hypothesis. To find a difference, you compare groups (Kumar et al., 2018). The F-test, or ANOVA test, was highly



significant for the dependent variable financial reporting quality, as demonstrated by Table (6), which produced  $F = 1179.346$  (sig. =.000 less than 0.05).

**Table 6: ANOVA test**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	161.449	8	40.362	2947.138	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	1.301	292	.014		
	Total	162.750	300			
a. Dependent Variable: University performance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), USR, Brand Equity.						

Based on the part of the literature review, hypotheses are evaluated as follows. The following findings were drawn from hypotheses H1 for university performance, H2 for the function of the mediating variable university reputation, H3 for professional competence, and H4 for top management support: Internal auditing standards and financial reporting quality are positively significantly correlated, as Table (7) shows ( $\text{Beta} = .088$ ;  $t = 1.967$ ;  $p = .042 < 0.05$ ). It shows that both factors go the same way, i.e., the university performs better the more USR activities it undertakes. As such, hypothesis (H1) is validated. According to the findings, USR is crucial for raising university performance. These encouraging outcomes show that, influenced by the economic situation in Lebanon, USR elements constitute the foundation of university success. It implies that the institution should use every aspect of CSR to improve its operations.

**Table 7: Coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	.288	.086		3.357	.001
	University Social Responsibility	.117	.059	.088	1.967	.042

**Source: SPSS (20) Outputs**



### 4.3 Brand Equity \* UP

Studying clan culture as an independent variable on CS is the second phase; the direct impact of USR on UP is not included in this study. Comparing the beta ( $\beta$ ) value before and after the clan culture's mediating factor is easier. This regression model will examine the direct correlation between the independent variable, Brand Equity and the dependent variable increase. The Table evaluates the research hypothesis (H2a). Regarding the direct connection between business sustainability and clan culture, hypothesis H2a demonstrates a "positive significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables." Results of this connection show that ( $\beta = 1.096$ ;  $t = 42.010$ ;  $p\text{-value} = .000$ ). Both variables move in the same direction, i.e., corporate sustainability increases with increasing clan culture (ignoring the independent variable).

**Table 8: Coefficient Analysis (Brand Equity \* Corporate Sustainability)**

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.318	.093		-3.412	.001
	Brand Equity	1.096	.026	.961	42.010	.000
a. Dependent Variable: UP						

**Source: SPSS (20) Outputs**

### 4.4 Brand Equity, USR \* UP

The third and last stage evaluates whether the varying clan culture moderates the direct link between USR and UP. To this goal, in one section, a "regression analysis is used to evaluate the relationship between Brand Equity and USR as the independent variables" and UP as the dependent variable in another part. This part compares the values of  $\beta$  of UP in the direct connection between USR and UP before and after the mediating variable from one part is included. The direct "relationship between the independent variables (USR and Brand Equity and dependent variable" (UP) will be tested using this regression model. The preceding Table evaluates the research hypothesis (H1). Considering the mediating variable clan, hypothesis H1 relates to the direct



association between USR and UP and demonstrates a notable positive influence between the dependent and independent variables. Results of this connection show that for the mediating variable clan culture ( $\beta = 1.455$ ;  $t = 50.085$ ;  $p\text{-value} = .000$ ) and USR ( $\beta = .429$ ;  $t = 15.001$ ;  $p\text{-value} = .000$ ). The value of beta ( $\beta$ ) before and after the mediating variable is included to the regression equation is compared to provide a primary evaluation of the impact of the mediating variable Brand Equity. The influence of the independent "variable USR on UP" was tested directly in the first regression model under the section on the impact of USR on UP (see Table) and yielded  $\beta = .751$ . Nevertheless, after including clan culture as a mediating factor, the beta value for the effect of USR on UP has dropped to  $\beta = .429$ . It demonstrates that one may presume that clan culture "as a mediating variable mediates the relationship between USR and" UP. Later, the slope analysis helped to prove it.

**Table (9) - Coefficient Analysis (Brand Equity, USR \* UP)**

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.044	.063		.690	.492
	USR	.429	.029	.382	15.001	.000
	Clan Culture	1.455	.029	1.275	50.085	.000
a. Dependent Variable: UP						

**Source: SPSS (20) Outputs**

#### **4.5 Brand Equity Direct and Indirect Effects of USR on University Performance**

The mediation study investigates further the direct and indirect impacts of customer satisfaction ratings on university performance via brand equity. A direct beneficial influence is indicated by the coefficient for user satisfaction ratings on university achievement (Table 34), which is 0.4838 and has a significant  $p\text{-value} < .0001$ .

**Table 10 - Direct effect**



Effect	SE	t	P-value	LLCI	ULI
.4838	.1054	4.5875	.0000	.2759	.6916

Source: SPSS v27

BootSE of 0.1269 and bootstrapped 95% confidence intervals (BootLLCI and BootULCI) of 0.7984 to 1.2998 indicate the indirect effect (Table 35) via brand equity of 1.0286. These results imply that brand equity moderates the impact of customer satisfaction ratings on university performance.

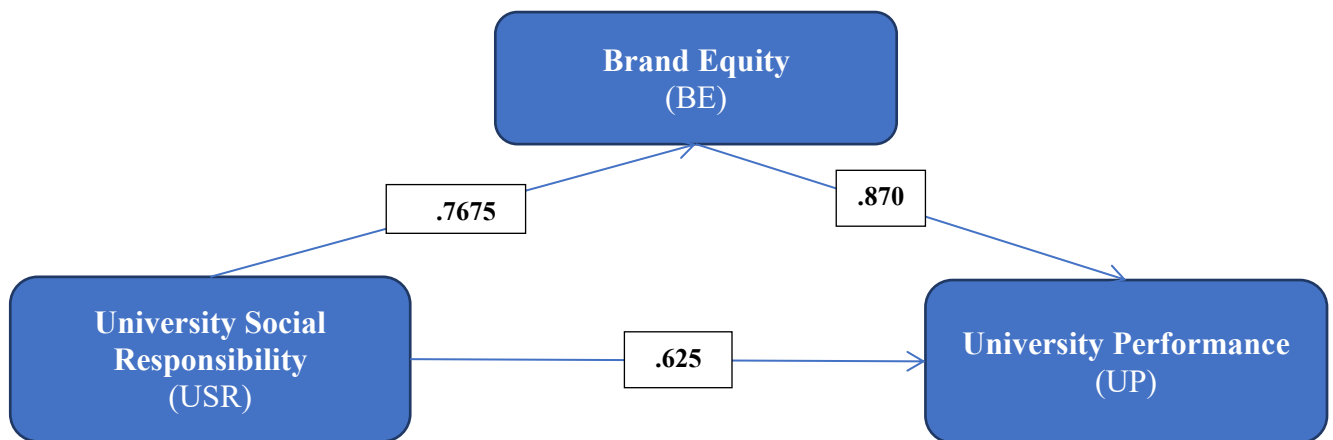
**Table 11 - Indirect effect**

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Brand Equity	1.0286	.1269	.7984	1.2998

Source: SPSS v27

The findings show that university performance and brand equity are significantly impacted directly by user satisfaction ratings. Furthermore, it is essential to consider brand equity as a method by which consumer satisfaction ratings affect university performance since it partially mediates the link between these two variables.

Therefore, the model would look as follows:



**Figure 3: Model Strength**





**Table 12: Hypotheses Results**

Code	Hypothesis Statement	Result
H1	University Social Responsibility has a direct statistical influence on Brand Equity at a p-value less than 0.05.	Supported
H2	Brand Equity Positively Impacts University Performance.	Supported
H3	University Social Responsibility positively impacts University Performance dimensions.	Supported
H4	Brand equity has a statistically significant mediating effect on USR and university performance.	Supported

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

This paper provides important new information on the connection between USR and university performance, concentrating on the mediating function of brand equity. Significant additions are made to the body of knowledge on CSR in the setting of higher education institutions by the study's results, as described in the regression and mediation analyses. First, USR and university performance are significantly positively correlated according to the regression analysis of the study (Gallardo-Vázquez et al., 2020). This result agrees with earlier studies showing how crucial CSR programs are to improving organizational results (Chatzopoulou et al., 2020; Barnett et al., 2020). Numerous research has shown how CSR activities improve financial performance, employee engagement, and customer satisfaction—among other aspects of company performance (Latif et al., 2020; Park, 2020). Through the extension of this study to the higher education sector, the study emphasizes the need for CSR concepts in promoting favorable university results. In addition, the study's mediation analysis clarifies how Brand Equity functions as a mediator in the connection between USR and University Performance (Suranta & Rahmawati et al., 2024).

The findings emphasize the need to create a solid brand reputation for universities through socially conscious activities by showing that Brand Equity partially mediates the effect of USR on University Performance. This result is consistent with the body of research on brand management



**Multi-Knowledge Electronic Comprehensive Journal For  
Education And Science Publications( MECSJ )**

**Issues 75 ( 2024)**

**ISSN: 2616-9185**

that highlights the significance of brand equity in affecting customer perceptions, loyalty, and organizational success (Keller, 2013). When the study's results are compared to the body of research already in publication, it is clear that brand equity has been investigated in various situations, including business settings (Cheffi et al., 201). Corporate sector research has shown how CSR programs may improve brand reputation, financial performance and stakeholder views. By extending this research to the higher education sector, the present work offers empirical proof of the mediating role of Brand Equity on the link between USR and University Performance. Further methodological rigor is added to the study by using mediation analysis and Sobel tests to evaluate the importance of indirect effects. This analytical technique gives The study results more credibility, which also advances the methodological environment of CSR research in higher education. This study so significantly advances the field by emphasizing the value of CSR programs in generating favorable results for institutions. The study offers insightful information to university administrators and legislators looking to improve organizational effectiveness through socially responsible practices by pointing out brand equity as a significant mediator in the link between USR and university performance. Furthermore, the validity and dependability of the results are strengthened by the methodological rigor used in the study, which increases its importance even more inside the academic community.

## **6. Theoretical and Practical Implications**

The study shows how Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) improves university performance in higher education, expanding our knowledge about CSR. It emphasizes colleges' social obligations and takes CSR ideas outside business contexts. Furthermore, pointing out the relationship between CSR, brand management, and academic organizational results, establishing Brand Equity as a mediator gives more depth to theoretical viewpoints. The research emphasizes the importance of intangible assets, including brand reputation, in boosting university performance, contributing to resource-based theory. Furthermore, the methodological rigorousness raises the results' trustworthiness and corresponds with demands for more advanced CSR research methods. The



results practically highlight the strategic need to adopt University Social Responsibility (USR) programs to improve university performance overall. For administrators to match institutional objectives with society's expectations, sustainability, community involvement, and ethical governance may be given top priority. More substantial brand equity depends on universities developing and maintaining brand reputation through focused marketing and communication initiatives. Giving stakeholder involvement a priority helps to build transparency, trust, and shared values, which increases stakeholder loyalty and satisfaction. Strategic resource allocation supports USR goals and brand management activities while assuring investments in infrastructure, faculty development, and student support services. Finally, institutions may monitor and evaluate their efforts proactively, spot areas that need work, and take advantage of chances for long-term expansion in USR and brand management techniques.

## **7. Research Limitations**

Despite the extraordinary contributions this research made to USR understanding and practice, it was beset by challenges, mainly getting hold of university people. The first drawback is that this survey only contains a small number of Lebanese students because not all universities have their data/annual to be collected due to accessibility problems. Regarding generality, this might affect the caliber of the study. Moreover, as this study only examines the situation of Lebanese institutions, the conclusions cannot be generalized to other kinds of enterprises or universities outside of Lebanon. Furthermore, this study only clarifies four aspects of organizational culture out of all the features of USR and organizational culture per all theoretical frameworks. Furthermore, this study does not consider the “behind the scenes” factors influencing the features of the USR, organizational culture, and UP—all of which will impact the USR implementation procedures. A prime illustration is the level of control that corporate culture may have, which may impact USR's effectiveness and limit its authority.

## **8. Suggestions for Future Research**



**Multi-Knowledge Electronic Comprehensive Journal For  
Education And Science Publications( MECSJ )**

**Issues 75 ( 2024)**

**ISSN: 2616-9185**

Future studies should examine auditing techniques that might help universities evaluate and address current USR concerns. One helpful area may be to employ red flags to evaluate the possibility of USR. Red flags have been used to evaluate hazards resulting from asset theft and financial reporting unethical and unsustainable activity; nevertheless, no study has specifically examined how well they work to evaluate USR-related issues. Finally, this study must be considered exploratory as no previous study has examined the relationship between University Social Responsibility and company culture in the service industry. Thus, the theories are derived from different academic domains. Though no broad generalizations are necessary, our results offer the first detailed understanding of how UP may support service companies acting socially responsibly.



## References

- Abbas, J. (2020). HEISQUAL: A modern approach to measuring service quality in higher education institutions. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 67, 100933.
- Al-Abdin, A., Roy, T., & Nicholson, J. D. (2018). Researching corporate social responsibility in the Middle East: The current state and future directions. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 25(1), 47-65.
- Albalawi, R., Yeap, T. H., & Benyoucef, M. (2020). Using topic modelling methods for short-text data: A comparative analysis. *Frontiers in artificial intelligence*, 3, 42.
- Alsharari, N. M., & Alshurideh, M. T. (2020). Student retention in higher education: the role of creativity, emotional intelligence, and learner autonomy. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 35(1), 233-247.
- Alsughayer, S. A. (2021). Impact of auditor competence, integrity, and ethics on audit quality in Saudi Arabia. *open Journal of Accounting*, 10(4), 125-140.
- Azizi, L., & Sassen, R. (2023). How universities' social responsibility activities influence students' perceptions of reputation. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 417, 137963.
- Barnett, M. L., Henriques, I., & Husted, B. W. (2020). Beyond good intentions: Designing CSR initiatives for greater social impact. *Journal of Management*, 46(6), 937-964.
- Benitez, J., Ruiz, L., Castillo, A., & Llorens, J. (2020). How corporate social responsibility activities influence employer reputation: The role of social media capability. *Decision Support Systems*, 129, 113223.
- Cabedo, L., Royo, M., Moliner, L., & Guraya, T. (2018). University social responsibility towards engineering undergraduates: The effect of methodology on a service-learning experience. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 10(6). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su10061823>
- Calva, M. L., & Vasquez, M. C. (2014). Informal Economy, Employability, and Professional Ethics in Mexico.



- Carroll, A. B. (2008). A history of corporate social responsibility: Concepts and practices. In A. Crane, A. McWilliams, D. Matten, J. Moon & D. S. Siegel (Eds.). *Oxford Handbook of Corporate Social Responsibility* (pp. 19-46). Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Carroll, A. B. (2021). Corporate social responsibility: Perspectives on the CSR construct's development and future. *Business & Society*, 60(6), 1258-1278.
- Chatzopoulou, E. C., Manolopoulos, D., & Agapitou, V. (2022). Corporate social responsibility and employee outcomes: interrelations of external and internal orientations with job satisfaction and organizational commitment. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 179(3), 795-817.
- Cheffi, W., Malesios, C., Abdel-Maksoud, A., Abdennadher, S., & Dey, P. (2021). Corporate social responsibility antecedents and practices as a path to enhance organizational performance: The case of small and medium-sized enterprises in an emerging economy country. *Corporate social responsibility and environmental management*, 28(6), 1647-1663.
- Chile, L. M., & Black, X. M. (2015). University–community engagement: A case study of university social responsibility. *Education, Citizenship, and Social Justice*, 10(3), 234–253. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1746197915607278>
- Compagnucci, L., & Spigarelli, F. (2020). The Third Mission of the university: A systematic literature review on potentials and constraints. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 161, 120284.
- Cui, R., Ding, H., & Zhu, F. (2022). Gender inequality in research productivity during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Manufacturing & Service Operations Management*, 24(2), 707-726.
- Domanski, D., Howaldt, J., & Schröder, A. (2017). Social Innovation in Latin America. *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, 18(2), 307–312. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19452829.2017.1299698>
- Gallardo-Vázquez, D., Folgado-Fernández, J. A., Hipólito-Ojalvo, F., & Valdez-Juárez, L. E. (2020). Social responsibility attitudes and behaviors' influence on university students' satisfaction. *Social Sciences*, 9(2), 8.



- Haque, A. U., & Yamoah, F. A. (2021). The role of ethical leadership in managing occupational stress to promote innovative work behavior: A cross-cultural management perspective. *Sustainability*, 13(17), 9608.
- Hnatenko, I., Orlova-Kurilova, O., Shtuler, I., Serzhanov, V., & Rubezhanska, V. (2020). An approach to innovation potential evaluation as a means of enterprise management improving. *International Journal of Supply and Operations Management*, 7(1), 112-118.
- Hopson, R., Miller, P., & Lovelace, T. S. (2016). University–School–Community Partnership as a Vehicle for Leadership, Service, and Change: A Critical Brokerage Perspective. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 15(1), 26–44. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15700763.2015.1071402>
- Hosny, S., Ghaly, M., & Boelen, C. (2015). Is our medical school socially accountable? The case of the Faculty of Medicine, Suez Canal University. *Medical Teacher*, 37(S1), S47–S55. <https://doi.org/10.3109/0142159X.2015.1006600>
- Kaplan, R. (2015). Who has been regulating whom, business or society? The mid-20th-century institutionalization of ‘corporate responsibility in the USA. *Socio-Economic Review*, 13(1), 125-155.
- Khaskheli, A., Jiang, Y., Raza, S. A., Qureshi, M. A., Khan, K. A., & Salam, J. (2020). Do CSR activities increase organizational citizenship behavior among employees? The mediating role of affective commitment and job satisfaction. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 27(6), 2941-2955.
- Kusmuriyanto, A. K. W., & Susilowati, N. (2020). Environmental Management Accounting Implementation in Higher Education: Case Study in Universitas Negeri Semarang.
- Latif, K. F., Sajjad, A., Bashir, R., Shaukat, M. B., Khan, M. B., & Sahibzada, U. F. (2020). Revisiting the relationship between corporate social responsibility and organizational performance: The mediating role of team outcomes. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 27(4), 1630-1641.
- Li, X., Xiao, L., Tian, C., Zhu, B., & Chevallier, J. (2022). Impacts of the ecological footprint on sustainable development: Evidence from China. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 352, 131472.



- Mahmood, A., & Bashir, J. (2020). How does corporate social responsibility transform brand reputation into brand equity? Economic and noneconomic perspectives of CSR. *International Journal of Engineering Business Management*, 12, 1847979020927547.
- Makki, D. H. (2023). *Institutionalizing university social responsibility: insights from Lebanese private universities* (Doctoral dissertation, Northumbria University).
- McWilliams A, Siegel DS, Wright PM. (2006). Corporate social responsibility: Strategic implications. *Journal of Management Studies*, 43(1):1-18.
- Nazari-Shirkouhi, S., Mousakhani, S., Tavakoli, M., Dalvand, M. R., Šaparauskas, J., & Antuchevičienė, J. (2020). Importance-performance analysis based balanced scorecard for performance evaluation in higher education institutions: an integrated fuzzy approach. *Journal of Business Economics and Management*, 21(3), 647-678.
- Oliver Su, Y., Chen, K.-F., Tsai, Y.-P., & Su, H.-I. (2018). How universities can work together with local communities to create a green, sustainable future. *E3S Web of Conferences*, 48, 06001. <https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/20184806001>
- Orlitzky, M., Schmidt, F., & Rynes, S. (2003). Corporate social and financial performance: A meta-analysis. *Organisation Studies*, 24, 403–441.
- Park, K. O. (2020). How CSV and CSR affect organizational performance: A productive behavior perspective. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(7), 2556.
- Peixoto, M. G. M., Musetti, M. A., & de Mendonça, M. C. A. (2020). Performance management in hospital organizations from the perspective of Principal Component Analysis and Data Envelopment Analysis: the case of Federal University Hospitals in Brazil. *Computers & Industrial Engineering*, 150, 106873.
- Rahman, T., Wasliman, I., Muttaqien, K., & Sauri, R. S. (2021). Accreditation Policies Implementation to Improve Performance Quality in Madrasah. *International Journal of Educational Review*, 3(2), 124-144.





- Rodriguez, V. H. P., Tijias, W. E. M., & Yaun, E. I. S. (2024). Influence of University Social Responsibility in Intercultural Contexts, Peru. *Kurdish Studies*, 12(4), 215-227.
- Suhartini, D., Widoretno, A. A., Azmiyanti, R., & Effendi, M. I. (2022). Comparative Study of Green Accounting Implementation based on University Social Responsibility (USR) and Good University Governance (GUG) Policy. *IJEED (International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Business Development)*, 5(2), 323-331.
- Suhartini, D., Widoretno, A. A., Azmiyanti, R., & Effendi, M. I. (2022). Comparative Study of Green Accounting Implementation based on University Social Responsibility (USR) and Good University Governance (GUG) Policy. *IJEED (International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Business Development)*, 5(2), 323-331.
- Suranta, S., & Rahmawati, R. (2024). The role of higher education image and service quality on the effect of University Social Responsibility (USR) on student loyalty in Indonesia. *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, 16(2), 378-390.
- Tarurhor, E. (2024). Does University Social Responsibility Improve Performance in Nigerian Universities in Delta State? *Indiana Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 5(1), 1-7.
- Vázquez, J. L., Aza, C. L., & Lanero, A. (2016). University social responsibility as the antecedent of students' satisfaction. *International Review on Public and Nonprofit Marketing*, 13(2), 137–149. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12208-016-0157-8>
- Wood, D. J. (2010). Measuring corporate social performance: A review. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 12(1), 50–84.
- Zhang, Q., Cao, M., Zhang, F., Liu, J., & Li, X. (2020). Effects of corporate social responsibility on customer satisfaction and organizational attractiveness: A signalling perspective. *Business ethics: A European Review*, 29(1), 20-34.