

EMPLOYEE-CENTRIC CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN PHILIPPINE PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION: ENGAGEMENT, INCLUSION, AND INTERNAL SOCIAL IMPACT AS A QUALITY STRATEGY

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ABSTRACT

This study examines employee-centric corporate social responsibility (CSR) as quality infrastructure in Philippine private higher education institutions (HEIs). It addresses a persistent managerial problem: employee well-being initiatives often exist as isolated activities, while workload design, psychosocial risk, inclusion, employee voice, and professional development remain weakly integrated into governance and quality assurance. A qualitative documentary synthesis was conducted using a purposively assembled corpus of 14 sources published from 2020 to 2024, comprising Philippine higher education policies and accreditation guidance, international standards and policy documents, and peer-reviewed studies and reviews. The sources were analyzed through structured coding, cross-source comparison, and contribution-oriented interpretation across five domains: workload fairness, psychosocial safety, inclusion and dignity, employee voice, and capability development. The synthesis identifies three central findings. First, workload transparency and recognition of allied tasks form the operational foundation of credible internal CSR. Second, psychosocial support produces limited value when institutions address symptoms but leave organizational hazards unchanged. Third, employee voice and leadership follow-through connect internal CSR to service continuity by enabling risks to be identified before they affect students. The study proposes that employee-centric CSR creates internal social impact when it is embedded in decision rights, monitoring routines, and quality assurance rather than delivered as stand-alone welfare programs. The findings offer a practical governance framework for private HEI leaders while avoiding causal claims that cannot be supported by documentary evidence.

Keywords: employee-centric CSR, employee engagement, inclusion, internal social impact, philippines

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1. INTRODUCTION

Private higher education institutions (HEIs) depend on coordinated academic, administrative, and student-support work to sustain learning quality and institutional credibility. Faculty members design and deliver instruction, advisers and guidance personnel support student progression, registrars and finance teams manage high-stakes transactions, and operations personnel maintain safe and functional campuses. When these employees face persistent overload, unclear expectations, weak support, or limited voice, the consequences extend beyond individual well-being. Service delays, inconsistent learning delivery, reduced continuity, and preventable operational errors can become institutional quality risks.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) in education is frequently associated with scholarships, community extension, environmental programs, and external partnerships. These outward-facing initiatives are important, but they represent only one dimension of institutional responsibility. Employee-centric or internal CSR concerns the organization's responsibilities toward its workforce, including fair work design, occupational and psychosocial safety, development opportunities, dignified treatment,

participation, and credible mechanisms for raising concerns. Recent mapping of CSR and employee research confirms that internal perceptions of CSR are increasingly connected with employee attitudes, well-being, and organizational behavior (Thu & Quynh, 2024).

The relevance of internal CSR intensified after the rapid expansion of flexible and technology-supported learning. Philippine higher education guidance required institutions to formalize continuity plans, redesign delivery arrangements, monitor implementation, and sustain student support (CHED, 2020; CHED Regional Office III, 2020). Although these measures were essential, they also expanded documentation, digital coordination, assessment redesign, and responsiveness expectations. Research on online teaching similarly shows that increased workload, uncertainty, and blurred work-home boundaries can intensify burnout among academics (Fynn & van der Walt, 2023). These pressures make employee responsibility a matter of operational resilience rather than an optional benefit.

International guidance reinforces this organizational perspective. The WHO (2022) recommends interventions that address working conditions, leadership behavior, and organizational support rather than relying solely on individual coping programs. The ILO (2022) likewise positions mental health as an occupational safety and health responsibility involving prevention, participation, stigma reduction, and access to support. ISO 45003 extends this logic by identifying psychosocial hazards such as excessive demands, poor role clarity, weak change management, and harassment, and by requiring organizations to implement and monitor controls (ISO, 2021).

A key managerial challenge is the gap between policy presence and employee experience. An institution may offer wellness activities while leaving excessive workload or unclear role boundaries unchanged. It may maintain a grievance procedure that employees do not trust, or provide professional development that is accessible only to selected groups. In such circumstances, the existence of a program does not demonstrate internal social impact. Credibility depends on implementation consistency, protection from retaliation, transparent decision criteria, and visible leadership follow-through.

This problem is especially important in private HEIs, where resource constraints, contractual diversity, accreditation requirements, and enrollment pressures interact. PAASCU's human-resource standards emphasize adequate staffing and systematic practices for recruitment, deployment, development, evaluation, and retirement (PAASCU, 2021). These expectations make employee systems integral to educational quality assurance. At the same time, accreditation and compliance work may itself increase workload if evidence production is not planned and distributed fairly.

Existing studies provide valuable evidence on academic job demands and resources (Naidoo-Chetty & du Plessis, 2021), workplace mental health programs in HEIs (Coats et al., 2024), university leadership and supportive communication in the Philippine context (Bacaling-Cabag, 2024; Plata, 2024), and the health implications of unrecognized allied tasks (Vizcarra et al., 2024). However, this evidence is dispersed across occupational health, higher education management, communication, accreditation, and CSR literatures. A focused synthesis is needed to explain how these strands can be integrated into a practical internal CSR system for Philippine private HEIs.

Accordingly, this study conceptualizes employee-centric CSR as quality infrastructure: a coordinated set of policies, decision rights, leadership practices, and monitoring routines that protects employees' capacity to perform educational work reliably. The study does not claim to measure employee outcomes directly. Instead, it uses documentary evidence to identify the governance mechanisms through which internal CSR can plausibly support engagement, inclusion, workforce stability, and service continuity.

The study addresses the following research questions:

RQ1. Which domains of employee-centric CSR are most consistently emphasized in evidence relevant to Philippine private HEIs?

RQ2. Through what organizational mechanisms can employee-centric CSR support engagement, inclusion, workforce stability, and reliable student-facing services?

RQ3. What governance conditions determine whether internal CSR policies generate credible internal social impact rather than symbolic compliance?

The article contributes by integrating fragmented evidence into an education-specific framework, distinguishing policy existence from implementation credibility, and translating employee responsibility into quality assurance practices that are actionable for presidents, human-resource leaders, deans, and quality managers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Employee-Centric CSR in Higher Education

Internal CSR refers to responsible organizational practices directed toward employees, including fairness, development, health and safety, participation, and respect. In higher education, these practices carry particular significance because educational services are co-produced through direct interaction. Teaching, advising, counseling, records processing, and student support cannot be fully separated from the capability, judgment, and emotional availability of the people delivering them. Consequently, workforce conditions influence not only employee attitudes but also the consistency of institutional services.

The internal CSR literature increasingly examines how employees interpret organizational responsibility and how these interpretations shape work-related responses (Thu & Quynh, 2024). This interpretive dimension is important because formally similar programs may produce different outcomes depending on access, fairness, and implementation. A development policy, for example, may strengthen commitment when opportunities are transparent and role-relevant, but may reduce trust when selection appears arbitrary. Internal CSR should therefore be assessed through both institutional design and implementation credibility.

Workload, Psychosocial Risk, and Engagement

Academic and administrative work combines multiple demands: teaching or technical tasks, documentation, student interaction, coordination, research, quality assurance, and emotional labor. Naidoo-Chetty and du Plessis (2021) show that the effects of these demands depend on the availability of resources such as autonomy, collegial support, recognition, role clarity, and manageable workload. When demands expand without corresponding resources, chronic strain and disengagement become more likely.

The organizational nature of psychosocial risk is emphasized consistently across authoritative guidance. WHO (2022) recommends organizational interventions, manager training, and support for workers experiencing mental health conditions. ILO (2022) stresses prevention and participation, while ISO 45003 identifies work design, role clarity, change management, and workplace relationships as controllable risk domains. These sources collectively challenge approaches that treat stress as an individual resilience deficit. In an HEI, credible internal CSR must address how work is allocated, prioritized, supervised, and reviewed.

Evidence from pandemic-era higher education reinforces this conclusion. Fynn and van der Walt (2023) identify workload growth, uncertainty, and boundary erosion as important features of academic burnout during online teaching. Coats et al. (2024) similarly classify higher education stressors as psychosocial, organizational, and environmental, implying that interventions should match the source of risk. Counseling and wellness resources remain valuable, but they cannot substitute for changes in understaffing, excessive demands, or unclear expectations.

Inclusion, Dignity, and Employee Voice

Employee-centric CSR also includes protection of dignity across rank, employment status, and occupational group. Harassment, bullying, discrimination, retaliation, and exclusion are psychosocial hazards as well as ethical failures (ILO, 2022; ISO, 2021). In universities, power differences may discourage part-time, probationary, or outsourced personnel from reporting concerns. A policy therefore becomes credible only when reporting channels are accessible, confidentiality is protected, cases are handled consistently, and adverse consequences for speaking up are actively prevented.

Employee voice has a direct quality-management function. Staff members often encounter service bottlenecks, student risks, and operational inconsistencies before senior leaders do. When employees can report concerns safely, institutions gain early-warning information. When silence is normalized, small problems may persist until they affect students or institutional reputation. Philippine scholarship emphasizes the role of supportive communication and leadership signals in establishing norms around help-seeking, rest, and psychological safety (Bacaling-Cabag, 2024; Plata, 2024).

Capability Development and Quality Assurance

Professional development is commonly treated as a benefit, but in higher education it is also an institutional capability mechanism. Flexible learning, digital administration, changing accreditation expectations, and complex student needs require continuous learning. PAASCU (2021) places recruitment, deployment, training, appraisal, and employee development within the human-resource dimension of institutional quality. CHED policies on flexible learning and continuity planning similarly imply that employee capability and implementation monitoring are essential to educational continuity (CHED, 2020; CHED Regional Office III, 2020).

The distribution of development opportunities matters as much as their existence. Faculty, administrative employees, and student-support staff require different forms of capability building, while part-time or contractual workers may be excluded from standard pathways. Internal CSR becomes strategically meaningful when development priorities are linked to role requirements, access criteria are transparent, and learning is recognized in workload planning and career progression.

Analytical Framework

The review organizes employee-centric CSR into five mutually reinforcing domains. The framework treats implementation credibility as the condition connecting formal practices to employee and institutional outcomes. It also distinguishes proximal employee outcomes, such as perceived fairness and psychological safety, from downstream organizational outcomes, such as retention, service continuity, and quality reliability. These relationships are interpreted as contribution pathways rather than causal effects.

Table 1. Analytical framework for employee-centric CSR in private HEIs

Domain	Core institutional practices	Proximal employee condition	Quality relevance
Workload fairness	Transparent workload accounting; recognition of allied tasks; peak-cycle planning; role clarity	Perceived fairness, manageable demands, reduced role ambiguity	Continuity of teaching and services; fewer overload-related errors
Psychosocial safety	Risk assessment; supportive supervision; referral pathways; crisis adjustments; anti-stigma practices	Psychological safety, help-seeking confidence, reduced chronic strain	Earlier risk identification; sustained employee capacity

Inclusion and dignity	Anti-harassment controls; equitable treatment; accessible accommodations; non-retaliation	Belonging, respect, trust in institutional procedures	More stable collaboration and lower hidden conflict
Employee voice	Protected reporting channels; consultation; feedback closure; participation in work redesign	Willingness to speak up and contribute improvement ideas	Early detection of service and student risks
Capability development	Role-relevant learning; transparent access; career pathways; recognition of development time	Competence, growth opportunity, organizational support	Adaptability, succession capacity, and quality improvement

Note. The framework synthesizes the domains emphasized across the reviewed policy, standards, accreditation, and research sources.

3. METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Scope

This study used a qualitative documentary synthesis to examine how employee-centric CSR can be designed and governed in Philippine private HEIs. The approach was appropriate because the study sought to integrate policy expectations, psychosocial-risk guidance, accreditation requirements, and empirical higher education research rather than estimate statistical relationships. The unit of analysis was the documented concept, practice, or governance mechanism relevant to employee responsibility and educational quality.

The study was bounded to evidence published from 2020 to 2024. This period captured the institutional consequences of flexible learning, heightened attention to workplace mental health, and recent Philippine discussions of faculty and staff well-being. The analysis focused on private higher education, but international and public-sector studies were retained when they addressed mechanisms that are transferable to private HEIs, such as workload design, burnout, supportive leadership, psychosocial risk, or employee voice. Transferability was assessed cautiously and contextual differences were explicitly considered.

Documentary Corpus and Selection Criteria

The final corpus comprised all 14 sources retained in the reference list. Sources were purposively selected because they met at least one of four relevance criteria: (1) they addressed internal CSR or employee perceptions of organizational responsibility; (2) they examined employee well-being, workload, burnout, communication, or mental health in higher education; (3) they provided authoritative guidance on psychosocial risk or workplace mental health; or (4) they established Philippine higher education continuity, accreditation, or human-resource expectations. Eligible materials were peer-reviewed articles, official policy documents, international standards or guidelines, and accreditation guidance. Sources focused exclusively on student well-being or external community CSR without a substantive employee dimension were outside the analytical scope.

Table 2. Composition and analytical role of the documentary corpus

Source category	Included sources	Primary analytical role
Philippine policy and accreditation guidance	CHED (2020); CHED Regional Office III (2020); PAASCU (2021)	Defines continuity-planning, monitoring, and human-resource quality expectations.
International standards and policy guidance	ILO (2022); ISO (2021); WHO (2022)	Defines organizational responsibilities for mental

		health, psychosocial risk, participation, and preventive controls.
Higher education and workplace research	Bacaling-Cabag (2024); Coats et al. (2024); Fynn and van der Walt (2023); Naidoo-Chetty and du Plessis (2021); Plata (2024); Vizcarra et al. (2024); Wu et al. (2021)	Provides empirical and review evidence on workload, burnout, communication, leadership, well-being programs, and organizational practice.
Internal CSR mapping	Thu and Quynh (2024)	Clarifies the employee-centered CSR research stream and its links to internal perceptions and work outcomes.

Note. The corpus contains 14 documents published between 2020 and 2024. The categories indicate analytical function rather than an evidence hierarchy.

Data Analysis

Analysis proceeded in four stages. First, each document was read for explicit statements concerning employee responsibility, work design, well-being, inclusion, participation, development, and quality. Second, relevant passages were coded deductively using the five domains in Table 1 and inductively for recurring governance conditions that did not fit neatly within a single domain. Third, a cross-source comparison identified areas of convergence, contextual differences, and negative or cautionary evidence. Fourth, the coded findings were organized into contribution pathways linking institutional practices to proximal employee conditions and downstream quality implications.

The analysis did not assign numerical scores to institutions or treat policy presence as proof of implementation. Claims were classified according to evidence strength. Direct guidance from official standards was used to identify normative responsibilities; empirical studies were used to explain plausible mechanisms and observed employee conditions; accreditation and policy documents were used to establish sector relevance. Conclusions were limited to patterns supported by more than one source category whenever possible.

Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

Analytical credibility was strengthened through source triangulation, a structured source-to-theme matrix, explicit separation of evidence from interpretation, and attention to contradictory or limiting evidence. Dependability was supported by maintaining consistent coding definitions and documenting how themes were consolidated. Confirmability was addressed by avoiding institution rankings, causal language, and unsupported claims about employee perceptions. Because the study relied on publicly available documents and contained no individual-level or confidential data, ethical risk was minimal; nevertheless, sources were represented cautiously to avoid reputational or contextual misinterpretation.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The synthesis identified five interdependent dimensions of employee-centric CSR. Across the corpus, internal social impact did not depend on the number of welfare activities offered. It depended on whether institutions changed the design and governance of work, protected employees from psychosocial and interpersonal harm, enabled voice, distributed development opportunities fairly, and connected these practices to quality monitoring. Table 3 summarizes the principal findings.

Table 3. Cross-source synthesis of employee-centric CSR findings

Finding	Evidence pattern	Governance requirement	Likely quality implication
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Workload fairness is foundational	High demands become damaging when role clarity, staffing, autonomy, recognition, and recovery resources are insufficient.	Document allied tasks, review workload distribution, plan peak periods, and establish escalation rules.	More reliable teaching and service delivery; lower overload-related disruption.
Support must address hazards, not only symptoms	Counseling and wellness activities have limited reach when excessive demands, poor supervision, or bullying remain unchanged.	Use psychosocial-risk assessment, manager training, referral pathways, and monitored corrective action.	Earlier support, stronger work capacity, and fewer unmanaged crises.
Inclusion depends on procedural credibility	Policies are weakened by fear of retaliation, status differences, inaccessible reporting, or inconsistent case handling.	Protect confidentiality, enforce non-retaliation, provide multiple reporting routes, and communicate case closure.	Higher trust, reduced hidden conflict, and improved coordination.
Employee voice is a quality mechanism	Employees hold operational knowledge about service bottlenecks and emerging student risks.	Build protected feedback channels and close the feedback loop through visible decisions and explanations.	Earlier problem detection and stronger continuous improvement.
Development must be equitable and role-linked	Capability building supports adaptation, but access and workload recognition determine whether it is experienced as support.	Align development with role needs, publish access criteria, and recognize learning time and career pathways.	Improved adaptability, succession capacity, and quality assurance maturity.

Note. Quality implications are contribution pathways inferred from convergent evidence; they are not causal estimates.

Workload Fairness as the Operational Foundation

Workload emerged as the most consistent operational issue across the corpus. Academic employees manage teaching, research, student advising, assessment, documentation, and institutional service, while administrative and support personnel face transaction peaks, compliance deadlines, and emotionally demanding student interactions. Naidoo-Chetty and du Plessis (2021) demonstrate that job demands become particularly harmful when resources such as autonomy, recognition, role clarity, and support are insufficient. Fynn and van der Walt (2023) similarly show how intensified online teaching demands and blurred boundaries contributed to academic burnout.

Philippine evidence on allied tasks adds an important local mechanism. Vizcarra et al. (2024) report that non-teaching assignments can consume substantial time and affect stress and health when they are not adequately recognized. For private HEIs, this finding suggests that workload fairness cannot be assessed only through formal teaching hours or job descriptions. Institutions need a workload-accounting process that captures committee work, accreditation evidence production, advising, remediation, digital communication, and other recurring tasks. Without such visibility, internal CSR remains disconnected from the principal source of employee strain.

Psychosocial Safety Requires Organizational Controls

The reviewed standards and guidelines converge on the need to manage psychosocial hazards at the organizational level. WHO (2022) prioritizes organizational interventions and leadership capability, ILO (2022) emphasizes prevention and participation, and ISO 45003 provides a structured approach to identifying hazards and monitoring controls (ISO, 2021). Together, these sources imply that employee

assistance, counseling, and wellness activities should be components of a broader system rather than substitutes for work redesign.

This distinction is reinforced by the higher education review of Coats et al. (2024), which separates psychosocial, organizational, and environmental stressors. A mismatch between stressor and intervention reduces credibility: an individual seminar cannot correct chronic understaffing, ambiguous authority, or harmful supervisory behavior. Employee-centric CSR therefore requires a risk cycle that identifies hazards, assigns responsibility, implements controls, monitors effectiveness, and allows employees to report whether conditions have improved.

Inclusion and Employee Voice Depend on Trust

The evidence indicates that inclusion is procedural as well as symbolic. Anti-harassment and anti-bullying policies are necessary, but employees assess their credibility through confidentiality, non-retaliation, consistency, and leadership response. ILO (2022) and ISO (2021) both treat harmful workplace relationships as psychosocial risks, while Philippine studies emphasize that leadership communication establishes whether employees view help-seeking and speaking up as safe (Bacaling-Cabag, 2024; Plata, 2024).

Employee voice also creates operational value. Faculty and staff often detect student-service failures, unrealistic timelines, and process risks before they appear in formal performance indicators. A credible voice system therefore supports both dignity and quality assurance. Its effectiveness depends on more than an open-door policy. Institutions need multiple reporting routes, documented response times, protection across employment categories, and feedback closure that explains what action was taken or why a proposal could not be adopted.

Capability Development Must Be Integrated with Work Design

Flexible learning and continuity planning increased the need for course redesign, digital capability, monitoring, and adaptive student support (CHED, 2020; CHED Regional Office III, 2020). PAASCU (2021) likewise positions training, deployment, evaluation, and development within institutional quality. The synthesis therefore identifies development as both an employee responsibility and a quality-control mechanism.

However, development can become an additional demand when participation is expected outside recognized workload or when access is uneven. Credible internal CSR requires role-relevant learning plans, transparent selection criteria, protected learning time, and links between development, appraisal, and career progression. These conditions are particularly important for non-teaching, part-time, and probationary employees who may otherwise remain outside formal development pathways.

Leadership Follow-Through Connects Policy to Internal Social Impact

Across all five domains, the central cross-cutting condition was implementation credibility. Policies create internal social impact only when leaders apply them consistently, allocate resources, clarify decision rights, and monitor outcomes. Wu et al. (2021) show that workplace mental health improvement depends on coordinated organizational practices across culture, benefits, resources, policy, and leadership rather than isolated initiatives. The same principle applies to internal CSR in private HEIs.

Leadership credibility is visible in routine decisions: whether allied tasks are counted, whether supervisors adjust work during crises, whether complaints are handled consistently, whether development opportunities are distributed transparently, and whether feedback produces action. These decisions shape whether employees interpret internal CSR as a genuine institutional commitment or as symbolic communication.

Discussion

Employee-Centric CSR as Quality Infrastructure

The findings answer RQ1 by identifying workload fairness, psychosocial safety, inclusion and dignity, employee voice, and capability development as the central domains of employee-centric CSR. These domains are mutually dependent. Development cannot compensate for harmful workload, voice is ineffective without protection, and well-being support loses credibility when leaders leave organizational hazards unchanged. Internal CSR should therefore be governed as an integrated system rather than a portfolio of unrelated employee activities.

The analysis also answers RQ2 by clarifying the contribution pathway from employee practices to educational quality. Fair work design and psychosocial controls protect employees' capacity to perform. Inclusion and voice increase the likelihood that risks and improvement opportunities are disclosed. Development strengthens adaptability and succession capacity. Together, these proximal conditions can support more stable teaching, advising, administration, and student services. This pathway is consistent with the view that higher education quality is produced through human systems, but the documentary design does not establish effect sizes or causal direction.

RQ3 concerns the difference between substantive and symbolic internal CSR. The synthesis identifies four governance conditions: explicit responsibility, accessible procedures, consistent leadership follow-through, and routine monitoring. A policy that lacks ownership, decision rights, or review mechanisms remains aspirational. Similarly, a program that is available in principle but inaccessible to employees with insecure status, heavy workloads, or fear of retaliation cannot generate credible internal social impact.

A Practical Governance Model for Private HEIs

For resource-constrained private HEIs, system integration is more feasible than adding numerous stand-alone programs. Existing human-resource, occupational safety, accreditation, and quality assurance processes can be redesigned around a minimum governance package:

- 1) Workload visibility: document teaching, administrative, student-support, accreditation, and allied tasks; review distribution before peak periods; and define escalation thresholds for overload.
- 2) Psychosocial-risk governance: assess organizational hazards, train supervisors, provide referral pathways, and monitor whether corrective controls reduce exposure.
- 3) Protected employee voice: offer multiple reporting and consultation routes, protect confidentiality and non-retaliation, and communicate feedback closure.
- 4) Equitable capability development: align learning with role requirements, publish access criteria, recognize development time, and connect learning to career and succession pathways.
- 5) Quality integration: include employee indicators in management review, such as workload exceptions, participation in development, unresolved psychosocial risks, reporting-channel use, turnover patterns, and service-continuity incidents.

The purpose of these indicators is not to reduce employee well-being to a score. Their value lies in making patterns visible and enabling corrective decisions. Measures should be disaggregated by role and employment status where ethically and statistically appropriate, because aggregate results may hide unequal access or risk exposure.

Theoretical and Managerial Implications

Conceptually, the study extends internal CSR into the higher education quality domain. It shows that employee responsibility is not separate from institutional performance; it is part of the infrastructure through which educational services are produced. The synthesis also emphasizes implementation credibility as a necessary link between formal CSR practices and employee interpretation. This helps explain why organizations with similar policies may generate different levels of trust and participation.

Managerially, the findings redirect attention from activity counts to governance quality. Leaders should ask not only whether a program exists, but who can access it, who is accountable for implementation, how concerns are escalated, what evidence is reviewed, and what changes follow. For accreditation and quality assurance teams, this approach offers a way to connect human-resource evidence with service continuity and institutional risk without treating employee well-being as a peripheral compliance item.

Limitations and Future Research

The study has four limitations. First, it relies on documentary evidence and therefore cannot determine how employees in specific private HEIs experience the identified practices. Second, the corpus includes international and public-sector evidence; although mechanisms were selected for transferability, institutional contexts differ. Third, publicly available documents may overrepresent formal policy and underrepresent implementation failures. Fourth, the contribution pathways are interpretive and should not be treated as causal estimates.

Future research should test the framework through multi-site mixed-methods designs that combine policy analysis, employee surveys, interviews, and administrative indicators. Longitudinal studies could examine whether workload accounting, supervisor training, protected reporting, or equitable development reforms are followed by changes in engagement, intention to stay, turnover, absenteeism, service reliability, or student experience. Comparative work across institution size, accreditation maturity, and employment arrangements would also clarify the boundary conditions of employee-centric CSR in Philippine private higher education.

5. CONCLUSION

Employee-centric CSR in Philippine private HEIs is best understood as quality infrastructure rather than discretionary employee welfare. The documentary synthesis identifies five core domains: workload fairness, psychosocial safety, inclusion and dignity, employee voice, and capability development. These domains create credible internal social impact only when they are supported by clear responsibility, accessible procedures, consistent leadership action, and routine monitoring.

The central practical implication is that private HEIs do not need to separate employee responsibility from quality assurance. Workload review, psychosocial-risk controls, protected voice, and equitable development can be embedded in existing management and accreditation routines. Such integration helps institutions protect employee capacity, identify risks earlier, and sustain more reliable teaching and student services. The present study provides a defensible governance framework, while future employee-level and longitudinal research is required to test its outcomes empirically.

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