

ABSTRACT

The University is a section in the community which generates new information and educates people on doing good for society. Although every organization's aim is to gain revenue so as to survive, institutions of higher learning need to balance their desire for increased revenue against the needs and desires of the society within which they operate. If the institution displays CSR leadership, the university brand image will gradually be acceptable to all stakeholders. Therefore, universities aim should be not only to produce good quality student graduates, but also should aim to give academic service to the communities. This will enhance their brand image. The main objective of the study was to determine the influence of strategic corporate social responsibility on the brand image of selected public universities in Kenya. The specific objectives of the study included; to determine the effect of communication on the brand image of selected public universities in Kenya, to determine the influence of resources on the brand image of selected public universities in Kenya, to examine the influence of stakeholder on the brand image of selected public universities in Kenya and to examine the effect of organization culture on the brand image of selected public universities in Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The unit of analysis was five public universities that have been in existence for more than 15 years. The study targeted the 1410 employees in these universities. The sample size was 206 employees in the public universities. The study used stratified random sampling to select the sample. Primary data was collected in this research. Sourced data mainly gathered by administering structured questionnaires. Excel and Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 21 was used to analyse data. Data was analysed using inferential and descriptive statistics. Data was presented using means, standard deviation and distribution tables in tables and figures. Results showed that there was a positive and significant relationship between strategic CSR communication and brand image ($B=0.311$, $p=0.000$). In addition, that there was a positive and significant relationship between strategic CSR resources and brand image ($B=0.294$, $p=0.000$). Results showed that there was a positive and significant relationship between strategic CSR stakeholder and brand image ($B=0.233$, $p=0.000$). In addition, that there was a positive and significant relationship between strategic CSR organizational culture and brand image ($B=0.205$, $p=0.002$). The study concluded that most Kenyan universities had an interactive form of communication which enhanced their brand image. The study also concluded that efficient use of resources during corporate social responsibility activities enhances brand image of the institution. The Kenyan government, university partners and university collaborators should offer support to the universities in their corporate image initiatives. It is also important for the Commission of University Education (CUE) as the regulatory body to ensure that universities in Kenya operate in a favorable learning environment necessary for satisfactory service provision.