



GLOBAL JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS RESEARCH: G
INTERDISCIPLINARY

Volume 16 Issue 3 Version 1.0 Year 2016

Type: Double Blind Peer Reviewed International Research Journal

Publisher: Global Journals Inc. (USA)

Online ISSN: 2249-4588 & Print ISSN: 0975-5853

Awakening the Spirit of Volunteerism in Buea Subdivision – A Case Study of the Catholic University Institute of Buea- The Entrepreneurial University

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Abstract- Volunteerism is the principle of donating time and energy for the benefit of other people in the community as a social responsibility rather than for any financial reward. It is intended to develop your skills and also it promote goodness or to improve human quality of life. It has a positive benefit or impact for the volunteer as well as for the person or community served. The Catholic University Institute of Buea through its various schools and the college of business and technology offers service-learning which allow the students to serve a group through volunteering while earning education credits. This the authorities of the Catholic University Institute of Buea sees it as a powerful means of preparing students to become more caring and responsible citizens thus helping the university to make good on their pledge to serve the society or community and also as a good positional tool. It engages both the mind and the heart hence it provide a powerful learning experience, by so doing volunteerism thus captures students interest.

GJMBR-G Classification: JEL Code: L26



AWAKENING THE SPIRIT OF VOLUNTEERISM IN BUEA SUBDIVISION A CASE STUDY OF THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE OF BUEA THE ENTREPRENEURIAL UNIVERSITY

Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:



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I. INTRODUCTION

Volunteerism is the use of involvement of volunteer labour, especially in community service. It is the policy or practice of volunteering one's time or talents for charitable, educational or other worthwhile activities especially in one's community (www.dictionary.com).

Volunteerism is intended to develop your skills and also it promote goodness or to improve human quality of life. It has a positive benefit or impact for the volunteer as well as for the person or community served (www.nationalservice.com). It is also intended to make contacts for possible employment as many volunteers are specially trained in the areas they work.

While international volunteering also called volunteering in the developing countries is increasing becoming popular among young people especially gap year students who travel to communities of the developing countries to work on some projects with the local organisations, it is yet to be noticed and practiced within the Buea municipality or subdivision. Very little is done in terms of volunteers and donations to help run

private institutions effectively, this is for the simple reason that people here are yet to effectively understand the importance of volunteerism.

a) *Background of the Study/ Company Review*

The Catholic University Institute of Buea (CUIB) South West Region, Cameroon, was approved as a non-profit making university in two separate letters.

The authorization to create CUIB on 09/01/0194 of 11 June 2009 and the authorization to start was signed by the Honourable Minister of Higher Education Prof. Jacques Fame Ndongo by decision no 10/02173/N/MINSUP/DDES/ESUP/SAC/NJE/ebm dated 26th of May 2010.

Its primary purpose is to train professional servant leaders with moral and spiritual values so that they may be responsible to their communities. The proprietor/chancellor of the Catholic University of Buea is the Bishop of the Diocese of Buea.

In June 2011, another arm of the University, the Business and Research Park was created as a legal entity of its own by the Cameroon laws no RC BUC.2031-B023 with the name CUIB-Centre for entrepreneurship research and innovation.

From the president's message of 2015/2016 academic year, he reiterated that anyone who steps into the CUIB campus will notice that CUIB has a strong sense of community and campus pride. It clearly makes a difference in the lives of students and the surrounding communities in Buea. The students, staff and faculty go out weekly to carryout volunteerism in surrounding communities. Just five years old, the rest of the country has begun noticing its accomplishments through its students who are not only likeable and humble but are strong academically as they can compete with their peers internationally and win internal awards. Examples include, the Tony Elumelu entrepreneurship awards, the Anzisha award etc.

The Catholic University Institute of Buea Sport Academic (CUSA), Went operational in December 2014 with authorisation no 1106/G37/C84/VOL II/SAAJP with the main aim of assisting young, talented and excellent skilled Cameroonians in the various field of sport like football, volleyball, basketball, handball etc.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to the Collins English dictionary (2012), volunteerism is the principle of donating time and energy for the benefit of other people in the community as a social responsibility rather than for any financial reward.

The Catholic University Institute of Buea through its various schools and the college of business and technology offers service-learning which allow the students to serve a group through volunteering while earning education credits. This according to the authorities of the Catholic University Institute of Buea sees it as a powerful means of preparing students to become more caring and responsible citizens thus helping the University to make good on their pledge to serve the society or community and also as a good positional tool.

Volunteering through service learning unites the academic study and volunteer community service gives energy, commitment, time and skills to address human community needs. This thus have the result engaging both the mind and the heart hence it provide a powerful learning experience, by so doing volunteerism thus captures students interest (Eyler, 1999).

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For this research work, the researcher used only secondary data that was information collected from the Catholic University Institute of Buea bulletins and other University documents and websites.

IV. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

- In line with its mission of training professional servant leaders, the Catholic University Institute of Buea has been carrying out some social corporate responsibility methods in their surrounding communities.

Volunteerism: The Catholic University of Buea strives to promote volunteerism in a society where the culture of volunteerism is not well valued. There is also the CUIB-volunteerism network program which is also to help encourage student's community engagement service. A lot of the community work is done during the volunteerism week and the monthly volunteerism work carried out by the various schools and also the college of business and technology while putting on their corporate uniforms. With this already making news in the community, other higher institutions of learning have begun copying what just began as a joke. The Catholic University Institute of Buea is using this idea of volunteerism to position itself in this subdivision that has seen the tremendous growth of many higher institutions of learning.

The authorities of the university has made it mandatory that before a student graduate, the student

must have done twenty-five hour of volunteerism or community work per an academic year.

Family Fund Campaign (FFC): This was introduced as a flagship tradition in the 2013/2014 academic year with main purpose to engage internal stakeholders of the University to raise funds to support some pressing needs of the University.

Senior Class Philanthropic Gift: It was also introduced as a way to encourage students to give to the University as the University has also impacted the students during their stay on campus.

Social and Environmental Awareness and Responsibility: Here it enables students to be accountable to their communities, promote the common good, respect creation and the environment.

Sr. Emmanuela Fomenky Memorial Foundation Clinic: This is a health unit that was name after the founder Rev. Sr. Emmanuela Fomenky. It has a complete medical team (resident medical doctor, nurse, laboratory technician, manager etc). This centre renders health facilities to the students, staff, faculty and the community.

V. CONCLUSION

The Catholic University Institute of Buea has been carrying out some volunteerism and social corporate responsibility methods in their surrounding communities; they have been using this as a positioning tool. Through this activity other institutions of higher learning in this municipality have been copying and are also using this to make them known.

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