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Evaluating Corporate Social Responsibility Programs among Small-Scale Sugarcane Farmers in Davao Del Sur

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Abstract. The study aimed to assess which corporate social responsibility program effectively improves sugarcane production among small-scale farmers in Davao del Sur. The study used a descriptive-quantitative survey design conducted in Davao del Sur province. The study administered survey questionnaires to the selected 182 sugarcane farmers and eight representatives (chairpersons/general managers) from an organization with the help of stratified random sampling techniques. The study also utilized descriptive statistics, frequency distribution, and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) as statistical tools. The result showed that small-scale sugarcane farmers and organizations are typically informed about and satisfied with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Nonetheless, insufficient financial resources impede their ability to benefit fully. The farming organizations exhibit a democratic leadership approach and equitable gender representation, perhaps enhancing marketing initiatives. Although both farmers and organizations convey contentment, organizations exhibit greater satisfaction due to increased involvement in program implementation. Effective corporate social responsibility programs include livelihood support, skills development, improved agricultural methods, and market accessibility. Based on the findings, the Sugar Regulatory Administration could enhance its monitoring and evaluation to ensure that growers benefit most from these programs. Improving awareness and increasing the accessibility of financial support could alleviate the resource limitations that farmers and organizations encounter.

Keywords: Awareness; Corporate social responsibility; Farming practices; Financial resources; Small-scale sugarcane farmers.

1.0 Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives provide sugarcane growers with essential training and access to credit and tools for enhancing productivity and sustainability. In using modern farming practices, these projects help farmers increase crop yields and generate more income. CSR initiatives also come with increased farmer access to formal credit, which triggers the purchase of better inputs and infrastructure. Nevertheless, specific challenges exist. Lack of sustainable financing and uncertainty of support could undermine the long-term success of programs. Additionally, some of the CSR measures do not cover the complete requirements of farmers, resulting in limitations in the support they offer.

From planting to milling, bagasse, a by-product of the Philippine sugar industry, provides farmers with a substantial source of income. It helps rural communities maintain economic viability (Martiniello & Azambuja,

2019). Despite the significance of the sugarcane subsector, it is now under pressure in the Philippines; smallholder farmers, particularly, are bearing the brunt of these challenges (Kumar et al., 2020). The fall in sugarcane production has led to low sugar yield, low farmers' income, and less foreign exchange.

CSR money helps multiple commercial agribusiness service providers and NGOs provide farmers with agricultural technology, information, and skills (Suminah et al., 2023). Corporate Social Responsibility programs can vary depending on rural communities' regions, sectors, or particular needs (Reis &Molento, 2020). Such programs commonly focus on training and capacity building, access to resources and markets, value chain links and fair trade, access to finance and financial inclusion, and environmental sustainability. By focusing on these critical aspects, CSR programs assist farmers in enhancing their practices and augmenting output.

Strategies to lessen financial exposure in farming operations are frequently a part of CSR initiatives in sustainable agriculture (Lu et al., 2021). It is still unknown, though, what precise steps were taken to encourage long-term behaviors and what outcomes were achieved. The focus must be on how each program connects to fieldwork to evaluate the impact of CSR among Davao del Sur's small-scale sugarcane growers. It may be possible to demonstrate how financial access supports rural development by looking at the relationship between agency-based funding and crop yield. In this context, the application of social support in farm routines is shaped by financial education, available credit lines, and fundamental financial tools.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

The study evaluated small-scale sugarcane farmers' perceived efficacy of CSR programs in Davao del Sur using a descriptive-quantitative survey approach. The descriptive research stresses observing and recording the characteristics of events or groups without changing variables (Siedlecki, 2020). Popular in fields including economics, psychology, and the social sciences, the quantitative research design answers research questions and tests hypotheses by collecting and analyzing numerical data (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019).

2.2 Research Locale

The research was conducted in Davao del Sur, a significant sugarcane-producing province. In 2002, the sugarcane cultivation area was 11,635.34 hectares, producing an annual output of 554,664 metric tons, yielding an average of 47.67 metric tons per hectare. Nearby municipalities, including Kiblawan, Matanao, Sulop, and Sta. Cruz, all show great sugarcane farming. The study thus focused on the four towns of Kiblawan, Sulop, Hagonoy, and Matanao. The study focused on these four municipalities and was chosen for a central role in sugarcane production, accessibility, and alignment with the research goals. Because they are home to many small-scale sugarcane producers, these locations are ideal for data gathering and monitoring agricultural practices, issues, and the social consequences of sugarcane production.

2.3 Research Participants

The study randomly picked chairpersons/general managers from four Davao del Sur organizations and small-scale sugarcane farmers. The organizations are United Sugarcane Planters of Davao Multi-Purpose Organization (USPD-MPC), Samahang Sugarcane Planters Multi-Purpose Organization (SSP-MPC), Samahang Marginalized Sugarcane Planters Association (SMSPA), and Paramount Savings and Credit Organizations (PSCC). From these organizations, a collection of registered small-scale farmers was obtained. Using Slovin's formula for sample size computation, 182 sugarcane farmers from 333 members and two representatives (chairpersons/general managers) from each organization were selected. Moreover, stratified random sampling was used, whereby standard characteristics divided the population into smaller subgroups (Iliyasu &Etikan, 2021).

Additionally, the research participants were chosen according to defined inclusion criteria. They were required to be registered members of one of the four organizations and recipients of the corporate social responsibility initiatives. Moreover, they were required to possess land areas not exceeding 3 hectares. The respondents were divided into two groups: Active members and inactive members. Active members show their financial interest by regular donations, participating in organizational events, and maintaining a capital stake. Inactive members lack a capital stake, participate in events, or donate cash. Each organization's chairperson and general manager were also chosen to complete the survey questionnaires.

2.4 Research Instrument

The research employed questionnaires from multiple reputable sources to achieve its aims. The survey comprised three sections. The initial segment analyzed small-scale sugarcane cultivators' socio-economic features and geographical distributions. The second segment, derived from the research of RajaRajeswari and Somasundaram (2023), assessed farmers' degree of awareness and satisfaction concerning Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives. The concluding portion, influenced by Girei and Giroh (2012), examined the obstacles encountered by small-scale farmers in accessing CSR programs.

Furthermore, a comprehensive validation procedure ensured the reliability of the adopted research instrument. The instrument was reviewed and validated by three research experts, who were sent validation letters for constructive feedback. The appropriateness of the instrument for the investigation was evaluated using a validation sheet that specified specific criteria. These criteria encompassed the appropriateness of the content, alignment with the research objectives, and clarity of the queries. The instrument's reliability was also improved by addressing any weaknesses identified during the review and carefully considering the experts' feedback and recommendations. After these suggestions were incorporated, the instrument was finalized, guaranteeing the study's reliability and validity. The final version was prepared for administration, demonstrating a thorough and organized approach to ensuring its efficacy in measuring the intended variables.

2.5 Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher officially requested authorization from the Dean of the Institute of Graduate and Professional Education to conduct the study. A letter was addressed to the Dean and the President of Davao del Sur State College to solicit permission to undertake the research. A formal request letter was dispatched to four designated organizations: Paramount Savings and Credit Organizations (PSCC), Samahang Marginalized Sugarcane Planter Association (SMSPA), Samahang Sugarcane Planter Multi-Purpose Organization (SSP-MPC), and United Sugarcane Planters of Davao Multi-Purpose Organization (USPD-MPC).

The researcher adopted the survey questionnaire. Three experts in the field reviewed and evaluated it to verify that the questions aligned with the study’s objectives. Upon approval, the questionnaire was prepared for printing and disseminated to the respondents. Furthermore, the researcher administered the survey questionnaires directly to the selected respondents. The questionnaires were gathered upon completion. The data was subsequently aggregated and input into a spreadsheet for analysis. A statistician ultimately examined the data employing diverse statistical techniques.

After which, the level of awareness and satisfaction among small-scale sugarcane producers regarding Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs was assessed using descriptive statistics, specifically the mean and standard deviation. The standard deviation denotes the variability or consistency of the respondents' responses, whereas the mean provides an overall measure of awareness and satisfaction. Meanwhile, frequency distribution was also used to assess the respondents' socio-demographic variables. Furthermore, to evaluate whether there were substantial differences in satisfaction and awareness levels, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed. The most effective CSR programs were also identified using ANOVA, based on farmers' and organizations' highest mean results.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

The researcher ensured that all participants in the study were handled with dignity and trustworthiness. Conducting research that respects respondents, irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, or any other distinctions, is vital. Researchers must uphold a transparent and candid interaction with all participants during the research process. The researcher secured voluntary informed consent from each subject before commencing data collection. A permission letter was issued to elucidate the study's objective explicitly. While protecting data privacy, researchers must give participant anonymity a priority. Before data gathering, these criteria must be adequately disclosed to participants and incorporated into the agreement. This stage maintains the integrity of the study process and fosters participant openness and confidence. To guarantee reliable and consistent results, the researcher has to prioritize preserving credibility. Maintaining the integrity of the results depends on reducing bias and limiting intrusiveness throughout the study.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Socio-Economic Profile of Small-Scale Sugarcane Farmers and Organization

Demographic Profile of Small-Scale Sugarcane Farmers

Table 1 presents the socio-economic details of small-scale sugarcane farmers in Davao del Sur. Of 182 survey participants, 106 farmers (58.20%) were between 36 and 51, making up the largest group. The remaining farmers included 39.60% aged 52-67, 1.60% aged 20-35, and 0.50% aged 68 or older. Most farmers fall within the 36 to 51-year age range, which is typically linked to peak productivity. This group will likely have the necessary experience and physical stamina for farming, making them essential for maintaining sugarcane production.

Table 1. *Demographic Profile of Small-Scale Sugarcane Farmers*

Profile	Frequency	Rf (%)
Age		
20-35	3	1.60
36-51	106	58.20
52-67	72	39.60
68 and above	1	0.50
Sex		
Male	90	49.45
Female	92	50.55
Marital Status		
Single	17	9.30
Married	144	79.10
Solo Parent	5	2.70
Widow/Widower	16	8.80
Household Size		
2-4	101	55.50
5-7	75	41.20
8-10	6	3.30
Educational Attainment		
Elementary Graduate	12	6.60
High School Graduate	121	66.50
Bachelor's Degree	48	26.40

The statistics indicate that female farmers constitute 50.55% of the overall population, surpassing male farmers at 49.45%. Most small-scale sugarcane growers are married, comprising 79.10% of the population. Single farmers constitute 9.30%, widows/widowers account for 8.80%, and solo parents form the smallest demographic at 2.70%. This indicates that married individuals predominantly conduct sugarcane cultivation, and there exists a significant gender equilibrium, with women contributing substantially to the sector.

The household sizes of sugarcane growers varied, with the majority (55.50%) comprising 2 to 4 family members. This suggests smaller family groupings, implying that each member has a crucial role in agricultural and domestic responsibilities. An additional 41.20% of respondents indicated possessing 5 to 7 individuals, implying marginally larger family groups that may offer increased labor forfarming activities. Merely 3.30% of participants reported having 8 to 10 family members. The research indicates that families with small to medium-sized households predominantly oversee small-scale sugarcane growing.

Among the farmers interviewed, 66.50% attained a high school diploma, suggesting a basic to intermediate education level prevalence. This educational attainment indicates that these farmers are proficient in farm management, marketing activities, and commercial transactions. Nevertheless, 26.40% of farmers have attained tertiary education, suggesting that a minority pursue further education, perhaps constraining their access to improved agricultural techniques or wider economic prospects beyond agriculture. Furthermore, 6.60% of farmers have attained only elementary school, impeding their access to contemporary agricultural expertise or financial resources. This distribution indicates a potential deficiency in knowledge, as only a few farmers possess a comprehensive understanding of sophisticated farming practices. It underscores the need for targeted extension services and training catering to varying educational levels. Enhancing partnerships with local academic institutions and agricultural organizations can bridge this gap, equipping farmers with contemporary farming methodologies and instruments.

Farming and Household Economic Profile of Small-Scale Sugarcane Farmers

Table 2 established the economic and agricultural aspects of small-scale sugarcane cultivators. The findings indicate that 113 of 182 farmers (62.10%) depend predominantly on revenue sources external to agriculture. Conversely, 67 farmers (36.80%) rely on agriculture as their primary source of income, while two farmers (1.10%) opted not to answer the question. Furthermore, 70% of respondents supervise 1 to 2 hectares of land, representing 70.30%. The limited land area constrains production scale, affecting both productivity and income. The subsequent largest group, at 29.70%, possesses 3 to 4 hectares. These minor landholdings underscore the limitations encountered by small-scale farmers in expanding their operations or accessing broader markets.

Table 2. *Farming and Household Economic Profile of Small-Scale Sugarcane Farmers*

Profile	Frequency	Rf (%)
Non-Farm Employment of Household Head		
Yes	113	62.10
No	67	36.80
No Response	2	1.10
Land Size		
1-2 has	128	70.30
3-4 has	54	29.70
5-6 has	-	-
Total Annual Household Income		
P100,000-150,000	118	64.80
P151,000-200,000	53	29.10
P201,000 and above	11	6.00
Farm Experience		
1-3 years	22	12.10
4-6 years	66	36.30
7 years and above	94	51.60
Hiring in Farm Labor		
Yes	178	97.80
No	4	2.20
Market Access		
Yes	117	97.30
No	5	2.70

The yearly family income of sugarcane growers fluctuated, with the majority earning between Php 100,000 and Php 150,000 (64.80%). This range indicates that although sugarcane cultivation contributes to household income, it may not sufficiently meet the farmers' financial requirements, particularly due to the limited land sizes. The subsequent group, with earnings ranging from Php 151,000 to Php 200,000, constituted 29.10%, signifying a marginally steadier income. Nevertheless, merely 6% of respondents indicated earning beyond Php 201,000, underscoring the pervasive financial difficulties despite extensive farming expertise. This economic condition exposes the financial precariousness encountered by small-scale sugarcane cultivators.

Over half of the respondents had engaged in farming for seven years (51.60%), signifying a cohort of farmers with considerable expertise and a profound comprehension of sugarcane agriculture. Farmers with this degree of experience may help them address issues, including crop cycles, pests, and the use of effective agricultural practices. Another group, with 4 to 6 years of experience (36.30%), has a solid agrarian foundation but is still honing its abilities. The remaining 12.10% have 1 to 3 years of experience, suggesting they develop their expertise and may encounter challenges as they progress in their farming careers.

Most of those polled (97.80%) employ workers to help with cultivation, suggesting that family labor is usually insufficient for sugarcane output. Relying on hired help emphasizes the need for work, including planting, upkeep, harvesting, and processing. In contrast, 2.20% of farmers do not employ external labor, suggesting they have enough family support or operate on a smaller scale requiring fewer workers.The results show that most respondents (97.30%) have market access, allowing them to sell their products and earn income. However, this access is often restricted, with many relying on corporations to facilitate buyer connections. This arrangement enables farmers to obtain superior pricing compared to individual efforts, enhancing their income. Conversely, 2.70% of farmers lack market access, potentially due to obstacles such as geographical remoteness, restricted market networks, or issues in contacting buyers.

Credit Access and CSR Program Support of Small-Scale Sugarcane Farmers

Table 3 illustrates the credit access and corporate social responsibility program assistance from small-scale sugarcane cultivators. The results indicate that 60.40% of farmers benefit from CSR initiatives, with the predominant group (62.10%) receiving assistance for 3 to 4 years. This suggests that CSR programs substantially support these farmers by offering resources or financial aid. A significant percentage (24.70%) has participated for five years or longer, reflecting sustained engagement with CSR programs. Simultaneously, 17% have had access for 1 to 2 years, while 1.10% have benefited from CSR help for over 7 years. The disparity in support duration may indicate variations in program reach, efficacy, or farmers' eligibility.

Table 3. *Credit Access and CSR Program Support of Small-Scale Sugarcane Farmers*

Profile	Frequency	Rf (%)
Number of CSR Program Beneficiaries		
1-2	31	17.00
3-4	110	60.40
5-6	39	21.40
7 and above	2	1.10
Years of Access to CSR		
1-2 years	23	12.60
3-4 years	113	62.10
5 years and above	45	24.70
No response	1	0.50
Access to Credit		
Yes	182	100.0
Access to Agricultural Training		
Yes	182	100.0
Access to the CSR Program		
Yes	182	100.0

Thus, all small-scale farmers indicated access to loans, agricultural training, and corporate social responsibility initiatives; nevertheless, obtaining this help necessitates adherence to specific organizational criteria and norms. These requirements generally entail achieving production objectives, participating in collaborative organizations, or complying with environmentally sustainable methods. Consequently, while several farmers have access to assistance, the extent and regularity of benefits are contingent upon their capacity to meet these criteria.Furthermore, Figure 1 above presents the CSR programs utilized by small-scale sugarcane farmers. A notable proportion of respondents, 37.40%, attended the planner's barangay seminar, whereas 20.30% obtained livelihood support. Furthermore, 19.80% availed themselves of subsidized tractor rates, 14.30% profited from complimentary rodent treatment, and 8.20% participated in the adopt-a-farm initiative.

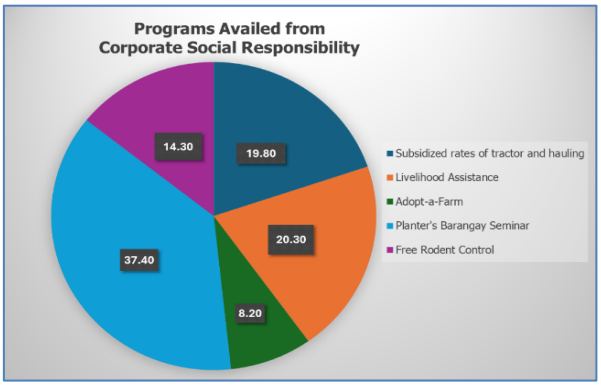

Figure 1. *Programs Availed from Corporate Social Responsibility*

In small-scale sugarcane cultivation, remaining knowledgeable about agricultural techniques, pest control, and post-harvest procedures enhances productivity and sustainability. The data indicates sustained engagement across the years: For 2019-2020 (19 barangays, 350 planters), for 2020-2021 (20 barangays, 380 planters), for 2021-2022 (21 barangays, 320 planters), for 2022-2023 (18 barangays, 330 planters), and 2023-2024 (20 barangays, 335 planters). This consistent engagement demonstrates farmers' willingness to adjust and enhance practices, particularly in response to evolving climatic conditions.

The livelihood aid and subsidized tractor and hauling services also address the financial and operational obstacles farmers face, who frequently have difficulty securing finance and essential farming equipment. Conversely, adopting a farm program, in which 8.20% of farmers are engaged, also holds significant importance. This initiative, financed by DOLE and SRA, provides resources to active members prepared to share equity. In return, farmers must provide progress reports and participate in routine monitoring. This system promotes accountability and enables farmers to enhance their productivity while disseminating best practices within their community. Although less popular, the free rodent control software is a significant support that tackles a prevalent yet frequently overlooked issue in farm management.

Demographic Profile of Chairpersons and General Managers

On the other hand, Table 4 presents the demographic profile of chairpersons and general managers in organizations located in Davao del Sur. Four of the eight chairpersons/general managers are male, and four are female.

Table 4. *Demographic Profile of Chairpersons and General Managers*

Profile	Frequency	Rf (%)
Sex		
Male	4	50.0
Female	4	50.0
Marital Status		
Single	1	12.50
Married	3	37.50
Solo Parent	0	
Widow/Widower	4	50.00
Educational Attainment		
Bachelor	6	75.00
Masters	2	25.00
Years of Experience		
3-5 years	1	12.50
6-8 years	2	25.00
9 years	5	62.50
Area of Expertise		
Operations-Oriented	2	25.00
Member Relation-Oriented	1	12.50
Marketing and Promotion	3	37.50
Others	2	25.00
Management Style		
Directive/ Authoritarian	1	12.50
Management by walking around	2	25.00
Democratic	3	37.50
Delegative	2	25.00
Organization link with		
PSCC	2	25.00
SMSPA	2	25.00
SSP-MPC	2	25.00
USPD-MPC	2	25.00
Role in Organization		
Chairman of the Board	4	50.00
Operations Manager	4	50.00

The predominant demographic consists of widows and widowers, comprising 50% of the group; 37.50% were married, and 12.50% were single. 75% have attained a university education, whilst 25% possess a master's degree. Most chairpersons/general managers possess 9 years of experience, representing 62.50%, while 25% have 6 to 8 years, and 12.50% have 3 to 5 years.

Some chairpersons and general managers indicated a concentration on operations (25%), but others did not delineate their function (25%). A significant proportion (37.50%) is engaged in marketing and promotions, while 12.50% focuses on member interactions. The majority of respondents chose a democratic leadership style (37.50%), while a portion preferred the management by walking about method (25%) and delegative leadership (25%). The remaining 12.50% exhibit a more directive or dictatorial approach. These organizations are associated with multiple groups, including PSCC, SMSPA, SSP-MPC, and USPD-MPC, each constituting 25% of

the responses. Among the eight respondents, 4 hold the position of chairperson, while the remaining four serve as general managers.

The results generally indicate a combination of leadership styles, operational priorities, and associations within the sugarcane agriculture sector. Democratic and delegative leadership philosophies balance strong interpersonal relationships and operational efficacy. This suggests that organizations wish to increase their market presence and maintain close internal relationships. The balance between strategic direction and hands-on management shows these businesses' capacity to effectively handle internal and external concerns.

The results correspond with Eleazar et al. (2024), who discovered that 81% of the 78,276 sugarcane farmers in the Philippines possess fewer than five hectares. Small-scale farmers often struggle because they lack financial assistance, administrative support, and knowledge. Consequently, they are more susceptible to the effects of climate change (Dang et al., 2019). Their dependence on rain-fed crops and poor irrigation systems makes them more vulnerable to extreme weather. Underfunding technology or infrastructure that could offset the effects of climate change exacerbates this susceptibility (Abegunde et al., 2019).

3.2 Level of Awareness of Small-Scale Farmers and Chairpersons/General Managers in Corporate Social Responsibility Programs Offered

Table 5 reveals small-scale farmers' and chairpersons'/general managers' knowledge of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs. Farmers' mean score of 3.64 (SD=0.61) suggested a "high" level of awareness. In contrast, chairpersons and general managers rated their awareness far higher at 4.39 (SD=0.50), indicating a "very high" knowledge. Though small-scale sugarcane farmers stronglyunderstand them, chairpersons and general managers have a more consistent and comprehensive awareness of CSR projects. Both groups are knowledgeable about various CSR projects.

Table 5. *Level of Awareness of Small-Scale Farmers and Chairpersons/General Managers In Corporate Social Responsibility Programs Offered*

Awareness	Farmers			Chairpersons/General Managers		
	Mean	SD	Verbal Rating	Mean	SD	Verbal Rating
Direct assistance program	3.72	0.63	High	4.44	0.53	Very High
Educational and community support	3.56	0.59	High	4.34	0.46	Very High
Overall	**3.64**	**0.61**	**High**	**4.39**	**0.50**	**Very High**

A "high" degree of support was indicated by the direct assistance programs for farmers, which obtained an average score of 3.72 (SD=0.63). This implies that farmers frequently receive financial support, agricultural supplies, or infrastructural upgrades, among other types of aid. These materials increase production and assist in meeting various farming needs. However, community and educational support scored 3.56 (SD=0.59), which is likewise classified as "high." This demonstrates that farmers actively attend seminars or training sessions hosted by partner organizations or CSR programs. These courses aim to enhance farmers' skills, knowledge, and practices in sugarcane growing by covering modern methods, pest control, crop management, and sustainable techniques.

Chairpersons and general managers gave direct assistance programs an average score of 4.44 (SD = 0.53), deeming them "very high." This suggests that top CEOs receive great support from other organizations through money, products, and tools to assist them in operating their companies better. The high score indicates their view that these initiatives offer vital tools for enhancing organizational efficiency. Community and educational support got 4.34 (SD=0.46), which is similarly deemed "very high." This indicates that chairpersons and general managers frequently participate in seminars, workshops, and training to develop their leadership abilities and raise the standard of service their members offer.

Tang et al. (2021) claim that social subsidies from CSR initiatives can significantly increase sugarcane production's long-term viability and profitability. These grants give farmers the money they need to invest in sustainable technologies and better farming practices, Carlisle et al. (2019) claim. Because of this assistance, farmers can increase productivity and try out new farming methods. According to Fandos-Roig et al. (2020), organizations that thoroughly understand these activities can better manage the challenges faced by small-scale farmers.

3.3 Level of Satisfaction of Small-Scale Farmers and Chairpersons/General Managers in Corporate Social Responsibility Programs Offered

Table 6 shows small-scale farmers' and chairpersons'/general managers' satisfaction ratings with the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs. Farmers' average score of 3.53 (SD=0.55) reveals high satisfaction. By contrast, chairpersons and general managers rated the initiatives better, averaging 4.06 (SD=0.48), which is also really good. This suggests that chairpersons and general managers are more pleased with CSR initiatives because of their direct involvement in their execution and better understanding of their benefits.

Table 6. *Level of Satisfaction of Small-Scale Farmers and Chairpersons/General Managers In Corporate Social Responsibility Programs Offered*

Awareness	Farmers			Chairpersons/General Managers		
	Mean	SD	Verbal Rating	Mean	SD	Verbal Rating
Agricultural Factors	3.64	0.53	High	4.22	0.43	Very High
Organizational Support Services	3.42	0.56	High	3.91	0.53	Moderate
Overall	**3.53**	**0.55**	**High**	**4.06**	**0.48**	**High**

With a mean score of 3.64 (SD=0.53), the agricultural elements of the CSR initiatives that farmers most appreciated were enhanced farming techniques, resource availability, and training. Organizational support services scored 3.42 (SD=0.56), slightly lower, and suggested excellent approval but with less emphasis on these areas. The score of 4.22 (SD=0.43) for chairpersons and general managers for agricultural initiatives revealed high satisfaction. Although still positive, organizational support services received a 3.91 (SD=0.53), indicating a somewhat lower degree of acceptance of these services within the overarching framework of farm organizations.

Upadhyay (2019) endorses this perspective, emphasizing that CSR programs centered on sustainable agriculture benefit enterprises, the environment, and society. Agricultural assistance programs can enhance farm performance and services, benefiting farmers and organizations. These programs foster beneficial social and environmental results, improving enterprises' long-term sustainability, resilience, and reputation (Van Zanten & van Tulder, 2021). Entities engaged in CSR initiatives offer farmers financial and technical assistance, including training, resources, and sustainable practices (Settembre-Blundo et al., 2021). This support enhances agricultural sustainability and mitigates the dangers linked to unsustainable farming practices (Bocken& Short, 2021). These studies illustrate that CSR actions in agriculture cultivate a reciprocal relationship. These actions improve agricultural methods while concurrently elevating firms' social and environmental obligations.

3.4 Challenges faced by Small-Scale Sugarcane Farmers and Chairpersons/General Managers in Accessing Corporate Social Responsibility

Table 7 outlines the challenges small-scale sugarcane growers and chairpersons/general managers face while trying to take part in corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Insufficient financial resources are the biggest challenge facing farmers, according to 41.20% of respondents. Additional obstacles include inadequate infrastructure and technology (21.40%), program ignorance (19.20%), complicated application procedures (14.80%), and restricted access to support services (3.30%). 62.50% of respondents agreed that the biggest challenge facing chairpersons and general managers is a lack of funding. Complex application procedures (25%) and infrastructure/technological constraints (12.50%) are other problems.

Table 7. *Challenges Faced by Small-Scale Sugarcane Farmers in Accessing Corporate Social Responsibility Programs*

Challenges	Farmers		Chairpersons/General Managers	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Lack of information about the program	35	19.20	-	-
Complex application procedures	27	14.80	2	25.00
Limited financial resources	75	41.20	5	62.50
Infrastructure and technology constraints	39	21.40	1	12.50
Limited access to support services	6	3.30	-	-

The results show that a lack of money for farmers, chairpersons/general managers, hinders access to CSR programs. Insufficient funds prevent them from fully engaging in agricultural operations, financial possibilities, or CSR-provided training. As a result, one does not fully benefit from these initiatives. This implies that many who answered believe that insufficient money is a significant barrier to participating in CSR projects. Though

they know the benefits, many cannot fully use them because of financial limitations. Depending on relationships, this could mean challenges, including no collateral, complex application processes, or a reluctance to offer ownership in exchange for help.

Indeed, Uduji and Okolo-Obasi (2022) pointed out that although small-scale farmers know CSR programs, they frequently encounter difficulties obtaining the information and resources required to participate in them. Hudaifah et al. (2019) voiced similar concerns, arguing that CSR initiatives might include bank collaborations to improve farmers' access to loans and financial services, lowering costs for those practicing sustainable agricultural methods, or renovating infrastructure. Chen et al. (2022) argued that giving low-interest loans, grants, or other financial assistance could help farmers access the tools and seeds needed to enhance output.

Because small-scale farmers rely on financial institutions for working capital to maintain their sugarcane crops, Nkoana et al. (2021) highlighted the complex relationship between these two parties. This indicates that although small-scale farmers frequently pursue finance from diverse sources, they face difficulties fulfilling stringent requirements due to comprehensive profiling. Furthermore, other factors that could negatively impact small-scale farmers' production include drought, farm size, poor infrastructure, low educational attainment, and a workforce that lacks expertise (Bukhosini& Moyo, 2023).

3.5 Significant Difference in the Level of Satisfaction and Awareness among Small-Scale Sugarcane Farmers and Organizations

Table 8 shows a significant difference in small-scale sugarcane farmers' and organizations' satisfaction and awareness of CSR initiatives. The F-value of 4.278 and p-value of 000 indicate a substantial difference in farmers' opinions of agricultural support, such as access to infrastructure, technical assistance, and farming inputs. These characteristics significantly impact farmers' satisfaction with CSR projects. Similarly, organizational support services significantly impact farmer satisfaction, with an F-value of 5.849 and a p-value of .000. This indicates that farmers place significant importance on organizational support, encompassing training programs, financial help, and management guidance.

Table 8. *Significant Difference in the Level of Satisfaction and Awareness among Small-Scale Sugarcane Farmers and Organizations*

Satisfaction Factors	Farmers		Chairpersons/General Managers	
	F	P-value	F	P-value
Agricultural factors	4.278	.000*	-	-
Organization support services	5.849	.000*	-	-

*-Significant at 0.05 level

a-Post hoc tests are not performed because at least one group has fewer than two cases.

3.6 Effective (Highest Mean Results) Corporate Social Responsibility as analyzed by Small-Scale Sugarcane Farmers and Organizations

Table 9 shows the effectiveness of corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives assessed by small-scale sugarcane cultivators and organizations. Direct assistance programs, particularly those emphasizing skills training and improvements in farming practices, got a mean score of 3.95 (SD=0.75) from farmers, indicating a high rating. Chairpersons/general managers assigned a notably elevated score of 4.63 (SD=0.52), categorized as extremely high. The "Adopt a Farm" initiative, which supplies planting materials and agricultural goods, received an average score of 4.63 (SD=0.52) from chairpersons and general managers. This indicates that chairpersons and general managers acknowledge the significance of the programs, as they are financed by the SRA and DOLE, providing 55% of the agricultural supplies required for farmers with 1 hectare of land.

The educational and community support results indicate that the Planter's barangay seminar obtained an average score of 3.98 (SD=0.80), categorized as high by farmers, and 4.63 (SD=0.52), classified as very high by chairpersons/general managers. This signifies that both groups positively welcome and efficiently execute localized training programs and awareness campaigns. Furthermore, chairpersons/general managers gave agricultural variables an exceptionally stable crop output, a score of 4.38 (SD=0.52), classifying them as extremely high. This displays their strong belief in the necessity of agricultural improvements to enhance production and sustainability.According to the data, farmers gave market accessibility support a mean score of 4.02 (SD=0.78), which was defined as high. In contrast, chairpersons/general managers gave it a rating of 4.38 (SD=0.52), which was extremely high. This emphasizes the importance of market access and income enhancement in the effectiveness of CSR programs. Furthermore, chairpersons/general managers reported that

incorporating continuous crop output and income received a mean score of 4.38 (SD=0.52), which is considered very high. Regarding organizational support services, farmers were assigned a mean score of 3.57 (SD=0.71), while chairpersons/general managers were awarded a higher score of 4.13 (SD=0.83), reflecting a significant satisfaction level. Moreover, the various training programs provided achieved a mean score of 4.13 (SD=0.35), which is also considered high, highlighting the significance of capacity-building initiatives.

Table 9. *Effective (Highest Mean Results) Corporate Social Responsibility as Analyzed by Small-Scale Sugarcane Farmers and Organizations*

CSR Programs	Farmers			Chairpersons/General Managers		
	Mean	SD	Verbal Rating	Mean	SD	Verbal Rating
Direct Assistance Program						
Livelihood assistance for skills training and improvement of farming practices	3.95	0.75	High	4.63	0.52	Very High
Adopt a farm that provides planting materials and some agricultural products.	-	-	-	4.63	0.52	Very High
Educational and Community Support						
Planter's Barangay Seminar	3.98	0.80	High	4.63	0.52	Very High
Agricultural Factors						
Incorporation of consistent crop production and income	-	-	-	4.38	0.52	Very High
Assistance on market accessibility to farmers	4.02	0.78	High	4.38	0.52	Very High
Organizational Support Services						
Services provided by organizations	3.57	0.71	High	4.13	0.83	High
Various training programs offered	-	-	-	4.13	0.35	High

Furthermore, the results indicate that farmers and chairpersons/general managers possess a high awareness and pleasure regarding CSR activities; however, organizational leaders typically perceive these initiatives as more effective. These initiatives fulfill the essential requirements of the communities and stakeholders involved. Direct aid programs have distinct advantages, enhancing the economic circumstances of farmers. Educational initiatives, such as the planter's barangay seminars, augment knowledge and empower participants to make informed agricultural decisions. Moreover, organizational support services enhance the competencies of both leaders and members, promoting more effective operations and robust communities.Indeed, small-scale farmers are limited to selling their sugarcane only through the organization; nonetheless, they report complete accessibility, as the group aids in locating purchasers. Farmers are urged to participate in these organizations, as they provide improved product pricing, given that independent sales typically yield lower prices. The disparity in satisfaction between farmers and organizational executives with CSR services indicates potential concerns with service delivery or accessibility. To enhance stakeholder support, CSR initiatives should prioritize strengthening direct assistance, expanding training possibilities, improving service accessibility, and enhancing market links.

4.0 Conclusion

Results revealed that most small-scale sugarcane growers are 36 to 51 years old, married, possess a high school diploma, and engage in non-agricultural jobs. They have intermediate agricultural experience and income and utilize various agrarian support services, including corporate social responsibility programs. This socio-economic profile demonstrates a necessity for continuous agricultural labor, financing, and education assistance. These observations indicate the necessity of focused policies and actions to enhance economic stability and productivity. Moreover, the equitable gender representation among chairpersons and general managers indicates a democratic leadership framework, which may influence the efficacy of marketing and promotional initiatives. Small-scale sugarcane farmers, chairpersons/general managers, significantly understood the available CSR programs. Farmers showed a commendable level of awareness, whereas chairpersons and general managers indicated an exceptionally high level of awareness. This suggests that organizational leaders understand the offered programs more profoundly. Furthermore, both small-scale farmers and chairpersons/general managers conveyed significant satisfaction with the CSR activities provided. Chairpersons and general managers expressed marginally more satisfaction, presumably due to their deeper engagement in program implementation. As the principal organizers, they understand the comprehensive benefits better, which may elucidate their elevated pleasure relative to the farmers.

Meanwhile, the primary problem encountered by both farmers and organizations was limited financial resources. Although cognizant of the existing CSR programs, budgetary limitations hinder many from fully engaging in or reaping the benefits of these possibilities. Based on the data, it was revealed that there exists a significant difference in the level of satisfaction and awareness in terms of agricultural factors and organization support services. Thus, effective CSR initiatives, recognized by farmers and organizations, encompass livelihood help for skills training, enhancement of farming practices, barangay seminars, market accessibility support, and services rendered by organizations. Both farmers and chairpersons/general managers acknowledged these programs as advantageous and efficacious.It is recommended that the Sugar Regulatory Administration strengthen its monitoring and evaluation of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects to ensure that farmers gain as much as possible. Through awareness programs and more widely available financial assistance, SRA could help farms and businesses with constrained resources. Moreover, small-scale farmers could gain from simplifying access to funding from low-interest financial institutions.

5.0 Contributions of Authors

The authors indicate equal contributions to each section. They conceptualized, reviewed, and approved the final work.

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7.0 Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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