

# Analyzing the Influence of Corporation Social Responsibility Behavior on Enterprises and Educational Equity

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**Abstract.** This paper explores the role of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in promoting educational equity, using the case of TAL Education Group during the COVID-19 pandemic. TAL's initiatives, such as the "suspend classes but not stop studying" project, have provided online education solutions to millions of students, ensuring access to quality education despite disruptions. The study examines how CSR activities not only enhance educational fairness but also build brand loyalty, attract high-quality talent, and improve corporate competitiveness. Through case analysis, this research highlights the impact of public welfare activities on both corporate and social development. While TAL has made significant strides, challenges remain, such as adapting to policy changes like China's "double reduction" policy. The paper concludes with recommendations for optimizing CSR strategies, including leveraging business advantages and expanding public welfare initiatives to enhance market awareness and attract talent. Future research could explore the long-term effects of CSR on educational equity and corporate sustainability.

**Keywords:** CSR, Education Equity, Corporate Value, Brand Value.

## 1. Introduction

With development in the digital age, every country pays attention to educational equity. More and more countries are realizing the importance of technological development to their own development. Education plays a crucial role in a country's technological development; only with increased balance and a high popularity rate can countries enhance their knowledge power. There used to be scholars who conducted research on the role of colleges and universities in enhancing a country's technological power. They found that education plays a crucial role in enhancing a country's technological power, strengthening people's culture, and contributing significantly to its development [1].

In 2019, the Chinese "Educational Blue Book: China Educational Development Report" indicated that China continues to face educational challenges despite reforms and openness. China's education finance structure is flawed, leading to disparities between schools and the populace, and it continues to struggle with the insufficient distribution of educational resources. TAL functions as a platform and conduit for China to attain educational parity. Between March 1, 2024, and May 31, 2024, New Oriental and TAL reported revenues of 11.367 billion and 4.14 billion US dollars, respectively. This signifies a year-on-year growth of 32.2% and 50.55% [2]. Only New Oriental surpasses TAL's position in the industry. TAL is now advancing the "AI + Teachers" initiative. TAL has developed an AI teaching system capable of fulfilling many educational functions to meet the diverse needs of pupils. Let us standardize learning universally. TAL Public Welfare aids the Daliang Mountain School in establishing an online teaching system, facilitating Mandarin language acquisition for Daliang's students through digital courses. Throughout the epidemic, TAL supported 31 educational districts and approximately 460,000 students in completing their training and utilizing the online teaching system [3].

The use of digital online learning has become a popular tool for learning in China today. There are numerous online courses available, and these learning materials and platforms have become the primary means for people to acquire knowledge. Previously, Chinese students relied solely on their teacher's teaching ability to acquire knowledge. However, today's students have access to a wide



variety of online courses, allowing them to take renowned teachers' courses from the comfort of their own homes.

The Xi'an Tianhe Scholarship Charity Foundation published a news item in 2024 under the title "Corporate Donate to School: A Positive Behavior to Perform Social Responsibility; Effective Promotion, Education Equity, and Educational Development." It suggests that engaging in social responsibility can enhance a company's image, increase consumer favorability toward the company, support the education industry, improve the allocation of education resources, reserve skilled personnel for the company, and ultimately benefit both the school and the company.

Therefore, this article focuses on analyzing the removal of social responsibility in education equity, conducting research on how to achieve social and corporate success through perfect education, and promoting education equity.

To address the aforementioned problem, this article employs the case analysis method, focusing on TAL as the research object. The article delves into the specific social responsibility of the "suspend classes but not stop study" project during an epidemic, and explores the strategy of establishing a positive social image after the plan's implementation. Then, using relational case analysis, it can understand how TAL achieves both social and corporate win-win situations. Lastly, explore the potential for optimization and how achieving perfect education leads to long-term social and corporate benefits.

## **2. Case Description**

Bangxin Zhang, the founder of TAL, established the organization in 2003 with a focus on technology education, combining AI and education to create an innovative and open online teaching system. The primary goal of TAL's services is to provide global instruction beyond the classroom and to ensure high-quality education. In 2019, TAL secured its position as the twelfth brand on the China Brand List [4].

In 2020, following the outbreak of the epidemic, the entire country experienced disruptions in the education system. TAL stands for the Technology Education Corporation. TAL established a 100-million-yuan fund to combat the epidemic, donating 20 million to Wuhan City's epidemic prevention fund and using the remaining 80 million for education. This fund enables students nationwide to "suspend classes without stopping their studies" [3]. TAL assisted a total of 595 schools in implementing an online teaching system, and it also assisted in enrolling 460000 students in online classes [3]. Simultaneously, TAL offered free live classes to cater to the varying needs of students from different areas. The "suspend classes but not stop studying" project successfully achieved the goal of suspending classes without interrupting learning, compensating for the loss of classes, and ensuring educational equity for all students. In 2020, TAL signed a cooperation agreement with UNESCO to create an online studying system that combines AI with the internet [5].

## **3. Analysis on Problem**

### **3.1. The Impact of Creating Social Value by Enterprises of Promoting Educational Equity**

TAL's social responsibility initiatives help develop a strong corporate social image and promote advancements in educational equity. During the pandemic, TAL introduced the "stop classes without suspension of learning" policy. This plan helped public schools by providing platform and teacher training support. It also supplied educational and training institutions with a free online teaching system powered by a live streaming cloud. This technology not only provided online classes to 595 schools but also benefited almost 460,000 students from 31 provinces, municipalities, and autonomous areas around the country [3]. The TAL Education Group founded the "TAL Public Welfare Foundation," which generously provided monies to communities devastated by the disease. During the outbreak, TAL Education's humanitarian initiatives alleviated the challenge of online

classroom learning for 60 million individuals daily across the country [3]. TAL Education stepped forward at the critical moment of the epidemic, distributing 100 million yuan to the TAL Education Foundation. Of this amount, 20 million yuan went towards Wuhan epidemic relief, while the remaining 80 million yuan went towards education special funds. These funds assisted children in Hubei province and other epidemic areas across the country in "suspending classes but not stopping learning" as much as possible [3]. This is an example of CSR, and it effectively improves the company's social image in people's perceptions [3].

Wang et al. demonstrated in their research on the nonlinear relationship between CSR and customer loyalty that if a company invests more effort and support in social responsibility in its management, such as donating funds in natural disasters, helping impoverished people, establishing foundations, and investing in publicity to let customers understand the company's social responsibility behavior, it will have a better evaluation of it [6]. Previous research on corporate reputations has found that a company's reputation has a good impact on productivity because it establishes trust, dependability, and recognition in its development and interactions with all stakeholders [7, 8]. McWilliams et al. conducted a study on CSR, revealing the company's excellent image among stakeholders and its strong sense of social responsibility, which can serve as a strategic and investment tool [9].

### **3.2. Public Welfare Activities Effectively Enhance Brand Loyalty and Enterprise Development**

TAL Education has launched a free education program for children nationwide under the "TAL Education Group" brand, providing a large number of free synchronous courses for primary and secondary school students during the synchronous time from Monday to Friday, as well as covering all subject courses from the first grade of primary school to the third grade of high school, with up to 60 million people learning online every day [3]. TAL Education's billion-yuan pandemic public welfare fund is a successful endeavor to cultivate a positive reputation through public charity. To avoid losing offline consumers, TAL immediately converted to online classes while keeping the original class teacher and schedule [3]. Simultaneously, TAL developed public welfare courses that conform to the national class schedule, catering to the increased learning needs of the market and addressing the issue of 60 million students facing difficulties in class and studying [3]. During the epidemic, a large number of students registered in online programs, making it impossible to ensure both course teaching quality and student learning attitudes. As a result, there is a greater demand for a comprehensive curriculum that incorporates tutoring services to support children's learning at any time and in any location, as well as to alleviate parental concern. CSR improves consumer loyalty and corporate image [10]. This move, which delivers high-quality online courses for children across the country during the peak of the pandemic, has increased the brand's market visibility and recognition.

Academic research also proved the importance of CSR. Chen Xiaofeng verified the relationship between CSR and customer loyalty; he used brand trust as a mediating variable and found empirical evidence that CSR has a positive promoting effect on both customer loyalty and brand trust, and brand trust serves as an intermediary between CSR and customer loyalty [11].

### **3.3. CSR Behavior Enhances Competitiveness and Attraction of High-Quality Talents**

CSR behavior has a positive effect on attracting high-quality talents. The public welfare project of "suspending classes but not stopping learning" in TAL belongs to social responsibility behavior, which helps recruit high-quality employees. According to the study, enterprises that actively participate in public welfare activities, focus on building a responsible and mission-oriented corporate image, and demonstrate good performance in society will be more competitive in the talent market, thereby attracting high-quality workers [12]. High-quality talents with a sense of social responsibility are increasingly focusing on CSR performance, particularly in enterprises that have made long-term investments in public welfare.

Based on the previous study, social responsibility has become an increasingly important criterion for people with excellent talents to choose companies, and there is a positive correlation between a company's social responsibility behavior and the attractiveness of job seekers [12]. Enterprises can attract potential job seekers through their own social responsibility performances so that they increase their competitive advantages [13].

## **4. Suggestions**

### **4.1. Utilize Company Own Advantages to Explore New Business Tracks.**

Nowadays, the government has fully popularized nine-year compulsory education, ensuring that every child has access to it. In the campaign for poverty alleviation, the government has striven to assist impoverished areas by investing in education and helping local children receive cultural education. In higher education, the country implements a policy of advanced recruitment student plans. However, in 2021, the country implemented the "double reduction policy," which negatively impacted TAL and caused a downturn in the education industry [14]. In the future, TAL can adapt to the evolving trends of the era and leverage its unique advantages to expand its business through live broadcasting on the Internet.

Businesses from various industries, including New Oriental in the education sector, have achieved notable success in live streaming sales. For instance, as part of the "double reduction" policy, New Oriental made a decisive donation of 80000 sets of desks and chairs to rural primary schools, demonstrating a commitment to CSR and enhancing the enterprise's reputation and value [15]. Additionally, this initiative prompted some staff members to introduce a profitable live streaming sales model. As of now, the "Oriental Selection" live streaming room has gained 29.59 million fans and a total of 220 million likes for its videos. Utilizing its excellent teacher culture resources has become an increasingly important criterion for exceptional talents when choosing companies. There is a positive correlation between a company's social responsibility behavior and the attractiveness of job seekers [12]. Enterprises can attract potential job seekers through their own social responsibility performances so that they increase their competitive advantages [13].

### **4.2. Carry out Public Welfare Projects to Enhance Market Awareness**

TAL pioneered the "dual teacher" education concept in 2018, offering students customized tutoring from multiple teachers by combining lectures from major academics with after-school tutoring. The "public welfare + Internet" enterprise has transitioned into the 3.0 era, but it still prioritizes students' offline material needs, underutilizing network resources for support. As a result, TAL Education can increase its market awareness by adopting more public welfare initiatives that promote educational growth.

TAL Education has now established a pattern of employing technology-assisted education to promote the expansion of public welfare activities. For example, in 2018, TAL helped children in the Daliang area learn Standard Chinese using "artificial intelligence teachers" and an online classroom. This program provides youngsters in poor communities with access to Mandarin teachers. This initiative not only accelerated the evolution of standard Chinese, but it also effectively addressed the issue of a teacher shortage in the local area, offering strong talent support to improve educational quality. In the future, these experiences will provide outstanding and successful real-world instances of TAL, facilitating parental, peer, and societal acknowledgment and support. According to research, enterprises can not only convey the concept of public welfare, practice CSR, and amplify positive social effects; they can also establish and enhance market awareness and reduce distance with the audience by participating in public welfare projects, resulting in a win-win for both enterprises and society [16].

### **4.3. Improve The Recruitment and Absorption of High-Quality Talents through The Hundred Schools Alliance**

Despite the fact that a large number of fresh graduates enter the market each year, competition among firms is severe. To attract more excellent people, state-owned firms must develop their brand employer structures [17]. Through the Hundred Schools Alliance, TAL may broaden the brand-employer effect and collaborate on the development of exceptional job candidates. New Oriental has established partnerships with over 90 colleges to foster student growth and innovate education, which has resulted in nearly 10,000 career opportunities for students. TAL, in contrast to New Oriental, anticipates hiring 347 individuals during the autumn campus recruitment process in 2024. Campus recruitment is a crucial strategy for businesses seeking to hire exceptional employees. Enterprises should not only demonstrate honesty and care in campus recruitment but also construct appropriate interview methods to guide graduates' career paths [18]. Simultaneously, firms need to establish precise and scientific analysis methodologies for accurate recruitment and department development to draw in more exceptional staff [18]. By improving campus recruitment, TAL can attract more unique individuals and increase the competitiveness of its businesses.

## **5. Summary**

This study has explored the role of CSR in promoting educational equity, using TAL Education Group as a case study. The analysis highlights how TAL's CSR efforts, particularly during the pandemic through its "suspend classes but not stop study" initiative, not only contributed to societal welfare but also strengthened its corporate image and brand loyalty. TAL's innovative use of technology, including AI-powered education platforms, has demonstrated the potential for private enterprises to make significant strides toward education equity. Through these initiatives, TAL was able to position itself as a leader in online education, benefiting both students and the company itself.

The paper's contributions lie in providing a deeper understanding of how CSR initiatives can enhance both social and corporate value in the education sector. By illustrating TAL's strategic initiatives, it highlights the potential for CSR to serve as a dual-purpose tool for fostering social good and strengthening brand competitiveness. Additionally, this study offers insights into how educational companies can align their business objectives with social responsibility to achieve long-term success.

However, this research has several limitations. Firstly, it focuses primarily on TAL, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other educational or non-educational sectors. Secondly, while the paper examines the positive impacts of CSR, it does not delve into potential drawbacks or challenges associated with its implementation. Furthermore, the case analysis is primarily qualitative, leaving room for more empirical, quantitative studies to explore the impact of CSR on financial performance or other corporate metrics in a more measurable way.

For future research, it would be beneficial to expand the scope by comparing TAL's CSR initiatives with those of other global education technology companies, especially in regions beyond China. Furthermore, a longitudinal study that tracks the long-term effects of TAL's CSR activities on brand loyalty and market growth could provide richer insights. Additionally, exploring the role of public policy in shaping CSR practices in the education sector would deepen the understanding of how governments and corporations can collaborate to improve educational equity. Finally, as digital education continues to evolve, future studies could investigate how emerging technologies like AI and machine learning further influence CSR practices in education.

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