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CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN BUSINESS: A CASE STUDY ON GRAMEEN PHONE LIMITED BANGLADESH

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ABSTRACT

Any corporation's business goal is to provide value and incentive to its stakeholders. Therefore, profit-oriented corporations or organizations are not a charitable organization although sometimes it is in their direct interest to support charitable activities. Furthermore, sometimes business organizations carry out certain activities that government should undertake, although they are not government agencies. It is beneficial for the corporations to carry out such socially responsible activities and this performance of business activities is getting more importance and interest. It is strikingly obvious that a business operates within a complex web of social responsible owing to the pressures like changing expectations of stakeholders, restructuring of international business rules, continuous pressure to improve the quality of products and services, ecological imbalances due to business operations, etc. So, the business must have right directions for talking care of the society in which it operate. This study mainly focuses on the involvement of mobile telecommunication companies in corporate social responsible activities. Moreover it is vital to highlight the several unique features of this industry, such as stiff competition between the companies for a strong customer base, various new issues that arise from customer services and satisfaction.

KEYWORDS

Discretionary activities, Motivating factors, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Stakeholders, GrameenPhone (GP).

1. INTRODUCTION AND CONCEPT OF CSR

 Social responsibility involves improving the well being of society. Besides obeying the law and meeting the normal and responsible expectations of the public, socially responsible organizations and individuals lead the way in setting standards of business and community performance. Social responsibility is voluntary; it is about going above and beyond what is called for by the law (legal responsibility). It involves an idea that it is better to be proactive toward a problem rather than reactive to a problem. It means eliminating corrupt, irresponsible or unethical behavior that might bring harm to the community, its people, or the environment before the behavior happens. Although social work in some areas of Bangladesh is gradually becoming recognized as a concept or an organized program but it will fill by the masses as an act of "god will" or Charity inspired either by a sense of religious duty or simple piety.

In Bangladesh, Non-government organizations (NGO) used to provide social activities in few areas such as in the field of health, education etc. Later NGO's started contribute to the victim of various worse incidents. Many business organizations were inspired by these NGO's. They frequently started social work. They frequently started only the well-known business organizations participated in social well-being gradually other. Medium and small business organizations started social activities. At first they used to provide social activities only to their customer by maintain quality of their products and services. Day-by-day business organizations engaged themselves in social activities to environment, employees and to their investor. Now became part of their business (Taher M and Rahman A, 1993).

In Bangladesh, a rapidly developing country, the business environment is typically characterized by powerful business enterprises, a legal environment aimed at ethical behaviors on the part of business, and societal expectations that businesses should be more ethical and socially responsible. Along with that, in developing countries the organizations need to be more competitive, therefore, issues of customer service and satisfaction is of great importance. Thus in decision making processes, companies try to avoid actions that may breach any regulation or negatively impact their reputation in order to avoid consumer dissatisfaction.

The business of the twenty first century-whatever its size- is going to be part of a global business community, affecting and being affected by social change, events and pressures from around the world. Whether the business entity large or small, its linkages to customers, suppliers, employees and communities around the world are likely to be more numerous, divers and important to its success. This is why the relationship between business, government, and society is significantly important to understand both as a citizen and a manager. Such a relationship becomes more and more complex as the whole world is now moving towards system where most nations will play to the 'same rules', for the time being those of global capitalism.

CSR covers the relationship between corporation (or other large organization) and this societies with which they interact. CSR also includes the responsibilities that are inherent on both sides of these relationships. CSR defines society in its widest sense and on many levels, to include all stakeholders and constituent groups that maintain an ongoing interest in the organization's operations (William B. Werther and JR. David Chandler). Moreover, business organizations have some obligations to the society, as they created some of the problems in their revenue generating races, and of course, these problems need to be addressed properly. So, corporate executives, employees, shareholders, consumers and other publics interested about business operations, today expect organizations to be engaged in some social issues like, reasonable price and quality living of consumer and employee, fair wage, employee safety, fair advertisement, proper fund

management, etc. Above all, the people of business enterprises have to be convinced that the arguments placed in favor of CSR practices are exaggerated. Rather, companies are aware that they can contribute to sustainable development by managing their operations in such a way as to enhance economic growth, increase competitiveness and ensuring at the same time environmental protection and promoting social rights. Thus CSR is a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns on their business activities (Julie, 2002). Social responsibility of business can be defined by the views and thoughts expressed by authors, researchers and observers in the respective context. Such expressions are mentioned below:

CSR is defined as categories of economic, legal, ethical and discretionary activities of a business entity as adapted to contribute to the values and expectations of society and it is also the continuing commitment by any business organization whereby they emphasize the ethical elements in their management and overall organizational structure (Richardson, 1999). Social responsibility refers to an organization's obligation to maximize its positive impact and minimize its negative impact on society (Pride Ferrell). Social responsibility is an ethical or ideological theory that an entity whether it is a government, corporation, organization or individual has a responsibility to society. This responsibility can be 'negative' in that it is a responsibility to refrain from acting (resistance stance) or it can be 'positive' meaning there is a responsibility to act (proactive stance) (Wikipedia). Social responsibility is the obligation of managers to choose and act in ways that benefit both the interests of the organization and those of society as a whole (John Naylor). Social responsibility means that a private corporation has responsibility to society that go beyond the production of goods and services at a profit –which a corporation has a broader constituency to serve than stockholders alone (Arif-1990)

In recent years the business strategy field has experienced the renaissance of corporate social responsibility (CSR) as a major topic of interest. The concept has not surfaced for the first time. CSR had already known considerable interest in the 1960s and 70s, spawning a broad range of scholarly contributions (Cheit, 1964; Heald, 1970; Ackermann & Bauer, 1976; Carroll, 1979), and a veritable industry of social auditors and consultants. However, the topic all but vanished from most managers' minds in the 1980s (Dierkes & Antal, 1986; Vogel, 1986).

Moreover, the concept of CSR, calls for a lengthy discussion due to its varied history. In the past, there have been traces of evidence in the business community that showed their concern for society in general. Although there are many definitions of CSR available, we center our attention on more recent concepts of CSR. CSR behavior can be defined as discretionary actions undertaken by companies that are intended to advance their social issues (Richardson, Welker and Hutchinson, 1999). CSR can be defined as regards to all aspects of business behavior so that the impacts of these activities are incorporated in every corporate agenda (Orgrizek, 2001)

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study mainly focused on the analysis of CSR activities and performances of the Grameenphone Limited and the extent of their involvement in CSR activities. In light of main objective, the specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- !) To determine the concentration and areas of CSR activities.
- !!) To identify the factors that influence telecommunication companies' involvement in CSR activities.

3. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

To cater the need of the objectives of the study, data were collected and used from the secondary sources of the sample company. An extensive desk work was conducted to get a clear idea about the concept of CSR of business and reviews published material from different sources to explain the relevant thought on the issue.

Furthermore, it confer to and look for advice from few academicians, qualified chartered accountants and cost and management accountants and experienced person in the relevant field in order to gain a logical and empirical basis of interpretation of corporate social responsibility, that comply with the prime objective. The data and information thus collected, analyzed, arranged and presented in logical format to make the study informative, comprehensive and reader- friendly covering all areas of corporate social responsibility activities of GrameenPhone Limited.

4. DESIGN OF THE STUDY

4.1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the competitive economy, a business has to be responsible sufficiently to her stakeholders to make profitable business growth. It is a reason why business firms integrate activities into social and economic objectives. At the same time people within and outside the organizations questioned about the type of engagement of businesses into society's interests protecting. The same argument is given by few leading management thinkers of today's practice. Some of them argued that profit should be the first and foremost motive of continuing a business. They raised question of justification and expertise of business managers to solve social problems. In such a view to say against social responsibility exercise, it is mentioned that engagement to social problems may hinder the prime responsibility in most of the cases (Arif, 1990). Actually investor and consumer do not want to take the share of such costs incurred in this case. Excepting cost consideration, business executives may lack the perceptions and skills to work effectively with social issues (Hoque, 1985). Although the debate has been continuing on the issue, organizations spend millions of dollar to take care of the stakeholders' interest.

However, in a very competitive global market, mobile telecommunication companies must strive to portray a picture of themselves as highly socially responsible companies. Active involvement in socially beneficial programs provides extra advantages to the company. This study examines the concentration of corporate social responsible performances and activities practices by GrameenPhone Limited in Bangladesh. Furthermore, this study also tests the motives and the most influencing factors in their concentration of involvement in CSR. On the basis of the agency theory assumptions, the primary motivating factors is the belief that CSR can increase long term profitability and sustainability of the company as well as enhance the reputation of the organization.

GrameenPhone Ltd. show satisfactory level of involvement in environmental concerns, welfare or charity, community involvement, product and services improvement, and natural disasters awareness programs. Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) as the regulatory body has determined that the mobile telecommunication companies will actively be involved in CSR as the customer- oriented factors in their business operation is of utmost importance. Overall, it can be concluded that the GrameenPhone Ltd. has high initiative in CSR activities with several constructive motives. CSR actually portrays the image of the firm itself. It shows what the company has done to fulfill its corporate duty to ensure the firm is not only good in providing the service but also plays its roles by contributing something to the community (Tilt, 1994). In order to have a good relationship with the community, the firm should do something beneficial for the community. Within the company itself, there is also a platform for social contribution especially to the employees. Another industry feature is the stiff competition amongst each to attract as many customers as possible. As the customer is their main target, welfare of the customer is of great importance. Thus, all the players in the industry compete on gaining strong customer basis. They work very hard to attract as many customers by adapting a comprehensive marketing strategy, offering valuable packages or schemes as well as quality service. As any other service oriented provider, all players need to maintain a high customer satisfaction level in order to ensure their survival in the industry (Dennies, 1998). All these activities actually help the companies to enhance their corporate image and at the same time fulfill their corporate social responsibility. Thus considering all these factors, we intend to determine the comprehensiveness of Grameenphone Ltd. involvement in CSR activities.

4.2. WHY CSR AND HOW IT IS RELATE TO THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT?

CSR is important because it influences all aspects of a company's operations. Increasingly, consumers want to buy products from companies they trust, suppliers want to form business partnerships with companies they can rely respect large investment funds want to support firms that they see as socially responsible; and nonprofits and NGOs want to work together with companies setting practical solutions to common goals. Satisfying each of these stakeholder groups (and other) allows companies to maximize their commitment to their owners (their ultimate stakeholders), who benefit most when all of these groups needs are being met. Relationship of CSR activities and responsibility in the business environment can be demonstrated into four basic categories, such as:

Economic responsibilities: Economic responsibilities are to produce goods and services that society wants at a price that perpetuates the business and satisfies its obligations to investors. **Legal responsibilities:** Legal responsibilities are, at the very least, to obey local, state, federal and relevant international laws. **Ethical**

responsibilities: Ethical responsibilities include meeting other societal expectations, not written law. **Voluntary responsibilities:** Voluntary responsibilities are additional behaviors and activities that society finds desirable and that the values of the business dictate.

FIGURE-1: THE HIERARCHY OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



Source: Bateman and Snell, Management 4th edition

Although criteria and standards for determining these responsibilities vary among organizations and countries, some efforts have been made to establish sets of global or universal ethical principles. For example, it is widely agreed that all people are normally obligated to adhere to core principles such as avoid harm to others, respect the autonomy of others, avoid lying and honor agreements.

4.3. MOTIVATING FACTORS OF INVOLVEMENT IN CSR

Based on the literatures definition of CSR, CSR behaviors are not constant over time or space, social expectations and pressure for specific types of CSR have varied over time and are contingent on the nature if the company. A study by Windsor, 2001 showed that social responsibility is achieved when the corporation conforms to the prevailing norms and expectations of social performance in a given society.

Since CSR behaviors are charitable and discretionary, the likelihood that a specific company will engage in CSR will also depend on the characteristics of the business and management. A company may decide to take a proactive attitude on an ethical issue in the absence of specific pressures for that company to act, more specifically it is voluntary. On the other hand, it is possible for businesses with publicly known CSR related problems to take no action with regard to these problems.

CSR is also influenced by the ethics of the firm or firm or organizations. Ethical motivation can guide the business or organization to do the right thing without any external pressure or governmental constrain. Joyner, Payne & Raiborn, 2002, contended that people believe businesses are amoral, when in fact they generally embrace the values of ethics in doing business. They cited several factors that serve to legitimize their position and one of the factors is society, which expects moral behavior of the business when it cries out against immoral labor practices or environmental policies.

Business leaders are starting to acknowledge some of the market benefits and competitive advantages for companies who put into place a comprehensive CSR policy (Ogrizek, 2001). This means that a business with a strong stance in corporate responsibility will attract top talent reputation. However, most of the respondents in a study by Zabid and Saadiatul, 2002, did not agree that business leaders who have too much social power should not engage in social activities that might increase their social power. It shows that the political power that they possess might have a direct relationship with the companies' social agendas.

Profitability or financial performance also has an influence on CSR. A study by Cochran & Wood, 1984, found that within industry groups, the financial variable that most strongly correlated with CSR is asset age and that omission of these variable results in a spurious correlated with CSR and financial performance. In other words, firm with older assets have lower CSR ratings.

In the context of CSR expenses and profit and profitability performance in Bangladeshi business organizations it may be mentioned that Income- tax Ordinance, 1984 provides some exemption i,e, tax credit under Section 44(1), part A of the Sixth Schedule and Section 44(4) part B of the Sixth Schedule of certain Non-

assessable and Tax-credit income is found related with CSR performance, and ten percent (10%) tax rebate is applicable on those CSR expenses subject to the specific conditions; CSR expenses should not exceed twenty percent (20%) of total income or amount not more than eight (8) core, lower one is eligible for tax rebate. Thus it is seen that government motivates corporate organizations to make their concentration on CSR activities with providing certain incentives.

A recent longitudinal Harvard University study found that, "stakeholder-balances" companies showed four times the growth rate and eight times the employment growth when compared to companies that are shareholder-only focused (BSR, 2001). Similarly, a study by the University of Southwestern Louisiana entitled "The Effect of Published Reports of Unethical Conduct on Stock Prices" showed that publicity about unethical corporate behavior lowers stock prices for a minimum of six months (BSR, 2001).

Furthermore, companies perceived to have strong CSR commitments often find it easier to recruit employees, particularly in tight labor market. Retention levels may be higher, too, resulting in a reduction in turnover and associated recruitment and training costs. Tight labor markets- as well as the trend toward multiple jobs for shorter periods of time- are challenging companies to develop ways to generate a return on the considerable resources invested in recruiting, hiring, and training talent.

4.4. TELECOM INDUSTRY IN BANGLADESH: AN OVERVIEW

In this era of globalization, communication has become the most significant factor. For this, telecom industry is playing the major role to change the lives of the people and their business. In a densely populated country like Bangladesh, telecommunication can play a vital role to boost the economy and social level of people. This sector is poised for rapid growth in the coming years. Moreover, the efficiency of other businesses has already increased because mobile phone has become easily available in these days due to the government's decision of deregulating the telecommunications sector, which had been a state monopoly until the late 1980s. Privatization of the telecommunication sector began in 1989, when Sheba and BRTA were awarded 25-year licenses to install and operate fixed-wire lines and wireless services in rural areas. The same year, Pacific Telecom Bangladesh got the Government's permission to launch the country's first cellular phone and paging service sold under brand name Citycell in collaboration with a Hong Kong based company. The company targeted only the higher class of the society. During that time price of mobile was above Tk 50,000/. Naturally, the growth of the industry was very slow. Citycell had a virtual monopoly until 1996. Therefore, the government decided to bring more companies in the market and break the monopoly. After a careful evaluation, Bangladesh government decided to provide three licenses to Grameenphone, TMIB (AKTEL)(today's ROBI), and Sheba Telecom (today's Banglalink). Citycell is using the CDMA (Code Division Multiple Access) technology. Grameenphone, AKTEL, and Banglalink are using GSM technology. GSM is the most popular mobile telecommunication technology in the world. About 60% of the cell phone users of the world use GSM technology. These three new companies entered the market, not only helped to cut back the over-dependence on BTB's fixed-line system, but also made mobile phones cheaper and easier to get. A definite development has been observed in the business market with comparatively high expectations. Customer maturity and anticipation regarding technology has increased over time. Rumors regarding new entrants have groomed expectations in the market. Consequently, people are expecting cheaper handsets with lowered airtime. However, the recent entrances of private fixed land phone companies have increased the concern of the cell phone companies. New companies like Teletalk, RanksTel, OneTel, Bay Phone and Bijoy Phone have kicked off their operations in different districts in Southeast, Northeast and Northwest regions of Bangladesh. In near future, this new segment might be a creeping threat for the existing players inside the industry. The telecom industry in Bangladesh is now at its growth stage with demand increasing at 20% every year. It will be another 5-7 years before the industry reaches the maturity stage. As we have shown in the following graph, it is apparent that the telecommunication industry in Bangladesh is in the growth phase of the market as a whole. The statement is justified after analyzing the characteristics of the product life cycle, marketing objective & strategies the companies are setting up to. The sales in the mobile industry are rapidly increasing. The cost is average per customer. Profits are marginally increasing. Customers are more or less early adopters. They are aware of the services that have been offered to them more precisely. The competitors are growing in number. The common marketing objective of all the companies is to maximize their market share. On the market strategies segment the product strategy is on the offer product extensions and on service orientation. More and more offers of value added service and added features are included in the package. The pricing strategy is to penetrate the market. Therefore, they are all more or less following the penetration pricing strategy. In distribution strategy, the industry is the building on intensive distribution. More and more emphasis is given on gaining the market. So distributing the product to the far corners of the country has become a priority. In case advertising & promotional strategy the companies are all in aggressive advertising policy. Using all the possible media uses to increase the market share & reaching potential customers in mass market. Lastly in sales promotion the companies are on a rampage. They are offering enormous amount of services with the same package & low cost rate with different events all round the year.

4.5. SAMPLE ENTERPRISE AT A GLANCE; GRAMEENPHONE- THE MARKET LEADER

In the late 1990s Norway's incumbent telecommunications company, Telenor, was facing saturation in its home market and needed a strategy of expansion that would open up new opportunities. It entered into a joint venture with the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh to provide mobile telephony to one of the world's least developed countries. The Grameen Bank, founded in 1976 by Professor Dr. Muhammad Yunus, for which he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize 2006, provided microfinance to millions of poor in most of the villages in Bangladesh, and had set up a number of other enterprises to create economic opportunities for the poor. The joint venture between Telenor and the Grameen Bank led to the formation of two separate organizations. GrameenPhone, the commercial company was operated by experienced Telenor managers and its strategic objective was to maximize financial returns. Grameen Telecom was set up as the administrative interface to the existing Grameen Bank BOP model. Its strategic objective was quite different – to maximize the numbers of jobs created for the rural poor and it had a very different organizational culture and management structure. When it started out in 1997, GrameenPhone was one of four companies to receive a license to operate a mobile network in Bangladesh. It became profitable in 2000, and had more than two million customers in late 2004, and 6 million in February of 2006. GrameenPhone is now one of the largest private companies in Bangladesh and the second largest tax-payer reflecting significant profit levels. In 2006 it had a market share of over 60 percent in a country of 150 million people, which signifies the potential for further growth. By 2006, Grameen Telecom had created more than 250,000 jobs for micro-entrepreneurs, or better known as "Village Phone Ladies." These are poor rural women who, despite being illiterate, quickly learned how to operate a mobile phone and to generate income from these phones. Grameen Telecom is financially self-sustainable and provides more than 10 percent of the revenues of GrameenPhone. It is a joint venture enterprise between Telenor (55.8%), the largest telecommunications service provider in Norway with mobile phone operations in 12 other countries, and Grameen Telecom Corporation (34.2%), a non-profit sister concern of the internationally Acclaimed micro-credit pioneer Grameen Bank. The other 10% shares belong to general retail and institutional investors. Over the years, GrameenPhone has always been a pioneer in introducing new products and services in the local market. GP was the first company to introduce GSM technology in Bangladesh when it launched its services in March 1997. The technological know-how and managerial expertise of Telenor has been instrumental in setting up such an international standard mobile phone operation in Bangladesh. Being one of the pioneers in developing the GSM service in Europe, Telenor has also helped to transfer this knowledge to the local employees over the years.

Today nobody needs to introduce the brand 'GrameenPhone' to anyone in Bangladesh. It is one of the most significant brands throughout the whole country with 95% Top of the mind awareness as a telecommunication service provider Brand. GrameenPhone is now the leading telecommunications service provider in the country with more than 20 million customers as of October 2008. Presently, there about 60 million telephone users in the country, of which, a little over one million are fixed-phone users and the rest mobile phone customers and 36% of them are with GrameenPhone for its innovative service offers and best networks being as a market leader in telecommunication industry.

4.6. CONCENTRATED AREAS OF CSR ACTIVITIES

The customers are the mainstream of sales oriented services. The success of such companies largely depends on the satisfaction of the customers. The buyers are happy if the product and the services meet their expectations. If their requirements do not meet the expectations the buyers become discontented, they are delighted when the performance fulfils their requirements. GPs' performances that are influence customer satisfaction most probably all are relates with after sales services, quality of airtime, 24hours helpline in Bangladesh, customer relation centers and its services and special value added services etc.,

However, GP started its journey twelve years ago with have faith in that- "Good development is Good business". Since its inception, GP has been driven to be inspiring and leading by example, when it comes to being involved in the community. GP believes that sustainable development can only be achieved through

long term economic growth. Therefore, as a leading corporate house in Bangladesh, GP intends to deliver the best to their customers, business partners, stakeholders, employees and society at large by being a partner in development. GP addressed CSR as a complimentary combination of ethical and responsible corporate behavior as well as a commitment towards generating greater prosperity in society as a whole by addressing the development needs of the country. GP has adopted a holistic approach to CSR, through this approach GP aims to, on the one hand, involve itself with the larger section of the society and to address diverse segments of the stakeholder demography and on the other hand, remain focused in its social investment to generate impact for the society. More specifically, GPs aims to combine all their CSR activities under these core areas to enhance the economic and social growth of Bangladesh.

4.6.1. HEALTH CARE SERVICES TO UNDERPRIVILEGED COMMUNITY

Helping and caring for the community is an essential component of GPs' CSR, therefore, they endeavor to make a positive contribution to the underprivileged community of Bangladesh by helping in improvement of the health perils in the country as much as possible. Healthcare is still inaccessible for many Bangladeshis. Almost half of the country's population live below the poverty line and cannot even afford basic healthcare. Study show that, only 35% of the rural population use adequate sanitation facilities and 72% have access to clean drinking water. Moreover the people of the flood-prone areas suffer from many water borne diseases. The major problem in this sector is the significant gap between healthcare knowledge and practice and availability of the healthcare services. Therefore, all possible sources, be it public or private, should mobilize their efforts to make healthcare services available to the people who need it most, thus help in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). GP's plan is to engage in programs, especially in the rural areas, that will assist in creating awareness about healthcare and healthcare services and help improve the overall quality of life. Keeping their vision in mind- We are here to help; GP aims to extend their contribution to the development of the healthcare system and works to provide a brighter and healthcare future for the people of Bangladesh.

4.6.2. ACID SURVIVORS' FOUNDATION

GrameenPhone extends its support to the Acid Survivors' Foundation (ASF) in the rehabilitation of acid victims by providing employment opportunities. GP has already taken many individuals who have been supported by the ASF and provided them with employment within the company. These individuals will also be provided with adequate training to help them develop the necessary skills to take on their new responsibilities in the company.

4.6.3. SAFE MOTHERHOOD AND INFANT CARE PROJECT

GrameenPhone has always recognized its social responsibilities, especially towards the less privileged sections of the society, putting special focus on the healthcare needs of the poor of the country. Keeping that in mind, GP has undertaken various long term healthcare initiatives. Earlier this year, GP launch a nationwide primary healthcare initiative called "The GrameenPhone Safe Motherhood and Infant Care Project" with NSDP of USAID, GP also regularly conducts free eye-care camps for the economically disadvantaged in collaboration with Sightsavers International, through which it has provided free-eye care support to over 4000 poor patients.

4.6.4. SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GrameenPhone and Oslo University have taken up solar power project to test the concept of using excess solar power of a mobile base station to provide electricity in the surrounding area. The project intends to test smart mini-grid for a single village or cluster of villages and look at the dynamics of the implementation and operation of these technologies. The project also intended to determine how to successfully implement and socially organize such power mini- grids to facilitate social and economic development in rural areas of Bangladesh, with a particular emphasis on establishing models that are replicable on a very large scale. Furthermore, GP officially launched a Community Solar Power project at Paharpur village under Ajmirigonj upzilla of Hobigonj district. Paharpur, the site of GPs' first solar power base station is a remote village by the river Kusiara is populated mostly by poor farmers and share croppers. The village is not connected to the national electric grid. Under this project, solar power generation capacity to operate the base station has been expended and 2 km radius transmission line has been constructed surrounding the base station. A total of 136 households have been connected to the mini-grid and getting power from 5 pm to 12 am daily.

4.6.5. EMPOWERMENT AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Lack of empowerment and poverty is a chronic and complex problem for Bangladesh. According, to UNDP HDI Report 2006, which measures the average progress of a country in human development, in terms of, life expectancy, adult literacy and enrolment at the primary, secondary and tertiary level, Purchasing Power Parity (PPP), etc., Bangladesh ranks 137th among 177 countries. Moreover, 50% of the total population of Bangladesh lives below the poverty line, defined by less than a dollar a day. Some of the major factors contributing to this situation are inequality in income distribution, lack of access to resources, lack of access to information and inadequate infrastructure. The rural people of Bangladesh especially are deprived of these facilities, which is a major issue to break out from the shackles of poverty prevailing in the country.

Empowerment is a key constituent towards poverty reduction, and it is a key driver for sustainable economic development. Empowerment is a process of enhancing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes, which in turn helps them to secure a better life.

GP acknowledges that development and poverty reduction depend on holistic economic prosperity; therefore, their aims are to increase development opportunities, enhance development outcomes and contribute towards development of the quality of life of the people through their CSR initiatives and innovative services. They would like to facilitate empowerment opportunities to the vulnerable people of Bangladesh, so that it enable them to better influence the course of their lives and live a life of their own choice.

4.6.6. ECO-LOGICAL SUPPORT TO MANAGE CLIMATE CHANGE RESPONSES

GrameenPhone being a socially and environmentally responsible company adopted systematic processes to ensure that, wherever possible, we manage and mitigate the probable negative impact of our business activities on the environment. GPs' Climate Change Program was initiated early 2008 with a vision for reducing carbon emission, being environment friendly and creating a momentum with the community and people.

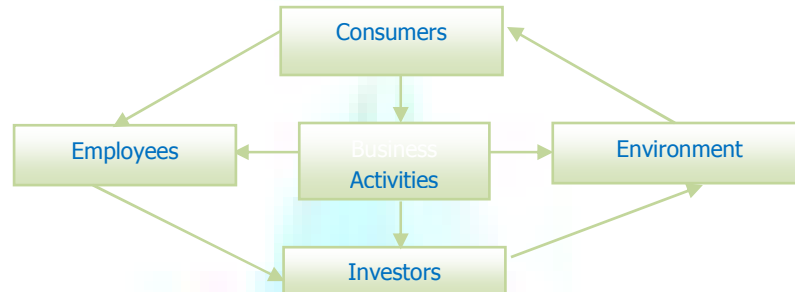
5. A PROPOSAL FOR CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

There are many possible ways that can be done in order to increase the concentration of the companies to play their roles in the practices of corporate social responsibility. Some of the many possible efforts are as follows:

- Analyze the market in a regular basis and find out what customers need and want in the area where subscribers are not satisfied. GrameenPhone as the largest telecom service provider in Bangladesh has to take necessary action to increase customer satisfaction by providing all kinds of after sales services through customer service and call center GPs'.
- Create strong Brand image by different promotional activities which catch peoples' emotion and feelings so that subscribers will be very much loyal.
- Fulfill CSR to create a good image in subscribers mind by organizing different events, donating money, doing something for the poor people, helping government to give education to the poor children.
- Motivate the employees by providing various incentives, such as free health checkup, sound office environmental facilities, on the job training facilities.
- The government may offer various types of incentives to those firms which reduce pollution, participate in disaster management, build infrastructural facilities for the poor and disadvantaged group, providing educational assistance etc.,. These incentives may include tax rebate, best corporate social responsibility award, best environmental responsibility award etc.
- It is the government of the country who play a significant role in promoting more companies voluntarily in the areas of corporate social responsibility practices in Bangladesh. Therefore, the government should come forward with appropriate policy support and create such an atmosphere so that the organizations feel obligation and comfortable in such types of involvement. Furthermore, the government must develop sustainable policies, encouraging and assuring that more profits will be achieved by the participation of the campaign on building good relationship with local and community and the environment. Therefore, CSR practices by the business enterprises will be improved.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Today many firms practice social responsibility in various ways and to varying degrees. Practicing social responsibility costs money. But ignoring social responsibility also has its costs-whether in fines, increased regulation, negative publicity, public disfavor, or loss of customers. Consumers, special interest group and the general public are aware of business's impact on society and expect firms to do more than try to make profits. Most managers today regard social responsibility as a necessary part of doing business. Social responsibility raises many challenging questions for business firms. To whom are we responsible? How far should we go to satisfy our customers and achieve organizational objectives? Will our decisions affect any segments of society that we have not considered? Decision makers in every type and size of firm must address many such questions, which rarely have simple answers. Business activities have an impact on consumers, employees, the environment, and those investing in the firm, socially responsible firms weigh the consequences of their decisions on these different concerns. To understand how firms try to achieve an acceptable balance. Let's look more closely at each of these concerns.

FIGURE-4: SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY CONCERNS OF BUSINESS

Moreover, Modern business is one part of a vast complex of social, governmental and private enterprise activities. Some times businesses have to do social responsibility because their competitors do and business try interacting with society by social activities to ensure their natural survival and success. Bangladesh is a less development country. Here, government can not always lookout at society's minor problem. So the companies which are very successful in their business should involve wish social responsibility. So the regulation of government sector will less stress on those companies. Business firm in our country social responsibility in many areas such as education and training, help to the neglected people, help to women victims, treatment of handicapped, develop the life style of rural people, help to the students, motivate to the people to clear environment etc. Business mainly does their responsibility to the consumer.

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