



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE, ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT

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- Kelkar V. (2009): Towards a New Natural Gas Policy, Economic and Political Weekly, Viewed on February 17, 2011 <http://epw.in/epw/user/viewabstract.jsp>

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: INDIAN EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has been widely regarded as a positive phenomenon helping bridge the gap of social inequality and thus contributing to sustainable development. Corporations around the world are struggling with a new role, which is to meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of the next generations to meet their own needs. Organizations are being called upon to take responsibility for the ways their operations impact societies and the natural environment. They are also being asked to apply sustainability principles to the ways in which they conduct their business. A firm must now focus its attention on both increasing its bottom line and being a good corporate citizen. India's recent economic progress has not only increased pressure on the environment, but also generated social tension by increasing the gap between India's middle class and the poor. Consequently, it has become even more important for corporations to consider their broader impact on society. Firms with CSR engagement may play a central role in stimulating sustainable development in India. The paper tries to find out the answers for: What are the approaches to CSR promotion and implementation? How the CSR as business case versus development in practice? To what extent CSR and corporate are successful in attaining sustainable development? To what extent CSR contribution to sustainable development? What are the CSR's challenges and limitations to achieve sustainable development?

KEYWORDS

Corporate Social Responsibility, Corporations, CSR Practices, Globalization, Sustainable Development.

"Our biggest challenge of this century is to take an idea that seems abstract-sustainable development-and turn it into a reality for the entire world's peoples".

Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary General

INTRODUCTION

In a context of change and globalization, businesses are increasingly asked to pursue their mission paying attention to the needs of the stakeholders whose well-being depends on the way enterprises manage their core activities. Corporations around the world are struggling with a new role, which is to meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of the next generations to meet their own needs. Organizations are being called upon to take responsibility for the ways their operations impact societies and the natural environment. They are also being asked to apply sustainability principles to the ways in which they conduct their business.

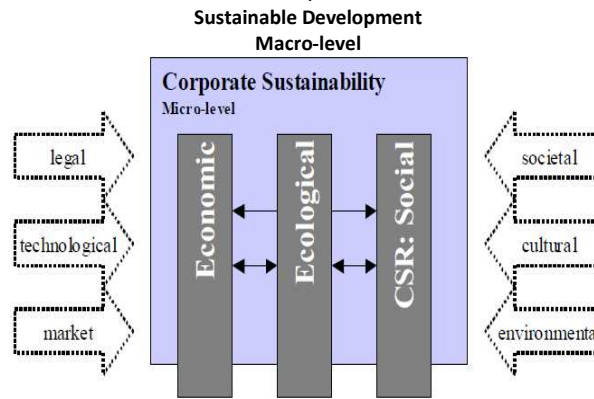
Sustainability refers to an organization's activities, typically considered voluntary, that demonstrate the inclusion of social and environmental concerns in business operations and in interactions with stakeholders. It is no longer acceptable for a corporation to experience economic prosperity in isolation from those agents impacted by its actions. A firm must now focus its attention on both increasing its bottom line and being a good corporate citizen. Keeping abreast of global trends and remaining committed to financial obligations to deliver both private and public benefits have forced organizations to reshape their frameworks, rules, and business models (D'Amato, Alessia et. al.-2009). *Corporate social responsibility* is a form of corporate self-regulation integrated into a business model. CSR policy functions as a built-in, self-regulating mechanism whereby business monitors and ensures its active compliance with the spirit of the law, ethical standards, and international norms. The goal of CSR is to embrace responsibility for the company's actions and encourage a positive impact through its activities on the environment, consumers, employees, communities, stakeholders and all other members of the public sphere. CSR is the deliberate inclusion of public interest into corporate decision-making, and the honouring of a triple bottom line: people, planet, profit. CSR has been widely regarded as a positive phenomenon helping bridge the gap of social inequality and thus contributing to sustainable development (Hediger, Werner-2008). WBCSD defines CSR as "The continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the work force and their families as well as of the local community and society at large".

CSR and sustainable development are essentially contested concepts as their meaning is always part of debate about their application. One of the reasons is because CSR and sustainable development are appraisive, internally complex and openly defined terms. Generally, the conception of CSR involves several matters related to a company's behavior in its social environment beyond the exclusively economic realms with which companies are traditionally associated. Thus, CSR has often been seen as apart from the profit-making activity of the firm, not required by the law and not the result of governmental coercion. Sustainable development has broad appeal and little specificity, but some combination of development and environment as well as equity is found in many attempts to describe it. Sustainable development is commonly perceived as fighting poverty while protecting the environment on a macro-level. Sustainable development when incorporated by the organization is called corporate sustainability and it contains, like sustainable development, all three pillars: economic, ecological and social.

EVOLUTION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY AND CSR

In 1987, the WCED defined SD as an ethical concept and has become the major definition of SD: It contains two key concepts: the concepts of "needs", in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation of the environments ability to meet present and future needs. Thus the goals of economic and social development must be defined in terms of sustainability in all countries developed or developing, market-oriented or centrally planned" (Elkington, 1998). Therefore SD is defined as a model of triple-bottom-line. WBCSD regards CSR as engine for the social dimension which supports companies to fulfil their responsibilities as good citizens and defines CSR as "business' commitment to contribute to sustainable economic development, working with employees, their families, the local community, and society at large to improve their quality of life" (WBCSD, 2006). The Commission of European Communities describes CSR as a "concept, whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns into their business operations and interactions with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis" (Ebner, Daniela et al 2008). The relationship between Sustainable Development, Corporate Sustainability and CSR is shown in figure-1.

FIGURE - 1: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SD, CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY AND CSR



Source: Ebner, Daniela & Rupert J. Baumgartner (2008) – “The relationship between Sustainable Development and Corporate Social Responsibility”, *Corporate Responsibility Research Conference, CRRC 2008: 7-9 September, Queen's University Belfast. P: 13.*

Fig. 1 shows the framework, SD as defined by Brundtland and the model of the triple-bottom-line as an ethical concept which offers ideas concerning sustainable orientation on a macro-level. The concept of SD on a corporate level is stated as Corporate Sustainability which is based on the three pillars economic, ecological and social issues, therefore, the social dimension is named CSR. The corporate orientation on sustainability is specially affected by external influences due to the specific sustainability orientation on a macro-level:

- Technological: new technologies
- Market: suppliers, competitors, customers, trends
- Societal: NGO's, society
- Cultural: attitudes, behaviour
- Environmental: nature, availability of resources

Not only does society influence the company, the implementation of Corporate Sustainability in companies also has positive effects on society in the long-term.

CSR CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

It is evident that company can contribute to sustainable development via its CSR activities if its CSR values coincide with those of sustainable development. Under the circumstances when company's CSR is directed mainly to short term profit, CSR contribution to sustainable development is questionable. First of all, there always has to be guaranteed a short term win-win scenario from the firm's perspective whereas sustainable development by definition is targeted at a long-term period. Secondly, additional conditions have to be assured in order CSR partnership with a non-business partner to become sustainable. The main difference from short term profit oriented CSR is that companies seek to uncover and pursue long term win-win situations what appear to be win-loss situation in the short term turned into win-win situation in the long term. CSR definition which says that CSR is not directed at short-term profits, CSR is thought to largely contribute to sustainable development. Many factors and influences have led to increasing attention being devoted to the role of companies and CSR. These include:

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: Humankind is using natural resources at a faster rate than they are being replaced. If this continues, future generations will not have the resources they need for their development. In this sense, much of current development is unsustainable-it can't be continued for both practical and moral reasons. CSR is an entry point for understanding sustainable development issues and responding to them in a firm's business strategy.

GLOBALIZATION: With its attendant focus on cross-border trade, multinational enterprises and global supply chains-economic globalization is increasingly raising CSR concerns related to human resource management practices, environmental protection, and health and safety, among other things. CSR can play a vital role in detecting how business impacts labour conditions, local communities and economies, and what steps can be taken to ensure business helps to maintain and build the public good.

GOVERNANCE: Governments and intergovernmental bodies have developed various compacts, declarations, guidelines, principles and other instruments that outline norms for what they consider to be acceptable business conduct. CSR instruments often reflect internationally-agreed goals and laws regarding human rights, the environment and anti-corruption.

CORPORATE SECTOR IMPACT: The sheer size and number of corporations, and their potential to impact political, social and environmental systems relative to governments and civil society, raise questions about influence and accountability. Companies are global ambassadors of change and values.

FINANCE: Consumers and investors are showing increasing interest in supporting responsible business practices and are demanding more information on how companies are addressing risks and opportunities related to social and environmental issues. A sound CSR approach can help build share value, lower the cost of capital, and ensure better responsiveness to markets.

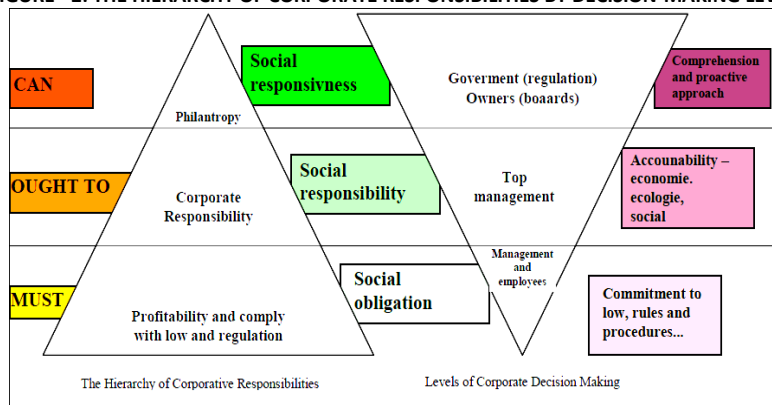
ETHICS: A number of serious and high-profile breaches of corporate ethics resulting in damage to employees, shareholders, communities or the environment-as well as share price-have contributed to elevated public mistrust of corporations. A CSR approach can help improve corporate governance, transparency, accountability and ethical standards.

BUSINESS TOOL: Businesses are recognizing that adopting an effective approach to CSR can reduce the risk of business disruptions, open up new opportunities, drive innovation, enhance brand and company reputation and even improve efficiency.

THE HIERARCHY OF CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITIES

Sustainability requires partnerships for economically feasible, socially fair and ecologically stable development. The priorities of international development cooperation under this paradigm are summarised in the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals: poverty reduction, universal education, gender equality, child and maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS and environmental sustainability (GTZ's Contribution-2010). The 'must-ought to-can' concept can be linked to Sethi's model of corporate social performance, which points out three levels of obligations to stakeholders, i.e. social obligation, social responsibility, and social responsiveness. It is mentioned in figure-2 that the obligation levels are connected with decision-making levels.

FIGURE - 2: THE HIERARCHY OF CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITIES BY DECISION-MAKING LEVELS



Source: Vitezic, Neda (2010) – “A Measurement System of Corporate Social Responsibility in the Pharmaceutical Industry of the Region”, 2010 EABR & ETLC Conference Proceedings Dublin, Ireland, P: 668.

On the first level – social obligations, all the employees, and primarily management, must perform their business activities and tasks by upholding the laws, rules, procedures and other regulations in order to ensure efficacy and profitability of business activities, but also to satisfy the interests of other stakeholders. On the second level – social responsibility surpasses social obligation and is considered to be something that should be included in the company's business policy which is adopted by top management or the board of directors. Responsibility is not only viewed through economic indicators, but also through ecological and social responsibility, which also satisfies the interests of external stakeholders. On the third level is responsiveness, the higher level of society's needs, which means applying and developing a proactive approach in development and adoption of regulations, with an emphasis on the possibility of satisfying social needs through philanthropy. Namely, both the government and the owners should strive to anticipate future social problems and actively, with much responsiveness, participate with all stakeholders in the identification of social needs. This approach does not mean substitution of social obligations and responsibilities with social responsiveness, but rather a holistic approach in the linking of interests and needs of all stakeholders.

THE APPROACHES TO CSR PROMOTION AND IMPLEMENTATION:

As companies they face the challenges of a changing environment in the context of globalisation and in particular the Internal Market, they are increasingly aware that corporate social responsibility can be of direct economic value. Although the prime responsibility of a company is generating profits, companies can at the same time contribute to social and environmental objectives, through integrating corporate social responsibility as a strategic investment into their core business strategy, their management instruments and their operations. CSR should be treated as an investment, not a cost, much like quality management. They can thereby have an inclusive financial, commercial and social approach, leading to a long-term strategy minimizing risks linked to uncertainty. Companies should pursue social responsibility for which there are various approaches. They are as below:

PHILANTHROPY APPROACH: A more common approach of CSR is philanthropy. This includes monetary donations and aid given to local organizations and impoverished communities in developing countries. Some organizations do not like this approach as it does not help build on the skills of the local people, whereas community-based development generally leads to more sustainable development. Many companies use the strategy of benchmarking to compete within their respective industries in CSR policy, implementation, and effectiveness. Benchmarking involves reviewing competitor CSR initiatives, as well as measuring and evaluating the impact that those policies have on society and the environment, and how customers perceive competitor CSR strategy. After a comprehensive study of competitor strategy and an internal policy review performed, a comparison can be drawn and a strategy developed for competition with CSR initiatives.

A HOLISTIC APPROACH: While companies increasingly recognise their social responsibility, many of them have yet to adopt management practices that reflect it. Pioneering companies can help to mainstream socially responsible practice by disseminating best practice.

- *Social responsibility integrated management:* Companies' approaches in dealing with their responsibilities and relationships with their stakeholders vary according to sectoral and cultural differences. At the start companies tend to adopt a mission statement, code of conduct, where they state their purpose, core values, and responsibilities towards their stakeholders. These values then need to be translated into action across the organization, from strategies to day-to-day decisions.
- *Social responsibility reporting and auditing:* Many multinational companies are now issuing social responsibility reports. While environmental, health, and safety reports are common, reports tackling issues such as human rights and child labour are not. Moreover companies' approaches to social reporting are as varied as their approaches to corporate social responsibility.
- *Quality in work:* Employees are major stakeholders of companies. In addition, implementing corporate social responsibility needs commitment from the top management, but also innovative thinking and, thus, new skills and closer involvement of the employees and their representatives in a two-way dialogue that can structure permanent feedback and adjustment.
- *Social and eco-labels:* Consumers care about the most are protecting the health and safety of workers and respecting human rights throughout company operations and the chain of suppliers, safeguarding the environment in general, and the reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases in particular.
- *Socially responsible investment:* In recent years, socially responsible investing (SRI) has experienced a strong surge in popularity among mainstream investors. Socially and environmentally responsible policies provide investors with a good indication of sound internal and external management. They contribute to minimising risks by anticipating and preventing crises that can affect reputation and cause dramatic drops in share prices (Green Paper, 2001).

TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE (TBL) APPROACH: An increasing number of companies are adopting a new way of operationalizing the intangible concepts of 'corporate social responsibility' and 'sustainability'. Triple Bottom Line or TBL focuses on data collection, analysis and decision making using economic, environmental and social performance information. In this concept, the company is judged on the basis of its triple bottom-line: its returns to shareholders, communities and the environment. Under this concept, the company will have to look at not just what it should do with its profits, but how it made its profits in the first place. This implies looking at impacts on all its stakeholders. Companies like Tata group and ITC are at the forefront of adopting the triple bottom-line approach in India.

CLUSTER APPROACH: all the local actors are stimulated to cooperate in order to manage the responsibility of the whole productive system towards the workers in the cluster, the local community, the customers, the environment, etc., being the social responsibility actions of their own organizations only a part of the sustainability management at the territorial level and an instrument to strengthen its potential.

- make local actors identify common CSR
- identify intermediary local actors
- diffuse – among the local actors
- develop – through a participative process
- make at local actors' disposal collective CSR tools

The proposed set of operational steps make quite clear that the “cluster” approach can be applied only in specific social and economic contexts where the relational structure can facilitate the development of co-operative behaviours (Battaglia et al, 2007). The application of a “cluster” approach to CSR can improve the management of social and environmental cumulative impacts caused.

TRIPLE-P APPROACH: CSR is measured on the basis of the configuration of the business organization into three levels, or the *Triple-P approach to CSR*:

- *Principles* of social responsibility;
- *Processes* of social responsiveness;
- *Products (or outcomes)* as they relate to the firm’s societal relationships.

These can then naturally be further divided into the principles, processes and outcomes for each stakeholder group. Corporations focus on creating stakeholder value as measured by profits, but in a socially responsible manner. A company that does poorly on one line, namely profits, but wonderfully on the environment or social component of TBL, is not going to last long in a competitive world. So concentration on defining exactly what is meant by a corporation’s responsibility to its stakeholders, who they are and how to measure progress through a limited number of precise key indicators (Hopkins, Michael –2004).

THE CSR AS BUSINESS CASE VERSUS DEVELOPMENT IN PRACTICE:

The steps below show one way to implement CSR commitments:

- Develop an integrated CSR decision-making structure;
- Prepare and implement a CSR business plan;
- Set measurable targets and identify performance measures;
- Engage employees and others to whom CSR commitments apply;
- Design and conduct CSR training;
- Establish mechanisms for addressing problematic behaviour;
- Create internal and external communications plans; and
- Make commitments public.

TABLE-1: IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

When? (Conceptual phase)	What? (Task delineation)	How? (Checkpoints on the journey)
Plan	1. Conduct a CSR assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assemble a CSR leadership team; • Develop a working definition of CSR; • Identify legal requirements; • Review corporate documents, processes and activities, and internal capacity; and • Identify and engage key stakeholders.
	2. Develop a CSR strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build support with CEO, senior management and employees; • Research what others are doing, and assess the value of recognised CSR instruments; • Prepare a matrix of proposed CSR actions; • Develop ideas for proceeding and the business case for them; and • Decide on direction, approach, boundaries and focus areas.
Do	3. Develop CSR commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do a scan of CSR commitments; • Hold discussions with major stakeholders; • Create a working group to develop the commitments; • Prepare a preliminary draft; and • Consult with affected stakeholders.
	4. Implement CSR commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an integrated CSR decision-making structure; • Prepare and implement a CSR business plan; • Set measurable targets and identify performance measures; • Engage employees and others to whom CSR commitments apply; • Design and conduct CSR training; • Establish mechanisms for addressing problematic behaviour; • Create internal and external communications plans; and • Make commitments public.
Check	5. Assure and report on progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure and assure performance; • Engage stakeholders; and • Report on performance, internally and externally.
Improve	6. Evaluate and improve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate performance; • Identify opportunities for improvement; and • Engage stakeholders.
Cross-check: One cycle completed		Return to plan and start the next cycle.

Source: http://www.iisd.org/pdf/2007/csr_guide.pdf

Regardless of the exact approach taken, it should follow the 'SMART' guidelines:

- Simple;
- Measurable;
- Achievable;
- Reliable; and
- Time-bound.

TABLE – 2: CSR AND PROFITS, LIKELY BENEFITS AND COSTS

Stakeholder group	Benefits	Costs
Directors	More independent non-executive directors	More meetings and briefings
Shareholders	Increased investment from	CSR premium on all company activities
	Ethically based pension funds	such as increased reporting costs, more openness, etc.
Managers	Better HR policies lead to increased motivation	Increased training in ethics
	More awareness of ethical issues from focus group sessions lead to more confidence about employees.	Focus group sessions and reporting
Employees	Better HR policies lead to increased motivation	Inclusion of ethics training
	Good ethical conduct by superiors lead to improved productivity.	More intra-company communications
	Less labour relations disputes, less strikes	More effort on labour relations
	Better working conditions	
	Good company CSR leads to easier recruitment of high flyers and young people	Will need to implement human rights policies
	Reduced costs of recruitment	
Customers	Move to ethical consumption captured by Company	Costs of goods may increase in the short term
	Less disputes	
	Advertising can cite CSR	
	Enhanced reputation	
	Brand quality recognition	
Subcontractors /Suppliers	Better quality inputs	Cost of inputs may increase in short-term
	Less harmful effect on public image	
Community	More willingness to accept new investments	Requires continual interaction with community
	Improved public image	
Government	More confidence in company.	Costs of adhering to new regulations will increase.
	Fewer legal battles, no new	
	Potentially harmful legislation.	
	More favourable trading regime	
	More willingness to accept	
Environment	Expansion or downsizing	
	Less legal battles	Investment in environmental damage control.
	Improved public image	

Source : Hopkins, Michael (2004) – "Corporate social responsibility: an issues paper", Working Paper No. 27, Policy Integration Department, World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, International Labour Office, Geneva. P- 30.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT MATTER: Four key reasons for stakeholder engagement are building social capital; reducing risk; driving innovation; and integrating these elements in corporate strategy.

BUILDING SOCIAL CAPITAL: Social capital refers to the firm's relationship with society, how it is perceived and regarded. In today's business environment, where reputation is key, social capital can be at least as important as access to other forms of capital. Social capital is the foundation on which a firm renews its "licence to operate." It is the basis for employees' willingness to give their best. Social capital means strong, trusting relationships.

REDUCING RISK: Stakeholder engagement can provide an early warning of: the service or product concerns of customers; safety; the human rights and environmental concerns of communities; and the governance concerns of shareholders, among other issues.

DRIVING INNOVATION: Stakeholder engagement can improve information flow, identify business opportunities and generate ideas. The importance of stakeholder engagement is to consider the role that customers, shareholders, employees, suppliers, communities and others can play in the "plan, do, check and improve" aspects of a CSR implementation framework.

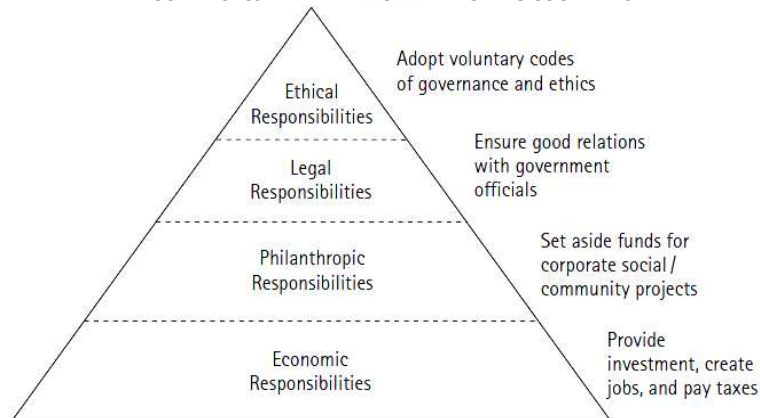
- **PLANNING** - During the planning phase, stakeholders can assist in identifying a firm's environmental, social and economic impacts, and help develop a firm's CSR strategy;
- **DOING** - Shifting from planning to doing, stakeholders play an important role in developing a firm's CSR commitments, as well as implementing those commitments;
- **CHECKING** - At the checking stage, stakeholders are integral to verification and progress;
- **IMPROVING** - the input of stakeholders can be crucial to a firm's evaluation and improvement activities; and

INTEGRATING MANAGEMENT: Finally, as part of the overall approach to CSR, the engagement process should encourage further alignment and coherence of the firm's strategic, financial, R&D, product development, supply chain, marketing and communication departments. In all phases, approaches to engagement should be practical and transparent, tailored to the abilities and needs of the firm and the stakeholders.

CSR PRACTICES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Carroll's four-part pyramid construct can be useful to look at how CSR is manifested in a developing country context. Taking this approach, my contention is that the order of the CSR layers in developing countries—if these are taken as an indicator of the relative emphasis assigned to various responsibilities—differs from Carroll's classic pyramid. Hence, in developing countries, economic responsibilities still get the most emphasis. However, philanthropy is given second highest priority, followed by legal and then ethical responsibilities. This is illustrated in Figure 3.

FIGURE – 3: CSR PYRAMID FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES



Source: Visser, wayne (2007) - "Corporate Social Responsibility in Developing Countries" Chapter-21 in a book on CSR in global context P: 489.

Each element of the figure is discussed in brief:

ECONOMIC RESPONSIBILITIES: It is well known that many developing countries suffer from a shortage of foreign direct investment, as well as from high unemployment and widespread poverty. It is no surprise, therefore, that the economic contribution of companies in developing countries is highly prized, by governments and communities alike. Hence, in developing countries, CSR tends to stress the importance of 'economic multipliers', including the capacity to generate investment and income, produce safe products and services, create jobs, invest in human capital, establish local business linkages, spread international business standards, support technology transfer and build physical and institutional infrastructure. When communities or countries become overly dependent on multinationals for their economic welfare, there is the risk of governments compromising ethical, social, or environmental standards in order to retain their investment.

PHILANTHROPIC RESPONSIBILITIES: Developing countries philanthropy generally gets higher priority as a manifestation of CSR. The socio-economic needs of the developing countries in which companies operate are so great that philanthropy is an expected norm—it is considered the right thing to do by business. Companies realize that they cannot succeed in societies that fail, and philanthropy is seen as the most direct way to improve the prospects of the communities in which their businesses operate.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES: In developing countries, legal responsibilities generally have a lower priority than in developed countries. This is because, in many developing countries, the legal infrastructure is poorly developed, and often lacks independence, resources, and administrative efficiency.

ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES: In developing countries, however, ethics seems to have the least influence on the CSR agenda. This is not to say that developing countries have been untouched by the global trend towards improved governance.

CSR PRACTICES – INDIAN EXPERIENCE

The CSR framework of companies in India has evolved over a period of time. For business conglomerates like Tata, Birla or the Godrej family, their specific approaches and strategies are mainly based and driven by the ethical beliefs of the founding fathers. However, of late, the companies have been influenced by several factors including business areas in which the companies operate the socio-economic environment, and the emerging opportunities. The basic objective of CSR these days is to maximize the company's overall impact on the society and stakeholders. An increasing number of companies are viewing CSR as a comprehensive set of policies, practices and programs that are integrated throughout the business operations, processes that are supported and rewarded by the top management. If integrated in the overall business strategy, CSR could be a remedy for protection against sudden corporate downfall. The following issues and companies are reviewed for their CSR practices.

EMPLOYEE ISSUES

TATA GROUP - has more than 2,45,000 employees. Tata were the pioneers in employee benefits that were later mandated through legislation in India and elsewhere in the world. The eight-hour working day, free medical aid, welfare departments, grievance cells, leave with pay, provident fund, accident compensation, training institutes, maternity benefits, bonus and gratuity were introduced by the group before any legal rules were framed on them. Tata has created cities and towns – Jamshedpur, Mithapur, Babrala and Mathigiri – around industrial facilities. Tata Steel maintains Jamshedpur's public utilities such as the local municipality and takes care of road maintenance, water and electricity supply, streetlights, healthcare and sanitation.

HLL - approximately 9% of the company's resources for community involvement come in the form of employee time. Their time is ranged from their involvement in Ashadaan to the disaster affected Yashodadham village near Bhuj. HLL management trainees spend approximately four weeks on Project Shakti in rural areas with NGOs or Self Help Groups.

INFOSYS - employees are encouraged to report workplace hazards and incidents to the concerned officials and contribute to implementing solutions. Infosys implemented health clubs and health programmes, such as health week, nutrition programmes and ergonomics training. It also implemented safety programs to improve awareness about precautions and measures to improve road and personal safety.

RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COMMUNITY

TATA CHEMICALS - has set up the Tata Chemicals Society for Rural Development (TCSRSD) in 1980 to promote its social objectives for the communities in and around Mithapur and Babrala, where its facilities are located. Some of the initiatives of TCSRSD are: agricultural development, education, women's programmes, animal husbandry, rural energy, training, watershed development, relief work and infrastructure. TCCI, in collaboration with the UNDP (India), created the Tata Index for Sustainable Human Development. This was aimed at directing, measuring and enhancing the community work that group enterprises undertake.

BSNL - the company is committed to provide quality Telecom Services at affordable price to the citizens of the remotest part of India, since it is of utmost importance for achievement of the country's social and economic goals. BSNL, is the only service provider offering rural telephony as part of its social responsibility. BSNL plans to provide broadband to 20,000 villages that are already connected through optical fibre. BSNL with support from government plans to provide broadband to all gram panchayats, secondary and higher secondary schools and public health care centres. BSNL is offering special tariffs for rural subscribers by providing lower rental and higher free calls as compared to urban area subscribers.

BAJAJ AUTO'S philanthropic activities among the rural poor are carried out by a Trust, the Jankidevi Bajaj Gram Vikas Sanstha (JBGVS) established in 1987 by Ramkrishna Bajaj in memory of his mother, Jankidevi Bajaj. This Trust acts as a catalyst to development at the grass root level in 32 villages around its plants in Pune and Aurangabad. The trust initiates sustainable, integrated development through long term projects in rural health, hygiene and sanitation, education and adult literacy, improving agricultural and livestock yield, watershed development and women's empowerment. These projects have a positive impact on the quality of rural living standards.

DABUR has a vision of being a company dedicated to the health and well being of every household, drawing inspiration from its founder Dr. S. K. Burman. In 1993, Dabur India Ltd established Sustainable Development Society (SUNDESH), a registered voluntary organisation, integrating various aspects such as health, literacy, employment, and empowerment. Through this, the company addresses the most deprived and weaker sections of the society including women, children, illiterates, and the unemployed. The Company organises camps, which include general OPDs, antenatal checkup, vaccination for children aged 0-5 years, family welfare, health awareness through meetings, eye screening and eye operation camps.

INFOSYS FOUNDATION, the philanthropic arm of Infosys Technologies Ltd, came into existence on 4 December 1996. Its main objective was to fulfil the social responsibility of the company by supporting and encouraging the underprivileged sections of society. The Foundation has been working on initiatives such as: training destitute woman in tailoring and donation of sewing machines and material to them to improve their livelihood; counselling centres to rehabilitate marginalised devadasis in North Karnataka; relief work conducted after natural disasters; donation of aid equipment to the physically challenged in rural areas of Karnataka; and construction of orphanages in rural areas.

THE ENVIRONMENT

TATA STEEL has laid great emphasis, over the years, on creating a green environment in and around its plants and on utilising the waste generated in the process of manufacturing steel. The company generates roughly 700 kg of various wastes in the process of producing one tonne of crude steel. Of this, 83.16% is utilised either through recycling and reuse in the company's own processes or is sold as raw material to other industries. The rest is sent for land filling.

GODREJ has been a key player in aiding education, environment and the health verticals besides looking after its own employees. The Soonabai Pirojsha Godrej Foundation has been maintaining the western bank of the Thane Creek, the single largest mangrove belt in Mumbai. The Sohrabji Godrej Green Business Centre launched the Green Business Initiative in December 2005, which was aimed at facilitating the development of corporate greenhouse gas inventories and subsequent investments in greenhouse gas mitigation projects.

ITC focuses on the use of renewable energy such as biomass and solar energy. A number of units have installed solar thermal systems mainly for use in canteens and kitchens. It claims it endeavours to be a carbon positive corporation. Its efforts in the field of energy conservation, use of carbon neutral fuels and large scale tree plantations through social and farm forestry have resulted in sequestering 85.6% of the Carbon Dioxide (CO2) emitted by its operations.

INDIAN OIL CORPORATION: has included CSR in its vision and mission statement and has built its corporate strategies around it. Environmental initiatives include: development of cleaner fuels such as diesel with low sulphur content and biodegradable lube formulations; pollution control programme, in which all refineries are provided with facilities to control pollution from different sources; and ecological parks, which are scientifically designed green belts that have been developed at Gujarat Panipat refineries, to serve as a pollution sink and to enhance the aesthetic look of the refinery area. In 1998-99, the Salaya-Mathura Pipeline and the Koyali-Ahmedabad Pipeline became the first oil pipelines in the world to be accredited with ISO-14001 for Environment Management System.

THE STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVE

BP: The Company engages itself in dialogue with a wide variety of groups to create strong and lasting relationships with them. Employees maintain a dialogue with key groups, such as national NGOs, in different ways and make recommendations for the company on the social and environmental impacts.

Hero Honda Motors takes considerable pride in its stakeholder relationships, especially ones developed at the grassroots. The company believes it has managed to bring an economically- and socially-backward region in Dharuhera, Haryana, into the national economic mainstream.

ONGC is playing an important role in strengthening India's corporate world with a tuned sense of moral responsibility towards the community of people where it operates and the country at large. It also aspires to abiding commitment to safety, health and environment to enrich quality of community life and to imbibe high standards of business ethics and organisational values (Article 13 Group -2007).

A number of Indian companies discharge their social responsibilities quite satisfactorily. Table – 3 illustrates socially responsible Indian companies.

TABLE - 3: CSR ACTIVITIES OF SOME INDIAN COMPANIES

S N	CORPORATE	AREA OF ACTIVITY	BENEFICIARY STATE
1.	ITC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary education Livestock development Social forestry Integrated watershed devt. 	UP, Bihar, MP, AP, Karnataka, MP
2.	ACC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revival of traditional arts Preserving culture and heritage Health and medicine Education 	Rajasthan, HP, MP, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, AP
3.	CITI group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women empowerment Rehabilitation Education Health 	AP, TN, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, MP
4.	HLL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rehabilitation Education Water conservation & harvesting Women empowerment 	Gujarat, Maharashtra, UP, Bihar, Jharkhand, WB, Orissa, MP, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra
5.	TISCO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community development Social welfare Agriculture Rural industrialization 	MP, Bihar, UP, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Orissa, WB
6.	SAIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community development Education Medical facilities and health Agriculture, poultry, fisheries 	Maharashtra, AP, MP, Karnataka, Bihar, Jharkhand

Source: <http://www.indiangos.com/corporate/about-csr.htm> and <http://www.itcportal.com/>

CSR'S CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The challenges on the road to developing socially responsible business seem formidable, and include:

LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCEPT OF CSR AND THE BUSINESS CASE FOR CSR: In addition, those that were familiar with the term and its meaning often portrayed CSR as an add-on to business, and not as a tool for supporting and achieving the strategic goals of the company.

VOLATILE BUSINESS CLIMATE: The instability and the uncertainty of the business climate contribute to some extent to a short-term as opposed to a long-term focus in business strategies and practices. This has a particular negative bearing on the introduction of CSR, as the benefits of sound CSR practices can be expected only in the long run.

LACK OF SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTORS: Socially responsible investments constitute a major driver to raising awareness for and promoting the practice of CSR in developed countries.

LOW LEVEL OF AWARENESS OF CONSUMER RIGHTS AND LACK OF CONSUMER ACTIVISM: It is obvious that companies pay little attention to the observance of consumer rights, that consumers themselves are not often aware of their rights, and that the willingness and the enforcement capacity of the government in this area is weak.

WEAKNESSES IN CORPORATE GOVERNANCE: The country is still facing the challenge of improvement of corporate governance, which is particularly important for better behaviour of firms and for private sector development. A lot remains to be done for improving corporate transparency.

LACK OF DOMINANT MODEL OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE/FUNDING: Local companies still lack a dominant model of corporate governance and control. There is no substantial external pressure or incentives for companies to fully implement the concept of CSR in their behaviour (Petkovski, Vladimir & Aleksandar Nikolov -2007).

As the roles and responsibilities of government are being redefined and the boundaries between business and government become less clear, the business leaders are facing a daunting array of challenges. In the new age of CSR, the needs of the stakeholders, consumers, employees, national as well as international regulators, watchdogs, NGOs, and activist groups have to be satisfied. The CSR rhetoric - including the blurred boundaries of CSR, the underdevelopment of the civic society, the economic reality, the ethical standards, and the attempts at self-regulation of business.

CONCLUSION

Business houses all over the world are increasing in realizing their stake in the society and engaging in various social and environmental activities. Corporate social responsibility is an evolving concept that incorporates a wide range of internal and external policies and practices extending from the workplace, into the community, the environment and beyond. It is not a new activity to many companies, both large and small, have already been practising CSR, albeit on an informal basis, for years. CSR holds a very important place in the development scenario of the world today and can pose as an alternative tool for sustainable development. As companies have shown great concerns for their immediate community and the stakeholders. Nevertheless CSR has certain limitations which restrict its activities. The need of the hour is to formulate effective strategic policies and adopt various instruments according to the company history, its content, peculiarity in relationship with its different stakeholders so that CSR can be best implemented towards its goals – sustained environmental, social and economic growth. Corporate together can make the world as a better place to live. CSR is becoming a leading principle of top management and of entrepreneurs. Organizations can re examine their pattern of behaviours in the TBL framework and begin their journey toward a sustainable approach that is integrated into their business strategy.

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