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CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY - INITIATIVES ADOPTED BY INDIAN ENTERPRISES

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ABSTRACT

This paper examine the underlying mechanism of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and how CSR activities are taking place in the contemporary manner in the modern day business environment. It also provides the enterprises and managers dedication towards the protection and promotion of the society and environment. This article is prepared based on the available secondary data.

KEYWORDS

Indian enterprises, corporate social responsibility.

INTRODUCTION

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.

DEFINITIONS

- Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a business approach that contributes to sustainable development by delivering economic, social and environmental benefits for all stakeholders. CSR is a concept with many definitions and practices
- Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is the way a corporation achieves a balance among its economic, social, and environmental responsibilities in its operations so as to address shareholder and other stakeholder expectations.

It is known by many names, including

Corporate responsibility,
 Corporate accountability,
 Corporate ethics,
 Corporate citizenship,
 Sustainability,
 Stewardship,
 Triple-E bottom line (economical, ethical, and environmental).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To Study the CSR practices adopted by the corporate world, specifically by Indian Corporate houses.
2. To analyze the impacts of CSR practices on Corporate Brand Building.
3. To carry out the comparative study of the Brand building through CSR practices.
4. To study and compare different CSR Concerns responsible for the Brand Building.
5. To compare various CSR Concerns among the customers' perception towards Brand Building.
6. To compare various CSR Concerns among the business executives' perception towards Brand Building.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The qualitative use of data sources predominantly drawn from the respective companies' websites as well as some of the other secondary data sources were employed in gathering the data for presenting this paper. This paper is prepared purely on the theoretical knowledge based on the secondary sources.

CONTEMPORARY CSR CONCEPTS

Corporate social responsibility is the terminology still widely used to represent business's social responsibilities. However, other terms have appeared that incorporate the consideration of economic responsibilities as well, including corporate sustainability, reputation management, social impact management, triple-E bottom line (TBL), and corporate citizenship.

CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY

As with the definition of CSR, academics, consultants, and practitioners have formulated many definitions of corporate sustainability, some of which are similar to those for CSR. Corporate sustainability (CS) refers to corporate activities demonstrating the inclusion of social and environmental as well as economic responsibilities in business operations as they impact all stakeholders. Marrewijk identified five levels of CS that are similar to how CSR could be viewed:

- Compliance-driven CS—Involves following government regulations and responding to charity and stewardship considerations considered appropriate by society.
- Profit-driven CS—Consideration is given to the social, ethical, and environmental aspects of business operations provided they contribute to the financial bottom line.
- Caring CS—CS initiatives go beyond legal compliance and profit considerations where economic, social, and environmental concerns are balanced, as it is the right thing to do.
- Synergistic CS—Well-balanced and functional solutions are sought that create value in the economic, social, and environmental areas, as it is a winning approach for all stakeholders.

- Holistic CS—CS is fully integrated and embedded in every aspect of the corporation's activities, as this is important to the quality and continuation of life on this planet.

REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

Is any effort to enhance the corporation's image and good name? In the past, the focus of these efforts was on media and public relations, and, to some extent, crisis management. Today, reputation management is being extended to relations with all stakeholders. Many managers believe that reputation management enhances financial performance, improves competitive positions, and increases public approval of corporate activities, and studies support this view.

A successful process to implement reputation management involves several stages: the identification of a desired perception of the corporation, the recognition of the significance of image with all stakeholders, an awareness of the influence of interactions with stakeholders on the corporation's reputation, and continuous efforts at maintaining relationships with stakeholders.

Reputations take a long time to establish and can be destroyed quickly. As a result, a reputation can be an asset but at times a liability. Managers must understand all the factors that encompass a reputation and be aware of the measures used to differentiate a good reputation from a bad one. Examples are provided by surveys appearing in the media, including the "Canada's Most Respected Corporations" survey in *The Globe and Mail*, sponsored by KPMG and conducted by Ipsos-Reid; the "Canada's Best Managed Companies" survey in the *National Post*, sponsored by Deloitte, CIBC, and the Queen's School of Business; and the "Best Corporate Citizens in Canada" survey by Corporate Knights: *The Canadian Magazine for Responsible Business*. The purpose in describing these surveys is to establish that public measures assessing a corporation's reputation are available. It also establishes the importance of reputation and the need for managers to consciously monitor it.

SOCIAL IMPACT MANAGEMENT

One of the main advocates of social impact management is the Aspen Institute. The Institute defines social impact management as "the field of inquiry at the intersection of business needs and wider societal concerns that reflects and respects the complex interdependency between the two." This is very much a "business and society" approach, stressing the need for contemporary business to recognize and understand this interdependency if business and the society in which it operates wish to thrive. The Institute argues that this understanding is becoming increasingly important as corporations take on a bigger role and society increases pressure for corporations to address more essential social and environmental concerns.

The approach stresses the intersection of traditional business concerns (i.e., for financial or economic matters) and society's concerns for the consequences of the impact of the corporation (i.e., the social impact of business). Thus, social impact management is two directional: society's influence on corporations, and the corporations' influence on the social and environmental concerns of society.

The Institute believes that "social impact management, as a way of thinking about business activities, explicitly considers and evaluates three aspects of a business:

- Purpose:** What is the purpose—in both societal and business terms—of a business or business activity?
- Social Context:** Are the legitimate rights and responsibilities of multiple stakeholders considered? Is a proposed strategy evaluated not only in terms of predicted business outcomes, but also in terms of its broader impacts—for example, on quality of life, the wider economy of a region, and security and safety?
- Metrics:** How is performance and profitability measured? What is being counted and what is not being counted? Are impacts and results measured across both short and long term time frames?"

TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE (TBL)

The triple-E (economic, ethical, and environmental) bottom line evaluates a corporation's performance according to a summary of the economic, social, and environmental value the corporation adds or destroys. A variation of the term is the triple-P bottom line: people, planet, profit. The narrowest meaning of the term is a framework for measuring and reporting corporate performance against economic, social, and environmental indicators. Recently, a broader meaning has been attributed to the term in that the concept is used to capture a whole set of values, issues, and processes that corporations must address in order to minimize any harm resulting from their value-adding or -destroying activities. This includes clarifying the corporation's purpose and taking into consideration all stakeholders. The triple-E bottom line approach is often the basis for corporate reporting of economic, ethical, and environmental responsibilities.

The triple bottom line approach has been criticized as being of limited value and even misleading. Norman and MacDonald argue that conceptually and practically the approach is not helping the discussion of CSR. The claims made are difficult to assess and amount to misleading rhetoric. The authors claim that the use of the triple bottom line may be providing a smokescreen behind which corporations can avoid ethical and environmental responsibilities and reporting.

FOR AND AGAINST CSR

There are two main points of view, whether business should be socially responsible or not.

1. Business has an only task to maximize profits; it should not do anything that does not suit this principle. It should not interfere in social problems, as it is a field of government regulation. The only way for business to help the society is to pay taxes and to provide people with work places.
2. Business is more than just economic unit, it is a part of complex surrounding consisting of various intermediaries like consumers, suppliers, mass-media, unions, employees and shareholders and it should definitely help the society, carrying out various social programs, cooperating with government. Social expectations concerning good corporate activities have already formed and there is nothing left for corporations but to follow them in order to be successful.

ARGUMENTS FOR

1. Favorable prospective in long run
2. Changing consumers' expectances and closer relationship with the society
3. Following moral standards and responsibilities
4. Creation of excellent reputation

ARGUMENTS AGAINST

1. Violation of profit maximization principle
2. The expenses on social programs mean costs for the company and these costs will be included into extra cost and thus will be indirectly paid by the consumers.
3. Business employees are not specialized in solving social problems and won't work effective enough

Actually nowadays, there is no choice. In spite of all disadvantages, most companies have started to develop social responsibility and CSR is necessary to be successful in the market and avoid contradictions with government, consumers and mass media.

FUTURE PROSPECT OF CSR

There are no doubts that this crisis will have a great impact on CSR throughout the world. Even European countries and the USA will feel the difference, but our country will be in a difficult situation. CSR in Russia is still forming and the crisis will put many companies in front of a reasonable question "Do we really need to be socially responsible?", moreover those who will answer "Yes" have a very big chance to face commercial problems and may be won't be able to carry out social supporting programs. As you know, it is very easy to stop, but hard to start again. So the companies will have 3 possible opportunities: to stop all social programs, to stop only several social problems and to carry on the main ones or to keep on with all the programs if they can afford them. In my study I hope to analyze all

the information I will get and to find out possible opportunities of CSR development in Russia because I'm sure that it is very important. The process of forming CSR will take a lot of time and effort, but the results worth this!

INITIATIVES BY INDIAN ENTERPRISES

ANAND CORPORATE SERVICES LIMITED

Anand has a longstanding commitment to addressing the needs of the society, in view of its belief that for any economic development to be meaningful, the benefits from the business must trickle down to the society at large. Anand is of the firm view that the corporate goals must be aligned with the larger societal goals. 25 years ago, the SNS Foundation, an expression of Anand's corporate social responsibility, was born. The objective of SNS foundation was comprehensive community development. The Foundation has created programs in the fields of health, education, natural resource management and life skills training, only to make sure that fellow humans could breathe easy.

APTECH LIMITED

Aptech Limited, a leading education player with a global presence, has played an extensive and sustained role in encouraging and fostering education throughout the country since inception. As a global player with complete solutions-providing capability, Aptech has a long history of participating in community activities. It has, in association with leading NGOs, provided computers at schools, education to the underprivileged and conducted training and awareness-camps.

Aptech students donated part of the proceeds from the sale of their art work to NGOs. To propagate education among all sections of the society throughout the country, especially the underprivileged, Aptech fosters tie-ups with leading NGOs throughout the country, including the Barrackpur-based NGO, Udayan, a residential school for children of leprosy patients in Barrackpur, established in 1970. The company strongly believes that education is an integral part of the country's social fabric and works towards supporting basic education and basic computer literacy amongst the underprivileged children in India.

AVON CYCLE LIMITED

The poor and ignorant of India's rural population turn to nearest towns and cities for healthcare. They face indifference and exploitation. Hope gives way to despair. This gave inspiration to AVON for locating Matakaushalya Devi, Pahwa Charitable Hospital. Mr. Sohan Lal Pahwa, AVON's Chairman and Principal Trustee of the hospital, spent a good part of his working life devoted to philanthropy. The hospital, in its 5th year of inception, has risen to serve a model healthcare facility boasting of some bold experiments in its very early years of existence. Its support since inception has been of the order of Rs. 3 crore to date and it continues uninterrupted. Reaching out to the needy farther afield, the hospital holds regular camps in surrounding villages to propagate scientific approach to healthcare. Recently the hospital took the social responsibility concept a step further and formulated a scheme titled 'Celebrated Female Child' to enable and inspire positive and enduring environment for society's all-consuming passion for 'sons only' to end.

CISCO SYSTEM INC.

Philanthropy at Cisco is about building strong and productive global communities - communities in which every individual has the means to live, the opportunity to learn, and the chance to give back. The company pursues a strong "triple bottom line" which is described as profits, people and presence. The company promotes a culture of charitable giving and connects employees to nonprofit organizations serving the communities where they live. Cisco invests its best-in-class networking equipment to those nonprofit organizations that best put it to work for their communities, eventuating in positive global impact. It takes its responsibility seriously as a global citizen. Education is a top corporate priority for Cisco, as it is the key to prosperity and opportunity.

ICICI BANK LTD.

The Social Initiatives Group (SIG) of ICICI Bank Ltd works with a mission to build the capacities of the poorest of the poor to participate in the larger economy. The group identifies and supports initiatives designed to break the intergenerational cycle of poor health and nutrition ensure essential early childhood education and schooling as well as access to basic financial services. Thus, by promoting early child health, catalyzing universal elementary education and maximizing access to micro financial services, ICICI Bank believes that it can build the capacities of India's poor to participate in larger socio-economic processes and thereby spur the overall development of the country. The SIG works by understanding the status of existing systems of service delivery and identifying critical knowledge and practice gaps in their functioning. It locates cost effective and scalable initiatives and approaches that have the potential to address these gaps and supports research to understand their impact. This is undertaken in collaboration with research agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), companies, government departments, local stakeholders and international organizations.

INFOSYS TECHNOLOGIES LIMITED

Infosys is actively involved in various community development programs. Infosys promoted, in 1996, the Infosys Foundation as a not-for-profit trust to which it contributes up to 1%PAT every year. Additionally, the Education and Research Department (E&R) at Infosys also works with employee volunteers on community development projects. Infosys leadership has set examples in the area of corporate citizenship and has involved itself actively in key national bodies. They have taken initiatives to work in the areas of Research and Education, Community Service, Rural Reach Programme, Employment, Welfare activities undertaken by the Infosys Foundation, Healthcare for the poor, Education and Arts & Culture.

ITC LIMITED

ITC partnered the Indian farmer for close to a century. ITC is now engaged in elevating this partnership to a new paradigm by leveraging information technology through its trailblazing 'e-Choupal' initiative. ITC is significantly widening its farmer partnerships to embrace a host of value-adding activities: creating livelihoods by helping poor tribals make their wastelands productive; investing in rainwater harvesting to bring much-needed irrigation to parched dry lands; empowering rural women by helping them evolve into entrepreneurs; and providing infrastructural support to make schools exciting for village children. Through these rural partnerships, ITC touches the lives of nearly 3 million villagers across India.

MAHINDRA & MAHINDRA

The K. C. Mahindra Education Trust was established in 1953 by late Mr. K. C. Mahindra with an objective to promote education. Its vision is to transform the lives of people in India through education, financial assistance and recognition to them, across age groups and across income strata. The K. C. Mahindra Education Trust undertakes number of education initiatives, which make a difference to the lives of deserving students. The Trust has provided more than Rs. 7.5 Crore in the form of grants, scholarships and loans. It promotes education mainly by the way of scholarships. The Nanhi Kali project has over 3,300 children under it.

SATYAM COMPUTER SERVICES LIMITED

Alambana (support) is the corporate social responsibility arm of Satyam Computer Services Limited, formed to support and strengthen the vulnerable and underprivileged sections in urban India. Registered as Satyam Alambana Trust in 2000, Alambana aims at transforming the quality of life among urban population. Alambana's services are directed primarily at the disadvantaged sections in all the cities that Satyam have offices in. Volunteers from among Satyam associates and their family members lead the services and perform the required tasks.

TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES

The Adult Literacy Program (ALP) was conceived and set up by Dr. F C Kohli along with Prof. P N Murthy and Prof. Kesav Nori of Tata Consultancy Services in May 2000 to address the problem of illiteracy. ALP believes illiteracy is a major social concern affecting a third of the Indian population comprising old and young adults. To accelerate the rate of learning, it uses a TCS-designed Computer-Based Functional Literacy Method (CBFL), an innovative teaching strategy that uses multimedia software to teach adults to read within about 40 learning hours.

DCM SHRIRAM CONSOLIDATED LIMITED

Shriram Fertilisers and Chemicals, is a unit of DSCL, located at Kota, 475 kms. Over the last 3 decades, various initiatives have been undertaken by the unit, in the Hadoti region (Kota, Bundi, Jhalawar districts) in ICU, ambulances, family planning, medical assistance; schools, scholarships, emphasis on girl child education; water to people and infrastructure.

GODEARTH EDUCATION FOUNDATION (GEF)

Work of GEF was initiated in 1996 with a project in the Rai Bareilly district in Uttar Pradesh. The four-year project covered 63 government schools and benefited 15,000 children. GEF is currently implementing projects in Thane district, Maharashtra (in 56 schools & balwadis), Alwar District, Rajasthan (this Project is being implemented in partnership with the NGO Bodh Shiksha Samiti, covering 71 schools & balwadis) and Solan district, Himachal Pradesh (10 Balwadis). GEF Objectives include providing equal opportunities in pre-primary & primary education to all children, and quality of education by ensuring that it is relevant, effective and activity based.

HINDUSTAN CONSTRUCTION COMPANY (HCC)

HCC plays an active role in CSR initiatives in the fields of Health, Education, Disaster Management, and Environment. Disaster Resource Network DRN is a worldwide initiative, promoted by the World Economic Forum (WEF). Trained volunteers and equipment resources from Engineering Construction & Logistics companies will complement the existing efforts of Government, NGO's and International Organizations in disaster management. It was during the WEF annual meet that the massive earthquake struck Gujarat in January 2001. The need for a trained and effective participation from industry was first felt there. The members of Engineering and Logistics segment of WEF came together to establish this network. The idea was further strengthened during the 9/11 incident where again the industry participated in the relief operations. DRN Worldwide was formally launched in New York in January 2002. And shortly thereafter, DRN - India Initiative was launched.

INDIA ALUMINUM COMPANY LIMITED

The Women's Empowerment project was initiated by Indal-Muri in Jharkhand where the Company operates an alumina refining plant. It was implemented in collaboration with an NGO, CARE-Jharkhand. The central problem this project has attempted to address is the very low socio-economic condition of the rural and tribal population of Silli block caused by low agricultural productivity, lack of or low cash income, unresponsive health/ Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) schemes. The Project has helped set up around 100 Self Help Groups so far, which are running successfully with members trained in various vocational income-generating skills, agricultural methods for better yields and health care initiatives. About 2000 women have been brought into the fold of this activity helping to improve not just their own lives but the quality of life of their children and families as well.

JCB INDIA LTD.

JCB India adopted a Government school, in the vicinity of the company premises as its social responsibility. They strongly believe that children are the foundation of our nation and they could be helped, we could build a better community and society tomorrow. The reason for adopting this particular school was the poor management of the school in terms of infrastructure, resources and quality of education. The company's commitment to the school goes much beyond just providing monetary support towards infrastructure and maintenance of school building.

CONCLUSION

Thus, it is concluded that corporates around the world are showing their concern even on the other stakeholders including society at macro level. In the recent past companies are trying to adopt CSR initiatives in a contemporary manner addressing various societal issues.

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