

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR) AND ITS EFFECT ON EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

In today's business world, corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is new opportunity for companies. A genuine concern for society usually strengthens the image of organization and support sustainable growth. Employees are one of the legitimate parts of any business firm, so the impact of CSR practices on employees' performance has been discussed theoretically. Literature review of existing studies regarding CSR helps in find the nexus between CSR and performance outcomes.

Keywords: corporate social responsibility, commitment, employee engagement, motivation.

1. Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is one of the latest business approaches. Various investigators worked on different aspects of CSR, but still they don't agree upon its single definition. CSR came in existence in late 1960's and early 1970's (Lee, 2011). In word of Cannon (1992), CSR is described as an alliance between three parties i.e. business firm, government, and society. Meanwhile he argued that the primary purpose of any organization is to work for society (say creating healthy environment, following government standards, educate employees etc.). In the similar vein, Branco and Rodrigues (2009) highlighted that there exists two factors i.e. internal and external factors behind an organization's motivation for adopting CSR practices.

Rationale behind the evolution of Corporate Social Responsibility is triple bottom line, profit, people and planet i.e. economical, socially responsible and environmental issues (Iamandi, 2007). To serves these, Shareholder approach, stakeholder approach and societal approach are developed (Marrewijk, 2003). First one focuses on profit maximization i.e. to gain more and more profit for their shareholders while stakeholder approach emphasizes on considering the interest of all its associated stakeholders' i.e. consumers, employees, suppliers, government, community etc. After considering the prevalent business situations, it is quite impossible to neglect the importance of stakeholders in an organization (Rodrigo and Arenas, 2008). Stakeholders are very important and legitimate part in socially responsible behavior of any organization (Mitchell et al., 1997). Freeman (1984) defined a stakeholder as "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of an

organization's objectives". Stakeholders are divided under various categories. Stakeholders are divided as primary stakeholders and secondary stakeholders (Clarkson, 1995). This classification is done on the basis of their level of impact on the organization mission, vision and objectives. Internal and external stakeholders are classified as their legal and administrative limits of the organization (Cavanagh and McGovern, 1988). They are also categorized as voluntary stakeholders and non-voluntary stakeholders depending upon their degree of risk bearing capacity (Mitchell et al., 1997). Goodpaster (1991) classify them as fiduciary stakeholders and non-fiduciary stakeholders, on the basis of degree of trust they have in management. Lastly, societal approach says that society is the most integral part of any organization, so to accomplish all the needs of society is also a responsibility of business.

2. Three domain model of CSR

An alternative model of CSR is proposed i.e. The Three Domain Model of CSR (Schwartz and Carroll, 2003). Underlying principles behind the origin of this new model are i) use of pyramidal structure ii) philanthropic as a separate dimension and iii) ambiguity in Economic, Legal and Ethical domains (Schwartz and Carroll, 2003) in Carroll's model. As Carroll (1991) proposed a hierarchical pyramidal structure of four dimensions of CSR. There is no explanation given regarding the most and least important dimension. Secondly, Carroll model shows a clear separation between all domains (Carroll, 1991). There may exist an overlapping between all domains. Thirdly, he described philanthropic as a separate dimension but one may argue that philanthropic is something which can go beyond the limits of responsibility or duties (Schwartz and Carroll, 2003). It can be consider as an integration of economic and ethical practices. There may exist some activities which doesn't fall in any of Carroll's' CSR dimensions. So, Three Domain Model of CSR is purposed which consists of seven CSR categories i.e. Purely Economic, Purely Legal, Purely Ethical, Economic/Ethical, Economic/Legal, Legal/Ethical and Economic/Legal/Ethical. But there are also some limitations of this The Three Domain Model of CSR. Firstly, no activity may be considered as Purely Economic, Purely Legal or Purely Ethical. Secondly, if there exist any activity which doesn't fall under any of seven domains, than under which domain should it be labeled? Thirdly, there is no proper criterion is given for MNCs' as they operate in home and host countries. So there may arise some issues regarding legal and ethical practices of home and host country (Schwartz and Carroll, 2003).

3. Lantos's Classification of CSR

Corresponding to Carroll's (1979) model of Corporate Social Responsibility, Lantos (2001) classify CSR under three components i.e. Ethical CSR, strategic CSR and Altruistic CSR. Ethical CSR emerges from the integration of Economic Responsibilities, Legal Responsibilities, and Ethical Responsibilities of Carroll's model. Here, Ethical CSR is not only a moral obligation but also to go beyond its economic responsibilities for the welfare of society. Strategic CSR or Strategic Philanthropy is about attainment of strategic business goals (Carroll, 2001). It is some where related to Philanthropic CSR as it also talks about to 'Giving Back to Society' but on the other side it expects some financial returns from that (Quester and Thompson, 2001). Cynics consider it as a self-serving phenomenon. Investment in Strategic CSR practices is considered as a type of investment in Goodwill Bank which consecutively gives financial returns (Vaughn, 1999). Dilemma regarding Strategic CSR is that who should be preferable among the group of stakeholders. Say, if employees are expecting higher wages and consumers are expecting products at lower price then who should be given advantage over another (Lantos, 2001). Moreover how factors like employee morale, goodwill, public relations should be measured in terms of financial returns (Miller and Ahrens, 1993). To check the improper implementation of Strategic CSR, social audits should be done for measuring social and environmental performance. Social audits should be conducted by ethics consultants, social auditing organizations, board of directors etc. Green marketing, cause-related marketing are some ways of implementing Strategic CSR (Lantos, 2001). Corresponding to Philanthropic domain of Carroll's model, Altruistic CSR is designed which depicts that contribution to the society is also a responsibility of every business (Lantos, 2001). Friedman (1996) suggests that altruistic CSR should not be considered as legal commitment for a business. As key objective of any business is to earn more and more profit i.e. profit maximization not endorsing public interests. An organization is not obliged to give back to the general public as it pay tax to the government which could be used for public welfare. There may remain some unresolved ethical issues because need of society can't be fulfill absolutely.

4. Performance Outcomes

In this era of globalization, technology is one of the important construct for the success of any organization. But the role of human resources can't be ignored. For the accomplishment of favorable outcomes, human oriented measures like employee commitment, employee motivation and employee engagement plays a significant role (Pfeffer, 1998).

5. CSR and Employee Engagement

The impact of Corporate Social Responsibility practices on Employee Engagement (EE) is not examined so far. Researchers are investigating on relationship between CSR and employee engagement. Most of the organizations believe that EE plays a vital role in gaining competitive edge (Macey et al., 2009). Employee engagement explains family friendly employment practices. On the other side, disengaged employees separate themselves from work place, cognitively and emotionally. The performance of engaged employees is much more better than disengaged employees (Shuck and Wollard, 2010). Satisfaction level of disengaged employees is lower than engaged employees. EE shows a level of commitment, loyalty towards a firm and hardworking tendency. It is a psychological construct (Harter et al. 2002). Kahn (1990) suggests that EE is multi-dimensional in nature and includes emotional, cognitive and physical domain. Emotional constructs explains relations or feeling associated with other employees. Cognition refers to self-awareness of an employee. Career objectives, job role constitutes its part. According to Shuck and Wollard (2010) Employee Engagement is "an individual employee's cognitive, emotional and behavioral state directed toward desired organizational outcomes". It is the predictor of desirable organizational outcomes (Luthans and Petersons, 2001). It is somewhere different from other construct like intrinsic motivation (Deci, 1975), organizational commitment (Mowday et. al., 1982), and job involvement (Lawler and Hall, 1970)

Employee Engagement is a part of business case and encompasses organizational commitment, job satisfaction and intention to stay (Langford, 2009). According to Smith and Langford (2011), Social responsibility has a greater correlation with EE than that of environmental responsibility. Applying social identity theory and signaling theory they explained that social responsibility has a direct influence on the engagement of employees as environmental responsibility does not (Greening and Turban, 2000; Albinger and Freeman 2000). They also proposed that ethical CSR has a high degree of correlation with EE than that of economic, legal and philanthropic CSR. Reason behind this, employees would like to recognize with the organization which bears a strong goodwill and reputation as Carroll (1991) also stated that philanthropic CSR is least important among all other dimensions. Smith and Langford (2011) found that in spite of legal CSR, rest all other dimensions of CSR are related to EE to a situation. Explanation is given in a way that legal CSR is reactive approach while others are proactive in nature. So EE is not highly related to legal CSR. Facts prove that CSR will lead to positive favorable outcomes (Brammer et al., 2007; Turban and Greening, 1996). There is also a variation between the employees' outcomes while using CSR practices and traditional HRM practices (Smith and Langford, 2011). Albinger and Freeman (2000) argue that employees primarily focus on their basic needs and after meeting up with them they consider CSR practices. CSR will have an additional variance in EE as that of traditional HRM practices. On the basis of above discussion hypothesis formulated here is

Proposition 1: there is a positive and significant relationship between CSR and employee engagement.

6. CSR and Employee Commitment

According to Meyer & Herscovitch (2001) Commitment is 'a force that binds an individual to a course of action that is of relevance to a particular target'. Meyer and Allen (1991) define 'Organizational commitment as the employee's psychological attachment to the organization'. It is broadly categorizes as Affective commitment, Continuance commitment and Normative commitment. Affective commitment (AC) is defined as the employee's positive emotional attachment with the organization. An employee who has affective commitment willing to remain associated with the organization. Continuance commitment (CC) is defined as employee commitment based on the economic and social costs of leaving the organization. An employee who has continuance commitment chooses to stay with the organization because of a lack of a better alternative. Normative commitment (NC) is defined as sense of moral obligation to the organization. An employee who has

normative commitment stays with the organization to reciprocate the benefits he/she receives. Apart from this classification there are some bases of commitment. First one is identification. It explains the employee can establish an identity where s/he is identifiable by her/his work performance, behavior, job outcomes etc. Secondly, socialization describes her/his behavior towards other employees whether s/he is a part of team, group, and organization or not. Thirdly, lack of choices, which explains that if an employee, has no alternatives then he indulges himself in that particular job. Factors like climate (as meteorological qualities like humidity, dryness, temperature and wind), culture (rules, regulations, rituals, codes, rewards) also affect commitment (Trevino et al. 1998). Integrating culture and climate give rise to a new concept i.e. ethical culture (Collier and Esteban, 2007). Organization involved in CSR practices also constitutes ethical culture. For example if some percentage of employees' salary is donated to any orphanage formulate ethical culture. Adoption of core values, ethics by all stakeholders of the company ensures successful ethical program. Better CSR practices will lead to immense commitment. To get a best result of socially responsible program one thing which can't be ignored is proper communication of organization values and ethics to its stakeholders especially employees. If employees are not aware about the organization values and ethics, then CSR would just become a window-dressing activity for the organization (Collier and Esteban, 2007). Employee Commitment is affected by CSR (Turker, 2008). If CSR includes employee oriented practices then current as well as prospective employees get attracted toward that organization (Greening and Turban, 2000). In nutshell, Shen and Zhu (2011) argue that employees feel a sense of affective commitment when they are associated with organization which adopts socially responsible HRM practices. Considering continuance commitment, it is related with opportunity cost. Practices like pay for performance, equality in hiring, promotion, appraisal, training and development etc would definitely make them committed towards that organization. Flexible working hour's facility is given to those employees who are actually in need. So if an organization is doing something beyond an employer expectation, this would definitely induce a sense of moral obligation to counter benefits to organization. On the basis of above literature, following proposition is developed:

Proposition 2: There is a positive and significant relationship between CSR and commitment.

7. CSR and Motivation

Motivation is the 'energizing force that induces action (Locke, 1997). It generally affects an individual behavior. Commitment is followed by motivation (Collier and Esteban, 2007). Studies conducted on motivation and Corporate social responsibility has implied that CSR can be used as a tool for motivation (Heslin and Ochoa, 2008). Motivation is related to many HRM practices like employee training and development, recruitment and selection, job sharing, flexibility, loyalty, retention (Meyer et al., 2004).

As per self-determination theory motivation is influenced by two types of incentive i.e. external and internal rewards (Skudiene and Auruskeviciene, 2012). External rewards are those rewards which are related with monetary values like salary, fringe benefits, bonus, and incentives. Internal rewards are those rewards which give an employee a sense of joy like job satisfaction, receiving appreciation, goal accomplishment, self-confidence, being involved in decision making (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Considering these two types of rewards, Minbaeva (2008) argues that external rewards are quite helpful in keep an employee on the job. External motivation can be achieved by external rewards and internal motivation through internal rewards. Motivating a person internally can be done through indirect ways like creating a comfortable work place, favorable work climate, induce a sense of belongingness, design interesting tasks (Skudiene and Auruskeviciene, 2012). Internal motivation can only be achieved by the self-interest of the employee (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Internally motivated person get emotionally attached with the organization and relate his personal life with organization (Skudiene and Auruskeviciene, 2012). So, it will lead a company to long term success.

It is found that majority of students prefer to go for that organization which is engaged in CSR practices (Heslin and Ochoa, 2008). Because they proposed that CSR act a motivator for selecting that particular organization (Heslin and Ochoa, 2008). There are some employees who can compromise with their salary if that organization is involved in social practices. According to Heslin and Ochoa (2008) "When employees see the positive impact of their work on society, they put more effort and demonstrate more persistence toward their job which leads to a better performance and productivity". Empirical research have found that CSR is having a positive relation with

self-image, team work, retention, trust, employee morale, employee motivation, commitment, need of belongingness, job satisfaction etc. On the basis of above literature, following hypothesis is formulated:

Proposition 3: There is a positive and significant relationship between CSR and motivation.

8. Conclusion

The notion of corporate social responsibility is now well accredited by organizations on the world business-agenda. From theoretical approach to action approach, many hindrances need to be tackled. Further, viewing the impact of CSR practices on employee performance, it has been concluded that CSR strategies need to be designed cautiously, so that a positive impact have been done on employees

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