Corporate Goals of Social Responsibility

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More and more corporations realize that behaving socially responsibly is one of the primary obligations organizations must fulfil in the modern-day business environment. The advancement of contemporary society and its implications on life on earth have been under debate for decades, and it is advised by academic scholars and the business research and development sector that behaving socially responsibly is essential for all entities to make the planet safe for living (Hopkins, 2012). Acting socially accountable implies considering environmental concerns and maintaining healthy relationships with employees and consumers.

In multidisciplinary concerns, corporate social responsibility is under debate for its definition and implications. Academia, society and business research suggest that firms need to act more in alignment with the social and environmental demands (Jenkins,2006). Corporate conscience, corporate social responsibility, and corporate citizenship are the terms used for one thing for businesses serving the well-being of society. Right after the emergence of contemporary society, the concept of social responsibility started with considerations among academia and business, but after World War II and the depression phase it faded from the serious issues for the time being. In contrast, it became on the front after when an article was published in Harvard Business Review containing the speech of the board chairman of Standard Oil of New Jersey, which he delivered in 1951, saying that it was obligatory for a business to operate firm's affairs in a workable and an equitable manner of balance to cater the claims of various stakeholders and interest groups and a balance based on harmony among consumers, employees, shareholders and the general public in a larger sense. (Frederick, 2006).

According to Howard Bowen (1953), social responsibility is a business' obligation to make such decisions, follow such policies or devise a course of action that is desirable in achieving the objectives and values of the society in which it operates (Garriga & Melé, 2004).

Caroll 1979 presented a theoretical model for corporate social responsibility; the model considers corporate social responsibility as the leading philosophy for organizations to develop vision and mission in such a manner that it functions in socially responsible behaviour (Carroll & Shabana, 2010).

The United Nations 2012 organized a summit named Rio+20 on global sustainable development where more than fifty thousand public and business leaders and other representatives developed a renewed program to promote sustainable development and policies to achieve such a goal (Zimmermann, 2012). Corporate conscience on the part of businesses incorporates different action plans and policies. For instance, operating a business ethically is a part of behaving socially responsibly, as it avoids any illegality and conduct that may harm society, the health of people, or the environment. The old-fashioned conventional ways of operating business are no longer enough to bring success to firms in today's era of conscious and fully aware consumers and other concerns.

State governments, non-profit organizations, healthcare associations and the general public now expect corporate businesses to serve society with innovative products and a more socially responsible code of conduct.

Socially responsible corporations collaborate with their communities, investing in projects with more responsible and ethical features, developing relationships with customers and employees, and adopting environmentally protective and sustainable policies. Critiques of the industries evaluate corporations more on socially responsible operating methods; organizations tend to achieve long-term strategic goals by being socially responsible and ethical businesses. Besides the hidden hand of the marketplace giving economic reasons to corporations to adopt socially responsible policies of operations, the regulatory system of the societies that is official authorities and political processes play a most important role in making the industries behave socially responsibly (Nobel, 1998). Nonprofit organizations play a major role in projecting the social responsibility to corporations. Human rights organizations, labour unions and other non-governmental organizations working for environmental safety, wildlife preservation and other eco-friendly projects and policies are a helping hand to the social services and motivating corporations to pursue in favour of a society that would ultimately bring them long-term profits and benefits.

Factories and plants are increasingly criticized and blamed for being responsible for causing the global warming environmental phenomenon by exerting mechanical wastes and smoke. Similarly, the human rights movements advocating labour protection, safety, and other rights have made businesses realize the importance of responsibly operating. Firms and corporations are increasingly incorporating social concerns in their visions and values so that their image is confident in the market and consumers prefer buying products from companies that are socially responsible and seem to care for human life and the environment on Earth (“What is corporate social responsibility?” n.d.). International corporations such as leading fast-moving consumer goods producers, especially worldwide and trading globally, envision their sustainable growth only by behaving responsibly towards society and the world environment. Corporations are endeavouring to achieve success with an ever-evolving vision and mission. Recently, corporations have devised policies that aim at behaving more socially responsibly and helping the hands in protecting life on Earth. New corporate goals of corporations come with revised strategies and goals, many of which incorporate social objectives (Smith, 2011).

Goodwill assets have become a buzzword in businesses worldwide, and companies are striving hard for innovative techniques and tools that can bring them a competitive edge of goodwill. The company’s ultimate source of fetching goodwill is socially responsible behaviours towards society and human resources. Consumers are the eventual payers of services and products and their advertisements and promotion campaigns; the more the consumers’ feedback is positive, the more the company’s goodwill. Social conscience and citizenship imply that today’s consumers are more aware of the pros and cons of the products and are educated on the processing of manufacturing and the quality of products and services. Hence, they derive the companies’ policies in a more favourable direction to the environment, life on earth, the health of human resources, and others. This deriving force is working enormously in the back end of the socially responsible behaviour of corporations.

Corporate Objectives of Being Socially Responsible

While defining Corporate Sustainability Reports, three corporate goals announced by corporations are increasingly social responsibility goals (Goodpaster & Matthews, 1982). These are three goals that companies tend to work toward over the coming five years. The goals listed in the report are as follows:

Zero Waste to Landfill:

In May 2015, Nestle USA announced that thirty per cent of its plants in the USA are geared to achieve the zero per cent waste landfill target, which means the factories will contribute to keeping the environment healthy and clean for life on Earth. Such a milestone reflects the corporation's concern towards being socially responsible and committed to the environmental health of society. The goal is supposed to be achieved by the end of 2020 by encouraging management and employees to adopt ways to decrease, reuse or recover energy when factories dispose of waste from the manufacturing process.

To Reduce Food Waste:

Corporations aim to improve the efficiency of their operative resources so that they can contribute to the reduction of food waste. It is recorded that around the world approximately one-third of food is wasted during the supply chain process before reaching the end users. Such a food loss is not only regretful in a situation where millions of people in underdeveloped countries are fighting hunger, starvation, and landfills caused by food loss.

Careful Packaging:

Companies are announcing using a more responsible method of packaging products to reduce food loss and control mechanical wastage. Companies state that they tend to strive for an improved contribution to environmental health by adopting an enhanced approach towards packaging the products and designing the products in such a way that they can reach the consumers with more quality, less waste and innovate the product life cycle. Saving the Earth's environment and favourable climate conditions is becoming a responsibility of corporations as they contribute most to soil and air pollution in the shape of mechanical wastages and flame and smoke arising from their manufacturing plants.

Stakeholders of the companies, such as employees, upstream and downstream suppliers, government concerns, non-profit organizations, and most importantly, their consumers, are all catered to by the socially responsible devised social objectives of the corporations. Such objectives, in fact, are strategically winning tools for corporations. Corporations and firms that keep an eye on their Human resource and employment procedures and policies in regard to their effects on the employees, their welfare and health demonstrate a high level of rationality and concern for their employees' welfare. Corporations rejecting those policies which tend to have a harmful or discriminative impact on the employees pose to give much consideration to the impact of their operations and policies on human resources. The state's role is crucial in setting the system's rules that may or may not project the socially responsible functioning of firms and corporations in society.

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