“Corporate Practices towards Education as Social Responsibility - A Theoretical Study”

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Abstract:-- Education plays a vital role in the era of globalisation in building the Nation. It is important for any nation to understand that without education it is impossible to make a good progress of a country. India has been lagged behind from other nations that it has now become difficult for us to abreast with them. Government of India has undertaken numerous initiatives to education. The millions of rupees have been dissipated to ameliorate the education system. It is not feasible for firms to sustain without considering the interest of society. This paper attempts to make a study on the social responsibility of corporate firms towards education and their contribution so far. Corporate firms have many challenging projects but they must consider this educational project as priority. This paper provides some suggestions that can be implemented to make this educational journey smoother. In this paper secondary source like journals, articles, authentic books, newspapers and companies websites have been accessed for the study

Keywords:-- Society, Education, Corporate, Government and Policies

I. INTRODUCTION

Corporation’s initiative to assess and take responsibility for the company's effects on environmental and social wellbeing is corporate social responsibility, often abbreviated “CSR”. CSR may also be referred to as "corporate citizenship” and can involve incurring short-term costs that do not provide an immediate financial benefit to the Education and CSR- the challenges ahead. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is becoming an increasingly important activity to businesses nationally and internationally. According to Lord Holme and Richard Watts "Corporate Social Responsibility is the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the local community and society at large” As globalization accelerates and large corporations serve as global providers, these corporations have progressively recognized the benefits of providing CSR programs in their various locations. Traditionally in the United States, CSR has been defined much more in terms of a philanthropic model. Companies make profits, unhindered except by fulfilling their duty to pay taxes. Then they donate a certain share of the profits to charitable causes. It is seen as tainting the act for the company to receive any benefit from the giving.

II. CSR AND EDUCATION

Today, public education faces the challenges of standardized testing, strained budgets, teacher retention, and global workforce competition. In this situation, corporate has added pressure to prove itself to consumers, investors, and government regulators. These demands have given way to new opportunities for businesses to support education in a win-win situations everyone. For many businesses, education is an important part of their plans, since the need of education exist in all geographic areas, across all subject areas, and for all kinds of people. Corporate firms have begun to take a more targeted approach in their corporate social responsibility programs and are seeking to impact areas that have a useful to their own business goals.

Corporate get involved in education for a number of strategic reasons, building a positive reputation and goodwill among investors, consumers, employees, and other stakeholders; developing brand recognition, whether to increase consumer loyalty, boost sales, or establish the company as an industry leader; building a more educated workforce; raising consumer awareness about a particular issue and fulfilling a company mission or mandate Students, schools, and the general public can benefit from the experience and expertise that corporations bring to the table, particularly if the groups work together to ensure the right needs are being met on both ends.

Corporate companies looking to contribute to public school education, for instance, must concentrate on the demands that schools and educators face daily – standardized testing, time constraints, tight budgets, technology access, and explicit curriculum standards – as well as the unique places where outside help is needed. As long as they feel the social responsibility on the right needs, corporate have the ability to make a tremendous impact. More and more companies are simultaneously meeting educational goals and their own business goals by providing resources, by building in strong connections with instructional needs, and by marketing the resources.
Parents are enthusiastic about the industry involvement, too, so long as it’s positive and productive. A Michigan survey conducted in April 2016 by The Detroit News, The Skillman Foundation, and Your Child showed that 77% of parents think businesses should play a role in education, particularly by providing additional resources General Electric has a five-year, $100-million “College Bound” program to boost the number of high school students who go to college in certain school districts. The program encompasses math and science curricula, professional development, management capacity, and the involvement and expertise of GE officials. One school superintendent said the initiative combines “high academic standards, best educational practices, collaborative relationships, and the expertise of a longstanding partner and global technology leader.” In 2004, Citigroup announced the formation of its Office of Financial Education, along with a 10-year, $200-million commitment to financial education. Since then, the company has developed curriculum programs for aspiring entrepreneurs, college students with questions about credit, and pre-scholars who are just starting to learn about money, among others. Thousands of Citigroup employees volunteer their time to teach these programs, which have reached people in more than 60 countries. Beyond curricula, some businesses get involved in the education world to train a new generation of employees.

_The key factors for CSR are:_

**Enlightened self-interest** - creating a synergy of ethics, a cohesive society and a sustainable global economy where markets, labour and communities are able to function well together.

**Social investment** - contributing to physical infrastructure and social capital is a necessary part of doing business.

**Transparency and trust** - business has low ratings of trust in public perception. There is increasing expectation that companies will be more open, more accountable and be prepared to report publicly on their performance in social and environmental arenas.

**Increased public expectations of business** - globally companies are expected to do more than merely provide jobs and contribute to the economy through taxes and employment.”

III. CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR) - GLOBALISATION

Globalization could lead to standard education, better jobs, higher standards of living, but could result in the gap between developed and developing countries expansion to the disadvantage of all.

Thus, two key areas need to be managed by corporations, along with governments in the process of globalisation, talents (and the mobility of people with talents in demand) and trade. Developing countries need to practice to develop and also improve talent, and that requires a revamp of much of its culture including education infrastructure, legal systems, immigration policies and management policies, while arts and entertainment facilities will need to adapt to meet changing demands and more international tastes. A free and open trade and investment environment is necessary, but achieving agreement between many countries and cultures is difficult. Social responsibility by corporations is required to help developing countries through their transition to knowledge societies.

According to Jack Greenberg, President and chief executive officer of McDonald’s Corporation USA, “the company works with local governments, to touch people’s lives at the grassroots level. Our commitments to social responsibility and to making profits are necessarily linked.” Corporations need to realize that good causes can help improve a company's as well as a country’s image.

The importance of corporate social responsibility is especially crucial in the case of developing or underdeveloped countries. In the case of mining companies’ paternalistic relations with local communities resulted in suppressing initiatives in education. Now the relationship has changed to big partnerships with local communities. Therefore social responsibility is a means of managing risk and avoiding a big price to pay for lack of involvement. The case of Microsoft’s investment in India in different ways in the sphere of education (Project Shiksha) and health (namely in terms of eradication of HIV/AIDS) are worth emulating by other corporations. The case of Malayampa natural gas power project in the Philippines is worth mentioning in Shell’s commitments towards sustainable development. SmithKline Beecham’s aim to eliminate elephantiasis and Liz Claiborne’s efforts to increase awareness of domestic violence are some of the examples of corporations increasingly taking on the mantle of social responsibility.

In this globalisation as corporations are becoming more aware of their social responsibilities the traditional responses of companies contributing to good causes are dramatically changing from mere philanthropy. Despite the worthwhile support given by many corporations, an enormous amount could still be done. If companies each invest in one good cause with the same fervour, which they invest in their bottom lines, a huge step could be taken towards Education, particularly poverty eradication be it through investments in it.
For corporations in the developing and underdeveloped countries, bridging the divide (digital, economic, social or environmental) in order to eliminate poverty should be the essence of the social agenda.

IV. CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY - INDIA

CSR is not a new concept in India. Corporates like the Tata Group, the Aditya Birla Group, and Indian Oil Corporation, to name a few, have been involved in serving the community ever since their inception. Many other organizations have been doing their part for the society. In recent years CSR has become a fundamental business practice and has gained much attention from executive management of larger international companies. Corporate social responsibility is represented by the contributions undertaken by companies to society through its activities, its social investment and its engagement in providing the education. They understand that a strong CSR program is a primary element in achieving good business practices and effective leadership. Companies have considered that their impact on the economic, social and environmental landscape directly affects their relationships with stakeholders.

In recent years Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has acquired new dimensions. The Indian context is distinct. On the one hand, there are long-standing traditions of respect for family and social networks, and high value placed on relationships, social stability and education. Diverse religions and cultures also bring distinct attitudes towards community social behavior and engagement as well as support and philanthropic contributions. Governments in the region also play distinct roles – often stronger in terms of influence on economic and social priorities, yet not as advanced in terms of social safety nets.

CSR has become increasingly prominent in the Indian corporate scenario because organizations have realized that besides growing their businesses it is also vital to build trustworthy and sustainable relationships with the community at large. Though India is one of the fastest growing economies, socio-economic problems like poverty, illiteracy, lack of healthcare etc. are still ubiquitous and the government has limited resources to tackle these challenges. This scenario has opened up several areas for businesses to contribute towards social development.

As an integral part of the corporate strategy, Today, CSR in India has gone beyond merely charity and donations. Present Companies have CSR teams that devise specific policies, strategies and goals for their CSR programs and set aside budgets to support them.

These programs, in many cases, are based on a clearly defined social philosophy or are closely aligned with the companies’ business expertise. Employees become the backbone of these initiatives and volunteer their time and contribute their skills, to implement them. CSR Programs could range from overall development of a community to supporting specific causes like education, environment, healthcare etc.

Many CSR initiatives are executed by corporate in partnership with Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who are well versed in working with the local communities and are experts in tackling specific social problems. For example, SAP India in partnership with Hope Foundation, an NGO that works for the betterment of the poor and the needy throughout India, has been working on short and long term rebuilding initiatives for the tsunami victims. Together, they also started The SAP Labs Center of HOPE in Bangalore, a home for street children. CSR has come a long way in India. From responsive activities to sustainable initiatives, corporates have clearly exhibited their ability to make a significant difference in the society and improve the overall quality of life. In the current social situation in India, it is difficult for one single entity to bring about change, as the scale is enormous. Corporates have the expertise, strategic thinking, manpower and money to facilitate extensive social change. Effective partnerships between corporate, NGOs and the government will place India’s social development on a faster track.

V. COMPANIES’ INITIATIVE TOWARDS EDUCATION

CSR is not a new concept in India. Many companies like Tata Group, Aditya Birla Group, and Indian Oil Corporation etc. have been fulfilling their responsibilities towards the Nation even before its compulsory enforcement by government. They have been donating and making charity for decades. However the contribution of various corporate towards education in India has been briefly discussed below:

Tata Group: TATA has significant contribution in educating India since its inception. The company has opened many educational institutes in India namely Indian institute of science (Bangalore), Tata institute of fundamental research (Mumbai), JRD Tata eco technology centre (Chennai) etc. TATA has opened many libraries in India (Namely Ratan Tata Library in Delhi University, JRD Tata library in Bangalore and Sir Dorabji Tata Memorial library in Mumbai etc. for the keen readers and researchers. The list of their contribution is much more and they have been playing vital role in development of our Nation.
Aditya Birla Group: The Company has been always focusing on the issues like: Formal and non-formal education, adult education; Scholarships for girls, merit scholarships and technical education for boys; Distance education; Girl child education; Digital literacy / computer education. The BIRLA group has opened many academic institutions and schools and has supported the education of rural children.

Procter And Gamble: The company has been supporting project SHIKSHA launched in 2005) from last 8 years and has helped 2, 80,000 unprivileged children to access their right to education. The program focuses on empowering girl child with quality education. It aims at providing clean drinking water, building separate toilets for girls and boys, advanced educational aids, computer centers. The Need of corporate social responsibility towards education in india

Apart from the vast developments in India there is a darkest phase where children are being forced to work instead of going schools and receive education. Even with the enactment of RIGHT TO EDUCATION ACT 2009, which enforces free and compulsory education for children between 6-14 years, plenty of children are being deprived of education. Every year numerous children get enrolled in government schools but only few of them complete the elementary education successfully. The reason is quality of education in government and government aided schools is deteriorated. They lack basic amenities, adequate infrastructure, adequate professional teachers, effective teaching aids and efficient school management etc. The dropout rate among the girls is greater than the boys. The main reason for drop out is the stagnation i.e children repeating same class again. The other contributing reasons to this are Poverty, Unemployment, and discrimination on basis of caste, gender, race and other Social barriers. In case of higher education, the no. of aspirants are greater than the availability of the seats in universities. However plenty of private universities have been opened but the fees of such universities and colleges are very high that lower income group student cannot afford. The governments have limited resources to tackle these problems; therefore intervention of corporate sector in education is needed.

VI. CHALLENGES

To enable educational institutions to provide quality education in changing economic and industry opportunities, our educational policy should encourage greater collaboration between industry and universities.

There are several examples of industry – academia collaboration in India. ICICI Bank has worked closed with deans and professors of several colleges to help develop course content and to provide visiting faculty to these colleges. Bharti Tele-Ventures has set up a telecommunication training school at IIT, Delhi. Infosys has established campus connect, an initiative to enhance the quality of teaching in technical colleges in India. Infosys also provides 26 Ph.D. scholarships in the IITs, the IIMs, IIS and a few engineering colleges. The Government should also encourage more collaboration between industry research institutions and colleges through tax incentives and a deregulated environment for research.

VII. METHODOLOGY

This paper attempts to throw light on the social responsibility of corporate in education field and their contribution so far. There are challenges like any other project but the corporate houses must take this project on priority. The present research paper is based on the secondary data. The data has been collected from text books and other websites. In this paper three companies were conveniently selected and made a theoretical study.

VIII. OBJECTIVES

1. To highlight the role of corporate social responsibility as an essential feature of corporate responsibility.
2. To observe the need for corporate social responsibility to play a vital role in Education in India.
3. To stress the inter-relationship between the roles of Government and Corporate towards Education.

IX. CONCLUSION

Corporate Social Responsibility has many modules of service practice. Companies have been searching for various innovative alternative ways to discharge their social responsibility. Education is the sector which is the most required and eligible for social rewarding effort for any corporate to be looked upon to discharge its social responsibility. Responsibility towards education at any level means re-energized education sector which can transform India into a true knowledge human resource and realize a future of prosperity and growth.
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Citations


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