

WOMENS' EMPOWERMENT AND CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: DIMENSIONS AND MEDATWAL'S MODEL

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Abstract : The success of business is linked to the health, stability and prosperity of the society and of the communities in which it operates. A corporation said to be socially responsible if it does not discriminate against women, minority groups and disabled and adopts policies that ensure equitable treatment. There are CSR initiatives that promote gender equality so that companies will improve their understanding of gender in their business and put in place more effective systems to strengthen their business benefits. This paper concentrates upon the issue of gender equality and womens' empowerment in corporate. This paper presents a new and specific approach i.e. Medatwal's- Four Folds Model on CSR @ Gender Equality to understand and implement gender equality into corporate. A corporate must try this model to know their current position through equal treatment to both genres. Also they can impose it for better CSR ratings.

Keywords: CSR, Gender Equality, Women Empowerment, Sustainable Development

OVERVIEW

The world business council for sustainable development defines Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as – “the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the local community and society at large. The long term sustainability has become the main objective of CSR. CSR concept has emerged from the period of Kautilya and recognized with the view of Sarvodaya (welfare of all). CSR originated in the year 1950 in USA and came into prominence after public debate during 1960s and 1970s to meet the problem of poverty, unemployment, population growth, corruption. Today, business organizations are considered to be social institutions, apart from being economic entities, for two reasons. First, business organizations exist and operate within a social structure. Second, business organizations need to be socially responsible as they exercise a wide influence on the society's lifestyle. CSR consists with certain dimensions around. Nine variables/dimensions of CSR are identified based on the previous literature available. These dimensions are presented in the figure-1. Society's codification of right and wrong comes under legal scenario. Just and fair to affects the practices which ultimately promote human welfare and goodwill. The term CSR is generally understood that business has an obligation to society that extends beyond its obligation to its shareholders or owners. “It can be truly said that women power is the ultimate power, builds the society and carry it with various responsibilities.”



Figure 1: Dimensions of Corporate social Responsibility

CORPORATE HOUSES PERFORMS CSR FOR WOMENS' EMPOWERMENT

Corporate plays various roles to uplift society and empowering women through-

- Battle against gender discrimination and overall development of women,
- Provide promising platform to women and protecting right and interest of women,
- Provide financial assistance and providing employment at different levels in corporate,
- Motivating deserving women in education, sports, defence, and economy.

The Global Reporting Initiative and IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, have collaborated on a gender and

sustainability reporting to help private enterprises worldwide creates new opportunities for women. Biggest problem in the corporate is the 'glass ceiling'. Working women and working mothers have dual responsibility of personal and professional management of their roles. Sometimes women have to sacrifice their bright career and opportunities to meet personal responsibilities. The Corporate is gaining co-worker acceptance in non-traditional roles is a serious problem. India being on the path of development still struggles with the social issues relating to women such as illiteracy, child marriages, female infanticide, dowry, child labour, unequal property rights, prostitution, trafficking and other severe problems.

CSR campaigns for women Empowerment

Ø Avon Cosmetics' commitment to women runs deeper than the boundaries of business. Women are the heart of Avon's success and Avon continues to support

Walmart Launches Global Women's Economic Empowerment Initiative [2011-09-29]

[Read309] BENTONVILLE, Ark., September 14, 2011 – Walmart President and CEO Mike Duke today launched a major initiative that will use the company's global size and scale to help empower women across its supply chain. Working over the past year with leaders from government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), philanthropic groups and academia, Walmart's Global Women's Economic Empowerment Initiative has established five goals.

By the end of 2016, they aim to: Increase sourcing from women-owned businesses. Over the next five years, the company will source \$20 billion from women-owned businesses in the U.S. and double sourcing from women suppliers internationally. Empower women through job training and education. Successful retail training programs will be scaled to help 200,000 women internationally. In the U.S., Walmart will help 200,000 women from low-income households gain job skills and access higher education. Increase gender diversity among major suppliers. Source: <http://walmartstores.com/women>.

Medatwal's- Four Folds Model on CSR @ Gender Equality:

A Recommendation

Usually CSR covers the aspects which contract to services for societal welfare. Here, specific 'Four Folds Model on CSR @ Gender Equality' is introduced to understand and implement gender equality into corporate. I found specific four factors through experiences and observations from corporate practices through news and events. This qualitative forecast is made available for amplification. A corporate must know what they are actually doing and it can be understood through the studies, researches and societal surveys. A Business house must note and watch its hierarchies, various levels and positions where gender ratio is observed and performance indicators are set.

and understand their needs through Avon's Breast Cancer Crusade. The goal of the Avon Foundation Breast Cancer Crusade is to improve access to quality breast health care for underserved, uninsured and low income populations, and to support biomedical research focused on prevention and improved methods of diagnosis and treatment to Cure and prevent breast cancer.

Ø Hindustan Unilever Ltd.'s 'SHAKTI'

Project is its initiative to uplift standard of living in rural India by creating income-generating capabilities for underprivileged rural women by providing a small-scale enterprise opportunity, and to improve rural lives through health and hygiene awareness. Project SHAKTI is taken up in rural areas only whereby women are the distributors for HUL products and are called "Shakti Ammas".

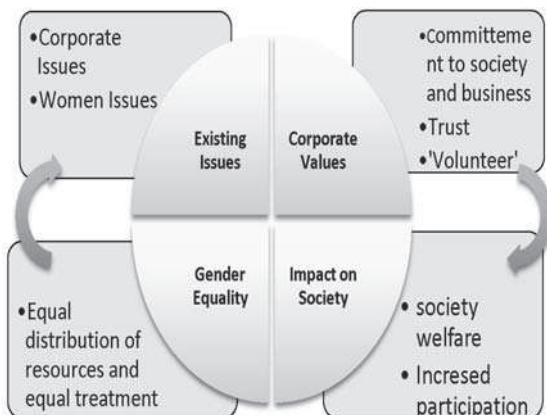


Figure 2: Medatwal's- Four Folds Model on CSR @ Gender Equality

1. Existing Issues viz., corporate issues and women issues. Every organization has its features and existing components that make its difference. Some of the corporate Issues, not specifically problems, but a concern which give base to the CSR. The women issues in the corporate like sexual harassment though comes under legal framework but it can be stopped by corporate if internal control within organisation gives due importance to women related rules.

2. Corporate Values -To really do their job they must be installed at the "belief" level. Too often values are installed but not believed. It is therefore necessary that some education goes along with installing the corporate values and recruitment processes ensure values are strengthened over time. A commitment to society and business is must to retain the value. Trust building is effortless if the motive and implementation matches. 'Volunteer' in CSR is person as a whole who takes decision and create responsibilities.

3. Gender Equality- Well known aspect upholds the key parameters to portray equal treatment with regard to women participation and their existence in the project. Equal distribution of resources among all people in terms of serving society, the knowledge providing, enhanced no. of women is the matter of concern.

4. Impact on society - Increased women participation is again a challenge as well to manage them at their workplace with the aspects of job satisfaction, development and empowerment. As with individuals, the environment that needs to be created to support corporations must positively address each of the focus points. A corporate must try this model to know their current position through equal treatment to both genres. Also they can impose for better CSR ratings.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The motive behind 'CSR towards womens' empowerment' is to provide solutions to women related issues. Corporate should undertake more number of campaigns for women empowerment. Providing competitive jobs equal to men is not only providing bread and butter to women but also uplifting them, society can only develop when growth is equally enjoyed by every section of the society. Corporate houses are using their own techniques to fulfil societal needs with CSR. The Medatwal's- Four Folds Model on CSR @ Gender Equality is designed significantly for women empowerment through corporate. Being one of the burgeoning under societal welfare aspects it helps corporate to establish a sound system of CSR.

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