Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility on Women Empowerment

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Abstract—Corporate social responsibility is a way for organizations to develop their image in the society while doing activities for social welfare beyond statutory compliance and there by gaining benefit from the government. Corporate Social Responsibility refers to increasing and improving the social, economic, political and legal strength of the women, to ensure equal-right to women, and to make them confident enough to claim their rights. Educational attainment and economic participation are key factors in ensuring the empowerment of women. Organizations through their CSR initiatives can focus on providing basic education and awareness to women solve many of their issues relating to discrimination. Empowering women appears to be a Herculean task, but can be made possible with dedicated and determined effort of family, society, business houses, NGOs, local bodies and government to eradicate deep-rooted problem of disregard for women. This paper shows how the Corporate Social Responsibility activities of an organization help in Women Empowerment and what are the major activities that focuses on empowering women. The paper focus on how system dynamics approach help to invigorate women empowerment through corporate social responsibility and it also shows the relationship between CSR activities, Women Empowerment and organizational success. Achieving Women Empowerment through CSR activities also requires the dedicated effort of the organization as well as the society in order to find the women in distress and to offer them a helping hand.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility, Women Empowerment, Business Dynamics, Causal Loop, organization

I. INTRODUCTION

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a way for organizations to develop their image in the society while doing activities for social welfare beyond statutory compliance and there by gaining benefit from the government. Corporate Social Responsibility in short is an organization’s ability to evaluate and take responsibility for the organization’s impacts on environmental and social wellbeing. CSR policy acts as a self-regulatory mechanism through which a business monitors and ensures its effective compliance with the law, ethical standards and national or international norms. Implementation of CSR is not basically of statutory requirement of the firm, but “actions that appear to further some social good, beyond the interests of the firm and that which is required by law”. CSR in short is an aid to an organization’s mission as well as serve as a guide to what the company has for its customers.

Women Empowerment refers to increasing and improving the social, economic, political and legal strength of the women, to ensure equal-right to women, and to make them confident enough to claim their rights. Women Empowerment on itself explains that Social rights, political rights, economic stability, judicial strength and all other rights should be also equal for women. To accelerate and achieve the real purpose of women empowerment some basic questions need proper answer. Questions like why is it necessary? Why are we trying to fill this gender gap? Why are women not given that equality level and trust in the society? Why are women not taking up leadership roles? Why are women not aware of their basic rights? Only if these questions are answered or given a proper research, one can start to empower women. There should be no discrimination between men and women. Women should be aware about their fundamental and social rights. Corporates now a days are taking up the responsibility to empower women through their social activities. Empowering women, what’s in it for the corporates is that their efforts will be recognized and accepted in a bigger level and thus the company receives a larger exposure? On the other hand, the organization will also be left with educated and self-confident women who can in turn work for them and the organization can sow the benefits of their own efforts.

Before even the organization can start the idea of empowering women, they must first identify and prioritize the major problems faced by women in the society, family, corporates etc. Only if a thorough understanding of the difficulties faced by women in the society is there, the corporates can necessary activities as a part of their social responsibility to
empower and alleviate women of their problems. Backed by the literature used for this paper, few of the problems that I’ve identified are discrimination and indifferent behavior to women in the corporates and society, problems faced by women due to silent alcoholism, rape and violence against women, problems faced due to the unawareness and negligence of laws and rights, denial of basic education and rights for girl children and underprivileged women. Organizations should focus on the specific problems in hand and try to solve them or create a platform for woman from where they can start off a better life.

Lawful aspects and cases related to women’s concerns in India:

• There is an active participation by women in India in the field of education, sports, politics, media, art and culture, service sectors, science and technology, etc. For example, one of the longest serving women Prime Minister in the world is Indira Gandhi and she is a great example of women leadership in India.

• Article 14 of the Indian Constitution guarantees equality to all women in India, no discrimination is promoted towards women by the state according to Article 15(1), Article 16 on the other hand focuses on delivering equal amount of opportunities for both men and women, Article 39(d) states that payment made should be equal for equal amount of work done. The Article 15(3) allows the State to make special requirements to be made in favor of women and kids. Article 51(A) (e) states that dignity of women shall be upheld in any situation. Article 42 also induces that the state should take actions to make the workplace safe and humane and to facilitate maternity relief.

• In the later part of the 1970s, the feminist activism in India got triggered. The Mathura attack case is one of the problems that actually made the women’s groups to unite and work together. Female protestors joined together over problems, for example, female child murder, sexual orientation inclination, ladies wellbeing, and female education.

• Since liquor abuse is frequently connected with viciousness against women in India numerous ladies groups propelled hostile to alcohol battles in states like Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and also different other states.

• Due to the contributions made by foreign donor agencies during the 1990s, it led to the creation of new women centered Non-Government organizations. Support groups and NGOs like Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) have incurred a crucial part in attaining women's rights in India. A lot of women have appeared as leaders of many local movements. A clear example of a women who emerged as a leader when the occasion needed her to was MedhaPatkar, who played a crucial part in the Narmada BachaoAndolan.

• 2001 is considered as the year of Women’s empowerment (Swashakti) in India. A National Policy aimed at the Empowerment of Women was also passed in the same year.

• 9th March 2010, a day after the International Women's day, Rajyasabha approved The Women's Reservation Bill, assuring a reservation of about 33% to women in the Parliament and also in the state legislative bodies.

• A family court in Mumbai, India judged that a husband opposing his spouse wearing a kurta and pants and furthermore convincing her into wearing a sarican be treated to mercilessness caused by the husband and can be considered as a base to find divorce in 2014.

• Supreme Court of India has given decision on triple talaq (talaq-e-biddat) and said it is unlawful on 22nd August 2017 (source: Times of India 23rd August 2017).


Laws and Rights protecting Women in India:

• Hindu Marriage Act, 1955
• Muslim Marriages Act 1939
• Domestic Violence Act
• Regulation and Prevention of Misuse Act- 1994
• The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971
• Right of Abortion vs. Child in Mother's Womb: Section 312 o
• Eve teasing In India and Tortious Liabilities
• Dowry Prohibition Act 1961
• Women and Advertisements: The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986, provides protection to women in this concern, The Information Technology Act, 2000, Women have their inherent right to Dignity.
• Safe guarding Women against Domestic Violence Act, 2005
• Personal Dignity: Women have inherent right to Dignity,
• Commercial Sex Workers: Immoral Trafficking (Prevention) Act, 2005
• Domestic Violence Act, 2005
• A Woman in India Can't Rape another Woman: In the State Government V. Sheodayal case (1956 Cr LJ 83 M.P) M.P High court judged that humility of a woman can be annoyed by another women u/s 354. Raping another women u/s 376 (2) (g) of IPC 1860.
• Hindu Marriage Act, 1955
• The Eve Teasing Malaise: Protection for women in respect of these violence is given under Section 298 A and Section 298 B of the Indian Penal Code, a man can be found guilty of making a female the target of indecent gestures.
• Gender Disparity: Man and woman are both supposed to be considered equal and both plays a vital role in the formation and expansion of their families in a specific and the society in general. Article 15(1) promises equalities of chances for all citizens in matters relating to employment.
• Arrest of Fair Sex Fairly: The Article 14 of Indian constitution states that men and women are equal but concurrently Article 15 (3) empowers the state to make requirements in errand of women.

Source: http://www.legalserviceindia.com/laws/women_en_issues.htm

Once the organization finds out the problems faced by women, they can implement different activities that will empower women. But the important factor to be noted and analyzed is the impact that these CSR activities have on the society and how it benefits the organization in return. It is also important to understand what factors drive the company into investing in CSR again. In order to show the relationship between CSR activities, Women Empowerment and organizational success, System Dynamics methods and tools are used. Casual Loop tool of the System Dynamics method is used to pictorially represent the cause and effect relationship between CSR, Women Empowerment and Organizational Success. The loop explains the relationship between factors that motivates the organization to invest in CSR Activities and how

Women Empowerment through CSR activities will trigger these factors for organizational success. System Dynamics methodology simplifies the complexity in creating a causal relationship between the factors. This paper uses a System Dynamics model to just show the cause and effect relationship between the factors. No simulation or flow has been done to validate the causal loop.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Corporates focusing on women empowerment through their social responsibilities have paved a new path which leads to the self-development of the corporates and the targeted women simultaneously. It is important for the corporates to find out the right segment of women who actually needs help [3]. Scientific methods and proper surveys are required to find these segments effectively. She also believes that scientific studies are required to solve the issue of weak women sections in the society. A really big task is required to empower women and the need for dedicated and committed persons and agencies [2]. The paper also focuses on the CSR activities of selected multinational companies towards women empowerment. While empowerment is being done, it is also essential to understand the impact that an empowered woman can have on the society and also their role in a corporate and the growing importance of it [4]. They also emphasize on the fact that the corporate and society are different and not a single entity.

For women to be empowered, one of the basic requirements is to have proper education and also an exposure to the economic conditions [9]. Organizations can focus on giving better quality to education to the right segment. She believes that with proper education and information about the market and the economy, a woman will easily be able to realize her basic rights and laws protecting her, there by having a sense of self confidence leading to empowerment on and individual level. The importance of providing training to women on specific jobs or sectors is another factor the organizations can focus on [5]. These training will make them better equipped for the new responsibilities. She uses the example of banking sector and emphasize that more women are required in the field of banking and also many other sectors that deal with clients and customers. It is essential to recognize the potential of women in the rural sections of the society and if provided necessary help, we should focus on what they will be able to achieve [8]. He also tries to bring out the various challenges faced by corporates in trying to empower and provide help to women in the rural areas. The hardships that a woman go through in an organization and how an
organization should give her benefits and pay hikes is a factor to be emphasized on [1]. Along with this, the paper also discusses some of the existing CSR initiatives taken up by the organizations.

IV. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The SD modelling method has a very high potential in understanding the performance of the organization by looking into the functioning of the organization and also taking the necessary steps required to furthermore improve the performance of the organization [8]. SD modelling also helps in focusing on all the issues in general and solving them, rather than focusing on just one issue or a set of stereotype issues [7]. In system dynamics, some tools are being used for representing a structure of a system. Two main tools are: causal loops & stock and flow.

![Figure1.png](attachment:Figure1.png)

**Figure1** Factors influencing/leading to Women Empowerment and importance of education.

Figure 1 explains the factors influencing women empowerment and also the importance of education in a women’s life. Education mainly influenced by the awareness campaign which explains the importance of education. Also education impacts the health and hygiene outlook of a women. An educated woman will focused in staying healthy and also a healthy woman will tend to go for higher education and achieve more in life. Health and hygiene can be measured by following all the medical standards of BP, cholesterol, proper height and weight, proper nutrition, sugar level etc. and also the availability of basic sanitation facilities.

Education also helps the women in having a skillset which they can use to have a earning. Earning here means a job or a business which generates a constant source of revenue to the women. Once they have a constant revenue, they will achieve financial stability (measured in terms of the revenue earned). A financially stable woman will be self-confident and also will have a strong decision making capability. A self-confident will woman can be considered to stand on her own feet, which directly implies empowerment. Self-confidence can be measured by a woman’s ability to act on situation and take decisions. The second factor that influences Women Empowerment is education. Thus it is evident that education is a key factor in empowerment. Only if a women is educated, she will know about her rights and laws protecting them. A women with thorough knowledge of all her rights can be good leader and an inspiration for other women. There by crimes against women will be reduced if she is strong and aware of her rights. A strong leader needs strong communication skills, which again a woman can achieve through basic education and measured through her knowledge of different languages and ability to convince others. An educated woman with a strong decision making skills is an asset for any organization. R5 here is a positive loop showing how self-confidence can improve women empowerment.

V. CONCLUSION

Empowering women socially, economically, educationally, politically, and legally appears a Herculean task. But can be made possible with dedicated and determined effort of family, society, business houses, NGOs, local bodies and government to eradicate deep-rooted problem of disregard for women. This paper explains how the CSR activities undertaken by a company can help in Women Empowerment and attainment of a better and well balanced society. The paper shows how system dynamics approach help to invigorate women empowerment through corporate social responsibility and it also shows the relationship between CSR activities, Women Empowerment and organizational success. The relationship is clearly explained with the help of a casual loop and the paper includes only the casual loop and no simulation has been done. The causal loop model clearly explains how the CSR activities empower women. From the loop, it is clearly evident that education and health plays a vital role for any women to feel their power. Education provides them with a skill needed to earn them a livelihood and also makes them feel confident and aware of their rights, health in the other hand leads to education and also gives women a feel of security and will be physically strong to carry out actions and oppose harassments against them. Only if women are educated, they will understand the laws and rights protecting their interests. So it is clear that education and health play a vital role in empowering women.
REFERENCES


