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## Corporate Social Responsibility in Times of Covid-19-Some Indian Business Case Studies

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**Abstract:** *Corporate social responsibility has been voluntary for companies wishing to improve their public image and something nice to do to show their good corporate citizenship. But the COVID 19 pandemic has disrupted the business in unprecedented ways. Now the companies are seeing their relationship with their stakeholders has changed very suddenly and drastically. The coronavirus pandemic has expanded the financial strain on the government, businesses and individuals as well. So, this research paper moves around developing an understanding about the corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities performed by various business houses in India during COVID 19 pandemic. Various business case studies have been examined to find out the initiatives taken by the companies for benefit of the nation, society and individual as well.*

**Keywords:** *Corporate Social Responsibility, COVID 19, Pandemic.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION TO COVID-19

The disease caused by novel corona virus was first identified in the city of Wuhan, China and has been named coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). ‘CO’ stands for corona, ‘VI’ stands for virus and; ‘D’ stands for disease. India reported the first case of corona virus on January 30 in Kerala. The patient had the travel history from Wuhan, China. Now the pandemic has spread all over India. The region which has highest number of cases is Maharashtra, Delhi, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat.

As the cases related to virus are being increasing day by day, it seems to be a serious public health risk. Various world governments are at work to establish medication to stem possible devastating effects. The Indian government has announced various preventive measures to minimise the entry of the corona virus. A 21 days lockdown was been imposed to curb the spread of the deadly virus. All the factories, schools, colleges, offices and transportation services were closed after this the lockdown have been extended till 31<sup>st</sup> may,2020.



## **INTRODUCTION TO CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR):-**

Corporate social responsibility has been defined as the self-regulating business model which helps a company to be socially accountable to itself, to the stakeholders and to the public.

CSR is equally valuable for the company and for the community as well. Carroll, (2009) have elaborated that the firms are expected not only to be virtuous but should practice “social responsibility” or “corporate citizenship” as well.

The writings on CSR began with the studies of Bowen who published “social responsibility of the business man” in the year 1953. Carroll (1979) had proposed a four part definition of corporate social performance which includes economic responsibilities, legal responsibilities, ethical responsibilities and discretionary responsibilities. Carroll (1979) advocated that the managers should take into account three definitive criteria namely how, why, where and in what way the stakeholders are related to social responsibility.

Wood (1991) had proposed three category of corporate social performance (CSP) framework. The first category of the framework comprised of incorporate legitimacy, public responsibility and individual principle. The second category comprised of process of corporate social responsiveness, environmental assessment, stake holders management and issue management. And the third category included social impacts, social programs and social policies.

## **DEFINING CSR:**

The world business council for sustainable development (WBCSD) (2002) defined CSR as “the commitment of the company to contribute to the sustained economic development by working with employees, their families, the community and entire society in order to improve life quality”. Baker (2003) elaborated that CSR is concerned in the way the companies are managing their business processes that positively affect society aligned to the business,

Wood (1991) had defined CSR as “a business organisation’s configuration of principles of social responsibility, processes of social responsiveness and policies, programs and observable outcomes as they relate to the firm’s societal relationship”. Friedman (1962) focussed on the social responsibility of a business that uses its resources and participates in profit oriented activities while being governed by set rules and just and free competition. Kok et.al. (2001) defined CSR as “the obligation of the firm to use its resources in ways to benefit society, through committed participation as a member of society at large and improving welfare of society at large independently of direct gains of the company.

World bank (2002) elaborated CSR as the businesses’ obligations to provide renewable economic development through cooperation with employees, their families, the local community and society in a manner that enhances their livelihood and consequently leads to beneficial business and development”.

Aguilera et.al. (2007) defined CSR as “the firm’s consideration of and response to issue beyond the narrow economic, technical and legal requirements of the firm to accomplish social and environmental benefits along with the traditional economic gains which the firm seeks.

## **Some Indian Case studies on CSR**

### **(1) NESTLE INDIA:**

For helping the society in the critical time of COVID nestle has focussed on five areas to battle COVID 19 which are as follows:-

(a) **For the communities-**Nestle has contributed Rs.15 crore towards feeding programs for the underprivileged sectors through participation with NGOs engaged in this and also



supported in the distribution of essential groceries to the needy people.

The company has also contributed Rs.1 crore to Narayana Hrudalaya Foundation for purchase of ventilators.

(b) **For the sales force-** “NESTLE SURAKSHA” program have been launched for the front line sales force which will cover each one of them, with a COVID 19 insurance protection for three months. And as a measure of commitment and trust they have been paid 100% of the sales incentives.

(c) **For the operators-** Strict social distancing measures and other precautionary measure are being taken at all the manufacturing plants to ensure health and well-being of the employees. “NESTLE SAMMAN” program have been launched to reward each operator for working during the stipulated period.

(d) **For the people-** For the safety and health of employees various virtual engagement programs, training programs and ,mental health and well-being initiatives, check-in programs with youngsters who live alone or far from home, free advisory calls are being arranged with doctors pertaining to corona virus.

## **2. TATA TRUSTS**

Tata trusts are well known for its services to the society. During the situation pf the pandemic named as COVID 19 the TATA TRUSTS has contributes Rs.500 crore for:-

- (a) Personal protective equipment for medical personnel.
- (b) Respiratory system for treating the increasing cases.
- (c) Testing kits to increase the test capacity.
- (d) Setting up of modular treatment facilities for infected patients.
- (e) Knowledge management programs, training of health workers and the general public.

## **3. AMBUJA CEMENT AND ACC:**

Ambuja cement and ACC collectively have contributed Rs.3.3crore to three NGOs to support daily wage workers, labours, slum dwellers and homeless people across the country.

They have also contributed the funds to GOONJ an NGO which has expertise in disaster relief and materials management, Praja Foundation and Mumbai Roti Bank, who re working with labourers and daily wage workers. Both the companies have also distributed thousands of bags of food and ration kits to migrant labourers.

## **4. COAL INDIA LTD (CIL)**

Coal India Ltd has contributed Rs.221 crore to the prime minister and citizen assistance and relief in emergency situation fund (PM CARES ) to fight against the pandemic.

Employees of CIL have contributed their one day salary amounted Rs.61 crore to PM CARES fund.

### **Initiatives for employees:-**

(a) CIL has developed “sanitizing chambers” at the Bartunga hill mine, chirimiri, south eastern coalfields ltd. to fight against the pandemic and safety for its employees.

(b) CIL is sanitizing its equipment, workplaces and residential areas for the protection.



## **5. SBI FOUNDATION**

The CSR arm of SBI i.e. SBI foundation has contributed Rs.30 crore to implement various relief measures for COVID 19 across the country.

This fund will be utilised for:-

- (a) Upgradation of healthcare infrastructure and diagnostic facilities.
- (b) Providing protection gear and sanitation kit.
- (c) Research and development
- (d) Testing facilities and home based collection of samples.
- (e) Quarantine facilities for patients
- (f) Fulfilment of nutritional requirement of patients.
- (g) Setting up of helpline to tackle psychological concerns.
- (h) Initiatives for general awareness of public.

The foundation has also helped in distribution of ventilators and PPE kits to hospitals and supply of 10,000 freshly prepared meals at four centre of the country. The foundation is also providing training to five lakh health professionals to fight against the pandemic.

## **6. COCA-COLA INDIA**

COCA-COLA has committed to contribute a support of Rs.100 crores for helping the health care system and communities to fight against the crisis.

The company is also working with its NGOs and its bottling partners to help most affected group of the society i.e. unemployed and migrant workers by distributing meals and beverages during the period of lockdown.

### **BOSCH INDIA:-**

BOSCH India has contributed an amount of Rs.50 crore. The company has contributed Rs.5 crore to PM CARES fund as a part of CSR initiative and Rs.45 crore for the welfare of various communities.

### **ICICI GROUP:-**

ICICI group has pledged contribute Rs.100 crore to support the nation during the deadly pandemic. Out of this amount Rs.80 crore has been contributed to pm cares fund and Rs.20 crore has been provided to state government and local authorities.

ICICI group has also provided 2.13 lakh masks, 20,000 litres of sanitizer, 16,000 gloves, 5300 PPE kits, 2600 protective eye gears and 50 thermal scanners and 3 non-invasive ventilators to various hospitals and state departments.

The bank is also helping various departments and government to collect the donation digitally.

### **WALMART AND FLIPKART FOUNDATION:-**

The retail giants of India Walmart and Flipkart Foundation have announced to provide Rs.46 crore to fight against COVID 19 pandemic. The amount will help to provide PPE kits and necessary equipment to hospitals.

In addition the foundation has donated Rs.7.7 crore to NGOs Goonj and Srijan which will be utilised to procure essential relief materials such as food, medicine etc. to support farmers, rural communities and micro-businesses.



**RENEW POWER:-**

Renew power, India's largest independent power producer (IPP) announced to contribute Rs.20 crore to central and state government to fight against the pandemic.

Out of this, Rs.10 crore will be contributed to PM CARES fund and Rs.5 crore will be contributed to communities impacted by the lockdown. In addition to this, Renew has also adopted a village in Haryana where they will provide dry ration and hygiene kits.

**NATIONAL STOCK EXCHANGE (NSE):-**

The national stock exchange has contributed Rs.26 crore to PM CARES fund and few state government funds to fight against COVID-19.

**POWER FINANCE CORPORATION (PFC):-**

The power finance corporation has contributed Rs.200 crore to PM CARES fund to support fight against corona virus. PFC has also provided financial assistance of Rs.50 lakh to Indian Red Cross Society in Rajasthan.

**VEDANTA:-**

Diversified natural resource firm Vedanta has contributed Rs.201 crore to fight against the corona virus pandemic. It has also provided fund in providing relief to communities which are affected by the lockdown.

**Other initiatives:-**

- (a) Vedanta has pledged to provide around 10 lakh meals to daily wage earners and highly impacted families across India.
- (b) Vedanta will feed around 50,000 stray animals in India.
- (c) Vedanta has provided PPE kits, masks, disinfectant sprays, essential hygiene and medical equipment in collaboration with district hospital with the help of district administration. Vedanta has distributed almost 6,11,000 masks and 99,466 soaps and sanitizers across India.

**(14) OIL AND NATURAL GAS CORPORATION (ONGC):-**

ONGC has contributed Rs.300 crore to PM CARES fund from its CSR funds, the initiative came up to strengthen the national drive to fight against corona pandemic.

**Other initiatives:-**

- (a) 35 projects worth Rs.4.59 crore is implemented across India.
- (b) Distribution of PPE kits, masks are distributed to the sanitation workers.
- (c) In collaboration with Akshay Patra 2400 meals per day are being provided to the needy families.
- (d) Funds have been raised to feed the daily wage workers and migrant labourers who are suffering due to lack of food.

**ASIAN PAINTS:-**

Asian paints, one of the leading paint and Décor Company has contributed an amount of Rs. 35 crore to COVID 19 relief fund. The contribution has been made to the central as well as emergency relief fund. Apart from this, Asian Paints in collaboration with various stakeholders, NGOs, district administration across India have reached out to the affected communities and helped them overcome the critical situation. The company has also focussed on providing relief measures to truckers, migrant workers and underserved community members.





**Other initiatives:-**

- (a) The company has been working with the retailers and have helped them to start their business by sanitizing their shops and also offered medical insurance scheme for the workers.
- (b) The company has also launched a “safe painting” campaign for ensuring safety of the painters.
- (c) Employees are instructed to work from home following the guidelines.
- (d) The safety of the employees is being ensured by providing protective gears who are stepping out of the house.
- (e) The company is also working with various NGOs for providing food, masks and sanitizers.

**INFOSYS FOUNDATION:-**

Infosys foundation, the philanthropic and CSR arm of Infosys and Narayana Health, have announced to launch a 100 room quarantine facility for corona virus patients. The facility will aim at saving patients of the economically weaker section.

The Infosys foundation has also announced to contribute Rs.100 crore to help government with COVID 19 relief efforts.

**Initiative for employees:-**

- (a) Employees are encouraged to work from home.
- (b) Adoption of regular cleaning routines and stocking essentials such masks and sanitizers.
- (c) Implementation of social distancing practices.
- (d) The company is providing active and continuous support to the families of the employees.
- (e) Infosys has provided mobilized laptops and desktops, with access to virtual work environment.
- (f) The company has launched InfyMe app to connect with its global workforce and provide the latest updates form advisories.

**WIPRO LTD.:-**

Wipro ltd, Wipro enterprises ltd and Azim Premji Foundation have together committed to contribute Rs.1125 crore to tackle the unprecedented crisis arising from COVID 19 pandemic. These sums are in addition to the annual CSR activities of Wipro and the philanthropic spends of the Azim Premji Foundation.

**RELIANCE INDUSTRIES:-**

Mukesh Ambani’s Reliance Industries have contributed Rs.500 crore to PM CARES fund. The company has provided Rs.5 crore each to the government of Maharashtra and Gujarat to fight against the pandemic.

In addition to this company has also provided 100 bedded dedicated corona virus hospitals in Mumbai, manufacturing 1 lakh protective face mask per day, also providing 50 lakh free meals to the needy through NGOs and also fuel to emergency vehicles.

Besides this thousands of PPE kits are being distributed among health workers and care givers.



**LARSEN AND TOUBRO (L&T):-**

Larsen and Toubro India's leading technology, manufacturing and financial services has committed to donate Rs.150 crore to the PM CARES Funds. It has also supported 1, 60,000 contract labours by continuing to pay their wages amid lockdown and providing them with food and basic amenities. L&T has converted its training centres into isolation centres.

Various other efforts are:-

**Welfare initiatives:-**

- (a) Providing timely wages to workmen and subcontractors during lockdown. Payment is being made directly to their linked bank accounts.
- (b) Extra vigilance to ensure proper hygiene, catering, waste management, cleanliness and preventive measures at various labour camps.
- (c) 24X7 availability of ambulance, doctors and other medical facilities.

**Employee initiatives:-**

- (a) Relaying health advisories and related messaging to around 1, 20,000 employees.
- (b) Employees are encouraged to work from home.
- (c) Formation of COVID 19 response teams (CRT) to take timely actions and to keep a constant vigil on evolving situation and take necessary actions.

**TATA SONS:-**

TATA SONS a parent company of TATA motor have contributed Rs.1000 crore in the fight against COVID 19 and related activities.

**INDIAN TOBACCO COMPANY (ITC):-**

ITC, FMCG Company has set up contingency fund of Rs.150 crore to address and manage the challenges arising out of COVID 19. The company has also provided assistance to district health and health care eco system that reaches out to the weakest section of the society.

The company has also joined hands with three non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to deliver food supplies to the needy people and those who are severely impacted by the lockdown.

**ZOMATO:-**

Zomato, food delivery giant is helping its partner restaurant, delivery staff and other daily wage workers in India who are income starved during lockdown. The firm has also set up fund to support to the family of daily wage workers. The name of the fund is "FEEDING INDIA". Zomato has also partnered with various NGOs to ensure distribution of meal kits.

**HINDUSTAN COMPUTERS LIMITED (HCL):-**

HCL has done the following to fight against the COVID pandemic:-

**For communities:-**

- (a) As a part of CSR, HCL India is providing cooked food and dry rations to highly impacted and under privileged communities across the country.
- (b) HCL has distributed around 6 lakh nutritious and hygienic meals and around 5000 plus dry ration kits in the national capital region of India.

**For employees:-**

- (a) HCL has provided life coach to the employees for their protection.
- (b) Free health care to take care of employees and their families.



- (c) HCL has allowed one hour as MY TIME for employees working from home so that employees can use this time to meet family needs and personal responsibilities.
- (d) All sorts of claim process have been eased out and made faster
- (e) Telecom claim limit revised for all employees
- (f) Global helpline has been created to address employee concerns related to COVID 19.
- (g) Corporate insurance policy has been revised to cover COVID 19.

#### **HINDUSTAN UNILEVER LIMITED (HUL):-**

During the time of COVID 19 HUL stood united with India. The company has donated Rs. 100crore. Despite this lot of other work had been carried out to help combat the serious situation.

#### **Donations for the community:-**

- (a) HUL has donated health kits and food items for patients, health officials and low income families.
- (b) Sanitizers have been given to local police in various cities.
- (c) In partnership with United Nation Development Program, sanitation and hygiene products have been distributed to sanitation workers in Mumbai and other cities.
- (d) In partnership with “United Way” lifebuoy soaps have been distributed to 40,000 plus workers across Mumbai. Hygiene and sanitation products have been distributed to 13 hospitals in Mumbai.
- (e) The sustainable community development initiative has supported 1 lakh migrant labour families by donating food kits and essential hygiene products.
- (f) Horlicks biscuits and sachets have been distributed among 5 lakh vulnerable children in New Delhi.

#### **Collaboration for medical infrastructure:-**

- (a) HUL has collaborated with Apollo Hospital, State Bank of India, Oyo, Lemon Tree and others to create isolation facilities for medical supervision for patients.
- (b) HUL donates 75,000 testing kits to tackle the spread of the virus in India.
- (c) They have also provided PPE kits, medical and hygiene essentials.
- (d) They have provided 29 ventilators to government hospital in Maharashtra.

#### **Providing mass awareness:-**

- (a) In partnership with UNICEF large awareness campaign on social distancing and hygiene has been conducted.
- (b) The campaign titled #BreakTheChain/#Viruskikaditodo’ helps the general public with preventive strategies to protect themselves from the virus.
- (c) HUL has also partnered with Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai to create awareness among the public regarding the pandemic.

#### **Safety of employees:-**

The safety of employees is the topmost priority of the company. For their safety and well-being following measure are being taken:-

- (a) Implementation of strict standards of access control and social distancing in the supply chain and sales force.





- (b) Use personal protection equipment (PPE) and strict sanitisation procedure are being implemented.

**Other activities:-**

- (a) In collaboration with the government, HUL has made it possible to ensure the supply of essential goods across the country during the lockdown period.
- (b) For small and medium sized suppliers, easy payments have been released.
- (c) Health and safety checklist is being followed to ensure the well-being of shoppers and staff.

## **7. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION**

Corporate social responsibility means a company should uphold the principle of sustainable development. Further the companies need to be economically viable, have a positive impact on society and should respect and preserve the environment. During this difficult time (COVID 19) it is the duty of every company to help the society as well as the humanity. The ministry of corporate affairs notified that the contribution towards the Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situation Fund (PM CARES Fund) will be considered as a part of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

So as discussed in the paper companies have taken many initiatives to stabilise the business and keeping their employees to not get affected in the pandemic. Apart from government initiatives these companies have tried to overcome the situation within the limited resources. On the other hand companies can't work to their full extent as they have limited basic resources like labour, raw material which creates a situation of no profit or loss. But still they have tried to handle the worst situation by helping their employees, government and society as well.

The company's CSR policy helped in removing the mental illness of the employees. In this pandemic situation the CSR initiatives of the companies supported them with financial security also. It also helped the small businesses which are the suppliers of raw materials and essential services to the business firms. In addition to this, supporting the small businesses also helped to stabilize the economy in this crucial situation. Thus, CSR initiatives by organizations have helped in identification of new areas where they can support the society and the nation at different levels is helping the economy to become a good investment destination when all the global economies are trying to overcome this pandemic.

**Limitations:-**

While preparing the research paper legal aspects like corporate governance, labour welfare related laws have not been taken into consideration.

**Recommendations:-**

- Periodic review of the CSR activities should be conducted so as to identify the areas where they are lagging behind.
- During the time of COVID 19 companies must find ways to transform and adapt.
- More NGOs should be encouraged to collaborate with the companies for CSR activities as they play a crucial role in the upliftment of the society.



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