CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

“There is no way to avoid paying serious attention to corporate citizenship: the costs of failing are simply too high. There are countless win-win opportunities waiting to be discovered: every activity in a firm’s value chain overlaps in some way with social factors — everything from how you buy or procure to how you do your research — yet very few companies have thought about this. The goal is to leverage your company’s unique capabilities in supporting social causes, and improve your competitive context at the same time. The job of today’s leaders is to stop being defensive and start thinking systematically about corporate responsibility.”

— Michael Porter

Over the past ten to fifteen years ‘corporate social responsibility’ (CSR) has become an iconic buzzword. The idea that business can and should be responsible, that they must give back to society, is accepted widely. Manifestation of such socially responsible activities includes philanthropy, voluntary initiatives, and the reduction of environmental impact.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has been debated and practiced in one form or another for more than 4,000 years. For example, the ancient Vedic and Sutra texts of Hinduism and the Jatakas of Buddhism include ethical admonitions on usury (the charging of excessive interest) and Islam has long advocated Zakat, or a wealth taxi. The modern concept of CSR can be more clearly traced to the mid-to-late 1800s, with industrialists like John H. Patterson of National Cash Register seeding the industrial welfare movement and philanthropists like John D. Rockerfeller setting a charitable precedent that we see echoed more than a hundred years later with the likes of Bill Gates.

“Business has a responsibility beyond its basic responsibility to its shareholders; a responsibility to a broader constituency that includes its key stakeholders: customers, employee, NGOs, government - the people of the communities in which it operates.”

— Courtney Pratt, Former CEO Toronto Hydro

There is growing recognition of the significant effect the CSR activities have on society, employees, customers, communities, the environment, competitors, business partners, investors,
shareholders, governments and stakeholders. It is also becoming increasingly clear that firms can contribute to their own wealth and to overall societal wealth by considering the effect they have on the global front when making decisions.

It has been the burning question for corporate responsibility since the beginning and remains so today, even as corporate responsibility has skyrocketed to the top quartile of many global corporations’ agendas: Have business of this decade really become socially responsible? Which stakeholder has driven this crusade against irresponsible behaviour of companies?

“Companies that are breaking the mould are moving beyond corporate social responsibility to social innovation. These companies are the vanguard of the new paradigm. They view community needs as opportunities to develop ideas and demonstrate business technologies, to find and serve new markets, and to solve longstanding business problems.”

-Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Harvard Business Review

The recent rise of CSR initiatives is an indicator that the role of corporations in society is clearly on the agenda. Today, virtually every company, market or business has experienced a pressure from its stakeholders for legitimate practices. In tough economic times, ensuring a company’s survival seems difficult enough, without adding corporate citizenship priorities into the mix. With everything going on, beginning or maintaining strong corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives may not be at the top of a company’s priority list. Let’s face it, not every company has money and resources to spare, especially now while the economy isn’t strong. What are the benefits of investing in CSR? Does CSR impact employee attitudes?

There is also some evidence that CSR is beneficial because – as with customers – CSR improves employees’ perceptions about the company. When a company has CSR initiatives, employees are more proud of and committed to the organization. CSR can help to boost the employee morale in the organisation and create a positive brand-centric corporate culture in the organisation. By developing and implementing CSR initiatives, top management feel contented and proud, and this pride trickles down to their employees. This is because their personal identities are partly tied up in the companies that they work for. The employee’s association with the company reflects positively on him and makes him feel good about the work he does for the company.
"In my view the successful companies of the future will be those that integrate business and employees' personal values. The best people want to do work that contributes to society with a company whose values they share, where their actions count and their views matter."

- Jeroen van der Veer, Committee of Managing Directors (Shell)

Organizations that are investing in CSR should leverage that investment to improve both employee perceptions of the organization and customer perceptions. Communication about the CSR investment and what the tangible positive outcomes are of that investment will help employees better understand the contributions the organization is making. After all, employees can’t be proud of something they aren’t aware of. Additional communication about CSR initiatives is likely to be especially important for those at the lower levels in the organization hierarchy.

In a survey conducted by the National Consumers League and Fleishman Hillard, a public relations company it was found that more US consumers consider the way companies treat their employees a good indicator of their social conscience than their philanthropy. In India the business houses of the Tata’s and Birla’s enjoy a very high degree of respect among the general public for their employee centric attitude.

“I do believe that we, in the Tata Group, have held a view and sense of purpose that our companies are not in existence just to run our business and to make profit but that we are responsible and good corporate citizens over and above our normal operations”

- Ratan N Tata, Chairman, Tata Group

Inspite of growing interest that the field of CSR is arousing in organisations, very little has been written so far regarding their potential impact on the employee attitudes and how they may affect their willingness to co-operate with the company.

1.1 Overview of the Problem

“Employees don’t stay with a company because of benefits. It is the long-term relationship-building that attracts people to stay-

- Jeff Swartz, CEO of Timberland
Several different concepts have been put forth attempting to describe the nature and understanding of social responsibility. For example, CSR means that companies are responsible for their impact on society \(^1\); but other similar concepts include corporate social performance (CSP), which has been used to describe the financial returns an organization may see from CSR activities \(^2\); and corporate social orientation (CSO), which refers to how people view CSR and CSP cumulatively. \(^3\) A definition that gets to the core of the general construct is “a company’s commitment to minimizing or eliminating any harmful effects and maximizing its long-run beneficial impact on society” \(^4\).

The extending literature on corporate social responsibility (CSR) provides various dentitions of the concept \(^5\). The social responsibility of business includes the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time \(^6\). As stated by \(^7\), CSR “means something, but not always the same thing, to everybody”. According to Bowen (1953), one of the first scholars to define the concept, CSR is the obligation of a businessmen “to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society” \(^8\). Since this definition of CSR, literature has provided contradictory definition of the concept. The elaborate review of Carroll (1999), which traces the evolution of the CSR construct since the 1950s, clearly indicated that one of the main problems in the literature is to sketch out a conceptual framework of CSR \(^9\).

According to Sims (2003), for instance, ‘social responsibility’ and ‘legality’ is not one and the same thing. CSR is often seen as acts that go beyond what is prescribed by the law”\(^10\). The definition of McGuire (1963) and Davis (1973) distinguished the social responsibilities of a business from its economic, technical, and legal obligations \(^11\). Although Carroll (1999) described the definition of Davis as a restricted version of CSR, Carroll also distinguished between the economic component and the non-economic components of CSR; the former is what the business does for itself, while the latter are what the business does for others (Carroll, 1999). Despite his attractive distinction, Carroll (1999) stated that “economic viability is something business does for society as well” and described the economic component as “a responsibility to produce goods and services that society wants and to sell them at a profit”.
However, this definition of the economic component might indicate the basic function of business in the society.

"Corporate social responsibility is a hard-edged business decision. Not because it is a nice thing to do or because people are forcing us to do it... because it is good for our business"

-Niall Fitzerald Former CEO, Unilever

There are two main differences which provide the basis for the most heated debates about CSR. First, the nature of the corporation has changed significantly over the past two centuries. While the most of these early activities were paternalistic in nature and chiefly initiated by the owners of those companies. Today’s CSR is carried out by huge corporations that are owned by hundreds and thousands of largely anonymous shareholders. Second, many of the early CSR activities by wealthy industrialists provided a standard for governments to issue legislation which made provision of decent working conditions, fair wages and access to education a mandatory right for citizens.

To say that CSR happens to employees is anthropomorphically erroneous. That is, if an employee is defined as anyone working for a particular firm, then CSR by nature is necessarily reciprocal in that employees as individuals and groups, and as representatives of their firm’s, commit acts of social (ir)responsibility, whereas other employees are insider witnesses to such acts. Given that employees are insiders, and often seek identification with their employing firm, they differ from the general public (outsiders, and possibly consumers, who are observers of the organization but not a part of its functional core). So employees may react negatively when perceiving a corporate injustice because the action implies a misalignment with their values and threatens their psychological needs. Employees may also react, however, with dissonance and make cognitive adjustments to dampen their original evaluation and demonize the organization’s opponents. Further, we define employees as the non-management workforce because these individuals are less likely to be involved in developing and implementing CSR policy, less likely to have fully internalized the corporate culture and be defensive of it (as compared to top management teams), and more likely to evaluate and react to the organization’s acts of CSR.

Employees have attitudes or viewpoints about many aspects of their jobs, their careers, and their organizations. Although it has been more common to investigate employee attitude data at the
individual employee level, researchers have begun to explore similar relationships at the business-unit level and the organizational level. Research conducted under the rubric of organizational climate has had success in aggregating individual employees’ perceptions and investigating their relationship to both organizational-level and individual-level outcomes. In addition, there are a handful of studies that have explored the relationship between aggregated employee job satisfaction attitudes and organizational (or unit-level) performance. Collier and Esteban (2007) showed that employees’ support affects the implementation of ethical corporate behavior by companies that operate in different cultures globally. They added that employees with ethical values and vision that agree with those of the corporation deliver CSR practices effectively.

Stautmanis (2008) adds that for employees to accept CSR they have to be provided by satisfactory working conditions with mutual coordination between employer and employee, and be trained on the goals and values of CSR. Similarly, Ellis (2009) states that employees’ awareness of CSR activities of the company, and CSR policies and values of the company encourage employees to support the company.

*CSR trends towards a people-centric approach. So, you see companies giving importance to HealthCare and education, as they directly benefit people at large”*

- Parul Soni, Executive Director Ernst & Young

The number of empirical studies which focuses on the impacts of CSR has continuously increased since the 1980s. Some of these studies have attempted to identify how CSR affects the overall organizational performance and provided empirical evidence on the relation between these corporate behaviours and reputation, competitiveness, and sustainability of the organizations. Some other studies have explored the impact of corporate social activities on financial performance. However, only a limited number of studies have examined how corporate social responsibility affects employee’s attitudes and commitment towards the organisation.

There seems to exist some evidence that employee attitudes play a relevant role in enriching employee’s commitment and retention the deep mechanism operating below this is still quite
unknown\textsuperscript{19}. There are two dominant conceptualis\,ations of organisational commitment in sociological literature.

1. Employee’s loyalty towards the organisation and
2. Employee’s intention to stay with the organisation

Loyalty is an effective response to, and identification with, an organisation, based on a sense of duty and responsibility.

1.2 Statement of the Problem
Interest in the potential of corporations to impact society has risen within the last three decades as corporate scandal and fraud have generated much attention and concern\textsuperscript{20}. Basically the reason for CSR gaining much importance is due to the fact that it is related to the well-being of all stakeholders of the organization since it has gained a foothold within the company itself, specifically in the area of human resources\textsuperscript{21}. Employees prefer and want to work for corporations that are regarded as ethical and responsible\textsuperscript{22}. The problem statement of the current research is

*Can the ineffective use of Corporate Social Responsibility policies influence Employees’ Perception towards Organizational Commitment?*

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the current study is to analyse the impact of CSR on organizational commitment of employees based on the framework derived from Social Identity Theory (SIT). A review of the literature reveals that SIT provides an explanation for the link between corporate social activities and employees’ work attitudes. The theory proposes that people tend to describe their self-descriptions in a social context and classify themselves and others into different social categories\textsuperscript{24}. A person has a repertoire of memberships in different social categories consisting of nationality, political affiliation, sport team, or similar groups\textsuperscript{24}. Social identity includes all aspects of an individual’s self-image which derived from the categories to which that individual perceives him or herself to belong\textsuperscript{25}. Therefore, every membership in different social categories is a social identity that describes and prescribes one’s attributes as a member of that group – i.e., what one should think and feel, and how one should behave (Hogg et al., 1995).
The positive relationship between employee perceptions of CSR and commitment emphasizes the payoff that may flow from investment in CSR. The relationship between external CSR and commitment suggests the benefits are not restricted to external reputation and external stakeholder management, but may also be reflected in the behaviour of internal stakeholders. This emphasizes the importance firms should attach to the communication of CSR policies to its employees. The present researcher, therefore, is interested in analyzing the relation between Corporate Social Responsibility and Employee Commitment. What role, does the employees perception of organization’s social responsibility play in shaping their commitment towards the firm?

Despite the concentration on corporate social responsibility activities, less stress has been given with regards to the employee perspective. Whether there exists a link between employee commitment and CSR initiatives by the organization. There is a need to develop a research thrust that will both unlock the mysteries of the notion of ethical culture with respect to employee commitment and investigate the avenues by which it impacts on employees of the organization.

The following points of purpose were developed to guide this investigation:

1. To make a critical assessment of the CSR activities and its impact on the employee.

There is an increasing public demand on business leaders to include social issues as part of their strategies in the present day social and political business climate. Managers continually meet demands from various stakeholder groups to devote resources to CSR. Such pressures emanates from constituencies as employees, consumers, communities and environment. Employee’s pressures include the increasing public recognition of certain employee rights in the workplace, including non-discrimination in hiring, firing and promotion. There exists a need to analyze this facet of the impact of CSR activities on the employee.

2. To evaluate the variables of successful implementation of CSR activities in the organization.

A key potential benefit from CSR initiatives involves establishing the conditions that can contribute to increasing the commitment and motivation of employees to become more innovative and productive. Companies that employ CSR related perspectives and tools tend to be businesses that provide the pre-conditions for increased loyalty and commitment from
employees. How critical are the internal stakeholders (viz. employees) in the implementation of CSR initiatives. Does the successful implementation of CSR depend on employee involvement?

3. To study the attitudinal changes in Top level and Middle Level Management as a result of CSR initiatives.

When employees feel that the organization is responsible toward them (e.g., improving work-family balance, offering salaries higher than industry average), they tend to reciprocate (Settoon et al., 1996; Eisenberger et al., 2001) with positive attitudes toward the organization, including affective bonds and feelings of loyalty. They form a stronger sense of community, feeling that they can satisfy their social, intimacy and security needs, and experiencing higher levels of psychological well-being. These positive emotions can induce people to develop higher affective and normative commitment toward the organization. Conversely, if employees perceive that the organization is a bad “corporate citizen”, is not committed to them, does not allow them to satisfy social needs and to perform meaningful work, their organizational identification, self-esteem and satisfaction decrease, their affective bond with the organization vanishes, the sense of loyalty decreases, and the desire to leave the organization intensifies. A comparison difference between the top and middle level management would better help in understanding the attitudinal changes.

4. To find the relationship between CSR and employee commitment.

In the current study, the importance of CSR for an employee is included in the proposed framework. If an employee supports the notion that a firm has some social responsibilities beyond profit maximization, he or she may show a higher commitment towards his or her organization which engages in CSR activities. In this case, it can be expected that the higher one’s beliefs to the importance of CSR, the greater the strength of the link between CSR and organizational commitment. In his study, Peterson (2004) also considered the effect of this factor on the proposed link between corporate citizenship and organizational commitment. According to the results of this study, the relationship was stronger among employees who believe highly in the importance of the social responsibility of businesses (Peterson, 2004). Employee commitment might per se be one of the variables resulting as a behavioural outcome of the CSR initiatives.
1.4 Pilot Study

As previously mentioned, CSR has not been extensively examined within the context of Employee Commitment. In order to capture the appropriate domains of the independent variable (CSR) for use in the main study it was necessary to conduct a pilot study. Based on the premise that not all CSR activities are the same, and that organizations vary in how they enact these initiatives, it was necessary to understand the nature of involvement of the employees in these activities.

1.4.1 Sample and Procedures

Correlations analysis was used to determine link between organizational commitment and CSR towards the social and nonsocial stakeholders. The internal consistency of each scale was assessed with considering the number of items, inter-item correlations, and Cronbach’s α levels. A two-stage hierarchical regression analysis was applied to test the hypothesized relationships. Both the changes in the adjusted $R^2$ and the level of significance in the regression equations were used to determine the existence and the strength of the relationship in the hypothesized model.

“In the study of communications, as in the study of people, you often can’t observe directly all you would like to explore…usually, then it is appropriate to sample”[31]. Random sampling method was used in order to understand the commitment level based on the CSR initiatives taken by the company. The sample size consisted of 310 employees of Tata Motors (Pune)

1.4.2 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis is the major entity that is being analysed in the study. It is the “what” or “whom” being studied. In social science research, the most typical units of analysis are individual people. Other units of analysis can be groups, social organizations, and/or social artifacts[32]. The units of analysis in this pilot study were the top and middle level management of Tata Motors
1.4.3 Results

The correlation analysis indicated a higher correlation between the CSR initiatives and the commitment of the employees. A two-stage bivariate regression analysis indicated the standardized β-coefficient of CSR (employees) pointed a positive relation with organizational commitment. The moderator factor was significant at the 0.05 level. The dependent variable was corporate social responsibility and independent variable was organisational commitment. The variable CSR to employees was significant at the 0.05 level. In the second step, the dependent variable CSR and were entered into the model. The adjusted $R^2$ explained the variance of the organizational commitment.

1.4.4. Conclusion

The pilot study indicated that CSR initiatives towards employees was the most significant predictor among these proposed factors with having highest level of β coefficients and adjusted $R^2$ change. In fact, such a strong link between the CSR towards employees and organizational commitment was expected at the beginning of the analysis, because the items in the second subscale relates with employees’ career development, training opportunities, or equal rights. In conclusion, the results of the study depict that employees prefer to work in socially responsible organizations and their organizational commitment level is positively affected by CSR towards society and employees. Based on the SIT literature, the prestige of an organization affects the self-esteem of its employees. The findings of the current study are consistent with the proposed model of SIT as well.

1.5 Hypothesis Development

Research indicates that the nonsocial stakeholders do not involve human relationships. It can be noted that the consideration of nonsocial stakeholders has been significant advancement in the understanding of the concept and has likely increased the recognition of these stakeholders in the business community. As the voice of these silent stakeholders, non-governmental organizations work for the same goal and expect the support of business organizations to their activities. By this way, protecting environment can be a common point for all of these stakeholders therefore; corporate social activities to these stakeholders can be titled as CSR to social and non-social stakeholders. When considering the increasing attention of people to the
global environmental problems in the recent times, people working for such an organization can feel an increasing commitment to it. Moreover, according to the propositions of SIT literature, the comparison of organization with competitors can also strengthen the level of organizational commitment.

Freeman (1984), stakeholders of a firm include those who affect or are affected by the firm’s goals. According to the results of this study, the relationship was stronger among employees who believe highly in the importance of the social responsibility of businesses. Internal environment of an organization can be an antecedent of the organizational commitment. Therefore, it is hypothesized that working conditions including career opportunities, organizational justice, or family-friendly policies affect the level of organizational commitment among employees. Previous studies also indicated that organizational commitment closely relates with some organizational factors like organizational climate or the degree of person–organization fit. In this case, it can be expected that the higher one’s beliefs to the importance of CSR, the greater the strength of the link between CSR and organizational commitment. Based on the discussion above, the study examined the following hypothesis:

**H1:** Employee’s Perceptions about the Firms CSR initiatives will be positively related to their organizational commitment

According to the results of this study, the relationship was stronger among employees who believe highly in the importance of the social responsibility of businesses. The importance of CSR for an employee is included in the proposition. If an employee supports the notion that a firm has some social responsibilities beyond profit maximization, he or she may show a higher commitment to his or her organization which engages in CSR activities. When employees feel that the organization is responsible toward them (e.g., improving work-family balance, offering salaries higher than industry average), they tend to reciprocate with positive attitudes toward the organization, including affective bonds and feelings of loyalty. Employees may also be proud of being a member of this organization, as per SIT, members of a social category can share its success or failure and the positive feedback received from the satisfied customer is one of the most effective ways of measuring organizational success. In this case, it can be expected that the higher one’s belief to the importance of CSR, the greater the strength of the link between CSR
and organizational commitment. However, as it is explained previously, this relation can also be affected by the importance of CSR. Therefore, it is hypothesized that

**H2: CSR leads to positive attitudinal changes in the Top and Middle Level Management.**

Leaving a legacy through work becomes an affirmation of the person’s sense of self and identity; it can become an important form of narcissistic gratification. Meaningful work fosters the employees’ self-esteem, hope, health, happiness and sense of personal growth. Employees will develop higher affective and normative commitment when they perceive that their organization acts as a “true corporate citizen”. In the light of above thought the hypothesis was proposed.

**H3: Influence of the perception of organizational commitment will increase as the employee's beliefs supporting the importance of social responsibility of businesses increases.**

The myriads of CSR initiatives are so much hyped about and made visible by media today that it may lead to the fallacy of interpreting CSR as social activities external to private enterprises. The concept of CSR is viewed by researchers with different variables including organisational performance, investor behaviour and employee behaviour. CSR is having positive effects on organizational performance by building positive reputation of the organisation. Stawiski et al. (2010) proposed that in order to yield maximum benefits of CSR, employees should be involved in decision making regarding which actions should be undertaken relating to environment, community, employees themselves and the likewise. The more the employees will be influenced by CSR initiatives the more would be the affiliation towards the organisation. If employees perceive their organization as being a socially responsible member of society, the senses of belongingness to this favourable reputable organization can enhance their self-concepts. According to the theory, it can be proposed that if an employee starts to be proud of being a member of socially responsible organization, his or her work attitudes can be influenced positively. Based on the above discussion the hypothesis was formulated as

**H4: Shift in CSR implementation affects employee commitment in the organisation.**

1.6 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual model is presented in Figure 1.1. The propositions in the figure suggests that the independent variable of CSR as predictor with four domains
1. Economic,
2. Legal,
3. Ethical,
4. Discretionary

will impact the dependant variables in the form of behavioural outcomes and the four dimensions are:

1. Employee Commitment,
2. Attitudinal Change,
3. Change in Perception,
4. CSR Implementation

What does it mean for a corporation to be socially responsible? Academicians and practitioners have been striving to establish agreed upon definitions of this concept for over 30 years. In 1960, Keith Davis suggested that social responsibility refers to “business decisions and actions taken for reasons at partially beyond the firm’s direct economic decisions or technical interest.” At
about the same time, Eells and Walton (1961) argued that CSR refers to the problems that arise when corporate enterprise casts its shadow on the social scene, and the ethical principles that ought to govern the relationship between the corporation and the society. In recent years the term Corporate Social Performance (CSP) has emerged as an inclusive and global concept to embrace corporate social responsibility, responsiveness, and the entire spectrum of socially beneficial activities of businesses. The focus on social performance emphasizes the concern for corporate action and accomplishment in the economic sphere. With a performance perspective it is clear that firms must formulate and implement social goals and programs as well as integrate ethical sensitivity into all decision making, policies, and actions. The dimensions of work attitudes, organisational commitment is the psychological identification that an individual feels towards his or her employing organisation. Organisational commitment reflects an employee’s relation with an organisation and has implications for the decision of maintaining membership.

People come to organizations with some needs, skills, and expectations. They hope to work in an environment where they can use their abilities and satisfy their needs. If an organization provides these opportunities to its employees the level of organizational commitment can increase as well. In fact a link can be expected between organizational commitment and corporate social activities which are directly satisfying the needs of employees (Peterson, 2004) however it is still not fully understood how corporate social activities which relates with other stakeholders affect the organizational commitment of employees. In the literature, the studies of Peterson (2004) and Brammer et.al (2005) support the notion that such activities positively affect the employee’s attitudes and their intentions to quit the organisation. Dawkins (2004) stated that corporate social contribution attracts motivated potential employees and improves commitment level of existing employee.

1.7 Delimitations

The study was delimited in following ways:

1. The study was restricted to the employees belonging to only managerial cadre in the organisations.
2. CSR was measured on the perception of employees who may not be well informed about the CSR involvement of their organisation. Therefore it is possible that there can be difference between the perceptions of respondents and the actual involvement level.
3. Depending on the selected sample, the current study reflects only the beliefs of employees, the internal stakeholders of a business.

4. Although it was assumed that the respondents give accurate and reliable information about the CSR involvement of their organisations it is possible that they might provide incorrect or incomplete information.

5. The study was restricted to the time span of 3-4 months of data collection. In case the duration of data collection would be more, the results would be more exact.

6. The data was cross-sectional in nature as each employee provided responses at only one point in time. It is conceivable that the responses would change for several model constructs depending upon situational elements. It is hoped that any extreme cases would either have been evident in the preliminary analysis of outliers or cancelled each other out statistically in the current design, but a longitudinal design would have delivered more reliability and validity inferences and estimates of true relations between model constructs.
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