Corporate Social Responsibility Performance in Relation with Digitalization of Marketing in India

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Abstract:
India being a developing country, companies have now realized that profit making is not only the goal of any corporation, but also trust building and gaining good social relationship is must in long run. Where going green and concept of being responsible in every small and large industry is spreading all over, company for being conscious of CSR implementing cost is also obvious. No company wants to merely spend over any extra business affairs which directly don’t generate any worth. So, in this context, company started looking of the way to create business values out of CSR investment. This paper tried to relate impact of digital marketing on CSR performance of the company and to find out the ways to make worth out of CSR investment by exploiting digital facility. The paper is based over various secondary sources of information. This paper finds that CSR now can be used as a tool of marketing. It is not merely a waste of investment. It helps to gain sustainability and publicity with a positive responsible image of the company. In long term it will achieve positive word of mouth, publicity, support and goodwill and relationship development. Digitization has made it easier to initiate and promote CSR activities.

Key words: corporate social responsibility, digital marketing, CSR role, online marketing

I. INTRODUCTION
Digitalization has its impact on almost every aspect of our lives and so in business too. Internet has come up with the most convenient way to deal most of the business activities from designing, automated production system, virtual display, distribution, promotion and everything. When this time is all grown up to be virtual, everything is under observation. Every smaller or bigger invention, effort, events and all is all put into it. Thus it is positively benefiting from one side and challenging from other side. But it’s well said that advertisement industry has best been favoured by this opportunity, where companies can pricelessly promote possible things of theirs and yes, internet has played a remarkable role in making advertising a Rs. 10,000 crore industry in India.

Corporate social responsibility is clear by its name, corporate “social” responsibility, if it is for society and something is being done by corporation towards it than society must be benefited and known about it. CSR is made compulsory to act ethically as social entity by every organization, than it is the right of corporation to be benefited by it too. Now internet has made a way to economically promote it and gain space in the positive side of mind set of people. CSR is benefited by digitization in many ways, but benefitting through its marketing is really a great idea of social marketing too. Marketing CSR activity has a lot of benefits addition to it.

i. Societal involvement
ii. Gaining trust by evidence based decision
iii. Positive positioning
iv. Higher competitiveness
v. Customer retention and wider support

India is not yet so much into CSR still but yes their lies few good example who started it before and above the government mandatory policy of 2% of profit to be invested in CSR activities. Like Mahindra and Mahindra, P & G, Tata, etc. has pioneered these activities before even government regulation for it came.
Activities are mostly related to women empowerment, education, health, sanitation, general awareness and basic infrastructure development. Some of the companies used tree plantation to be the environmental preservation activity. But it has been very less reported that the company puts its original state of responsibility showing effect of its activities acceding exploitation. As even digitalization is very recent concept in India, which has been boomed up at more recent time after demonetisation decision of present government, more and more studies are done over digitalization and its impact over all sectors in general, but not specifically in relationship between these two aspects in context of India. Almost 75% people above 18 year are using smart phones making India third largest smartphone market in the world. Digital way emerged as more easy, economic, wider, quicker, transparent and convenient way of doing anything, then why not advertising and why not CSR promotion.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

When national currency status of legal tender declared to be invalid in 2016, than people were shocked and it was a great step of demonetization and digitalization. But economy can’t stop, it must go on, thus people started searching for options and as intended, digital world welcomed them more pleasingly. Smart phone and PCs have almost been converted into market and money. This whole process invited a huge pull of internet user for replacing cash transaction and managing the day to day life. Purchasing basics to paying bills are all digitalised. The time again proved to be a great opportunity to advertisements to be visible side by side.

Apart from India all over the world we can find best examples of successful CSR by the organizations and have been better used in their marketing content as virtuality benefits the positive way. CSR performance is to show moral and responsible behaviour towards the society and environment you exist or play in. As per literature review, many researches been done regarding the use of CSR as marketing tool in international level but still it lacks in Indian context. Jakub Kronenberg and Joanna Mieszko wicz in his paper “Planting Trees for Publicity—How Much Are They Worth?” said that most of the time companies do not even know that they are polluting environment more than they put any effort in environmental conservation CSR activities. Here while you promote your tree plantation or any other environmental conservation activity through any ad campaign than it would spread wider than who are the direct sufferer of its pollution. Similarly, in the research paper, “Understanding Corporate Social Responsibility as an Advertising Appeal: A Theory of Planned Behaviour Analysis” by Teresa Tan gives logic that at the age where you have to act ethically and there are a lot of eyes from society, competitor and government wide enough to judge you, may be positive word of mouth will be from its users only but if you gave any chance than negative word of mouth will be fatal to the company image.

So, it can be said that communicating CSR may not be effective enough in comparison to the negative effect of not communicating CSR activities. But Drew Neisse in his article, “CSR is not a marketing strategy” puts a different idea that CSR is grown and encouraged as a culture not as marketing tool. Intentionally no CSR activities are focused on marketing benefit but yes it is surely to prevent unwanted happenings. Andreasknaut in his online published paper, “how CSR should understand digitalization” explains about the importance of using digital network in owns behalf. Whatever you do will be seen, so do what you want the world to see you as. Same way an online site Talentsoft has also focused on the evidence based decision which is only possible if you show what you did. Susan McPherson, Forbes, gives her logic that digitalization can create competition between companies for positioning and sustainability. Additionally they will give their best to lead in the commitment basis. Liquid state, in its article, “Going digital: How digital strategy can improve CSR” explains digitalization of marketing with CSR contents enables to reach its target customers in more conscious perspective, which again adds the support for the positive relationship between CSR performance and digitalized marketing.

G. Gorgiana and M. Mike in their study, “New corporate responsibilities in the digital economy”, they put a new idea regarding the other aspect of going digital in marketing. A well said statement, “With the addition of power, adds the responsibility also”, becomes clear here. With the development of technology and digitization, not only the opportunities and benefits have added, but also additional responsibilities and consciousness is required. Various different areas has emerged for the performance of CSR activities which use to limit within planting trees, women empowerment, girl saving, infrastructure development and health & sanitation. Market and its expectation as changes, changes with growth, so always same thing won’t last long. So, sooner will be the requirement to change something in it and also positively.
III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE
After going long through various studies of relation between CSR performance and digitization, as a marketing tool, promotional activity, etc. there can be traced a clear gap that studies and perception of CSR activities in India is yet to be changed. Thus major objectives of this paper are:
1. To know if corporate social responsibility performance be used as a marketing tool in India.
2. To know if there has come some change in CSR performance with digitalized marketing opportunity in India.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
This paper will be based on the review of online sources and various other secondarily available data. This paper draws conclusion in support of various articles, published journals, international papers, research papers, scholarly published articles, books, library consults, Google sites, magazines and many other. Thus the methodology used to reach up to the conclusion for set objectives are secondary reliable sources of information and the sources are all disclosed in bibliography part. Additionally for detail study of the trend of using digital media for advertising and specially ads with CSR performance content are analysed by following many ad series in various sites and of some specific organizations in YouTube, Facebook, Saavn, etc.

V. DISCUSSION
India has become a goldmine from investment perspective and from GDP growth rate perspective. Many eyes are on India to co-operate with and jointly start something. At this stage growing industrialization and other growing economic activities doing something as CSR activities for environmental preservation, education sector and health sector or development of infrastructure are all common to see. It is as the organization culture been developed. CSR is not merely to create positivity but also to prevent negativity. Global eyes are wide enough to analyse what you are doing and for what. Internet has made a way to telecast it as it is. Sometimes you yourself put something in it as you want and sometimes others put about you which matters more and may be or may not be like you want.

CSR performance can be the activities which may be benefited to own channel as well. Planting tree as environmental preservation involves a lot of hidden cost but can be reimbursed after certain period of time through its timber and manure. Construction of road or waterline can be benefited for own transportation as well as water supply at same time with social benefit. Education and training may be used for fulfillment of potential employment requirement. Health, sanitation and general awareness can be related with the use of own products like lifeboy hand wash does, like Savlone made soap-chalks to write for rural kids to develop hand washing culture, which in long term will benefit it.

VI. FINDINGS
Many researchers say that there is nothing wrong in promoting CSR performance but at same time thoughts of CSR as culture not as marketing is also equally prevailed. CSR can be a part of marketing campaign but it can’t totally or solely rely for overall marketing. Digitalization has enabled the opportunity run multiple campaigns at same time with most economical way. Thus digitization of marketing has added opportunity for better CSR promotion as information demand is also obviously high together with a huge information search group. 

As per our first objective of relating CSR and marketing,

Finding for objective 1: To know if corporate social responsibility performance be used as a marketing tool in India:

It can be concluded that yes it can be used as a part of marketing but not a complete campaign as promoting CSR only cannot most of the time meet the total objective of marketing. But the decision of using digital facility to perform or promote performance is never a bad idea. As it can help you gain more support, positivity, prevent negativity, raise awareness, increase user loyalty, goodwill and most importantly positive word-of-mouth. So in India where still companies much conscious of cost and worth of investment And for the second objective,
Finding for objective2: To know if there has come some change in CSR performance with digitalized marketing opportunity in India.

Many studies put their view that CSR performance promotion is one aspect after initiating CSR activities. But in India, we can’t trace more examples of much remarkable CSR efforts. So initially the mandatory CSR investment (2% of profit) must be enacted properly and then the perception of CSR as expenditure needs to be changed as investment. So the somewhat changes in CSR activities are found to be the effect of mandatory act Indian company act 2013, section 135 but not because of digitalized marketing. Thus some of ad campaigns with CSR content in it are specially launched in internet sites like YouTube, Facebook and other sites too. But side by side other media as well as digital media is used to run different product or service specific ad campaigns. So, with digitalization of marketing we can expect CSR activities to widen its area of performance as it is not only area specific or target customer specific issue but a global issue anyways. The slight change will be more remarkable and unique with competitive strategy in very near future in India, as the speed to accept and implement is found to be very high here.

VII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Main aim of marketing is to make corporate image sellable, appealing and acceptable in public. Thus, if the content of marketing include its positive efforts and responsible activities than it will better support the aim of advertisement be fulfilled. But yet it can’t be expaqqqected that a loyal customer of other brand would shift in other brand who performs CSR better. Though the communication activities arranges the circumstances in favour it is just the matter of culture development not the sales increment. One P of marketing mix as promotion is influenced by these activities but yet there is still many which has higher impact in sales of goods and services. Additionally the aim of promotion is also to create awareness of product use, its benefit, process of disposal, etc. than making marketing campaign to just promote its CSR activity is not a good idea. However internet being the most economical yet effective means of promotion, CSR can separately are promoted without much additional investment for it. Thus we can find many examples of separate ad campaigns run in internet and in television and other media. We can take an example of Magicbrick, it runs its CSR ad campaign only through internet channels at regular basis but not in television. Oxemberg also runs its CSR ad campaign through internet networks in YouTube, Facebook, etc. but not the same campaign in television and radio. Thus CSR performance and its promotion both are influenced by digitalization and more of digitalization of marketing.

With the support of many researches focusing on the use of CSR performance as the content of marketing, the other aspect of increased responsibility, increased competitiveness, new areas of responsibility being emerged, etc. is totally ignored. Digitization of marketing is more demanding than contributing. For companies, CSR performance now must be more that legal compliance and just an obligation for sustainability. CSR must run as blood circulation for an organization, like a human needs food, clothes, shelter, water and alike basics and he needs to maintain its environment favourable for food and water source, security, society, relationship etc. more than only promoting it through economic digital media to promote, organization must understand its seriousness and addition of responsibility with it.

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