THE CSR IMPLEMENTATION

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Abstract

The enterprises which started to integrate the principles of sustainable development in their activity, in their business processes and in their philosophy of business unfolding, require that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) actions held by the companies involved a significant component of sustainable development. In practice, it would be beneficial if every direct action of the enterprise achieved long-lasting objectives and obtained sustainable results. The original contribution of this work is therefore essential for practitioners because it identifies a series of steps to be followed for the implementation and evaluation of a company's CSR activities.

The present research addresses the need for implementing the concept of CSR in up companies. Our approach is drawn from several theoretical models, simplified for a beginner integrating CSR programs. Thus, in order to know what to start with, we have identified a number of simple steps and a methodology presented in this article.

Keywords: Corporate social responsibility, sustainable development, implementation

1. Introduction

CSR has developed a series of business changes that have occurred in the early 1990's. CSR has become a omnipresent phenomenon. Therefore, academic discussions on CSR have increased in the last decade.

Therefore, Welford (2007), or Zadek (2004), have made empirical studies to determine how consumers are actually aware of CSR. CSR's ability to have positive consumer purchase-behavior effects, once awareness has been established, has been extensively investigated [6]. Knox and Maklan (2004) argued in this context that the development of CSR could well be inhibited by ''the lack of a systematic framework linking investment in these responsibilities to social or business outcomes'' (Knox & Maklan 2004, 514).

The social responsibilities of the enterprises are not a trendy effect, but it rests on solid bases, both historically and conceptually [15],[18],[22]. At the moment, in the world, seemingly no firm can escape from social responsibility [5],[7],[8],[10],[23],[32] but there is "some national differences in CSR practice and performance" as Gjølberg (2009) mentioned.

The concrete suggested solution consists in the integration of the CSR concept in their sustainable development policy. Through this process the idea of Sustainable Development can be found at the enterprise-level in the concrete form of CSR (an approachable step for every enterprise, no matter the size), having as main objectives: the social ethics, environment protection and economical efficiency.

2. Present stage of knowledge

Carroll (1999) definition of CSR is perhaps the most cited. He defines CSR as the economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic responsibilities of companies.

For having a significant impact, CSR will be done in every level of a company and must be considered as a mandatory organization. While the need to do this is well established in the literature [5], [19], [25], [33] there is a shortage of research on specific strategies for integrating CSR with corporate and community initiatives existing [1],[17],[26], [29].

In some models [2],[3], the implementation of CSR beyond compliance and engages, performs in actions that promote social good, beyond the interests of the company and what is required by law

By integrating CSR in the strategic and operational management [28],[34], the organizations will have a positive impact on the society and on the environment, and, at the same time, they will increase their prestige, not only chasing for short-term profit but also caring for their future position [11],[12]:

- New preoccupations and expectations from citizens, consumers, public bodies and investors, in the context of the changes and of the globalization of the business activities [14],[13],[16].
- The identifying of new social criteria, which influence the investment decisions of some individuals and institutions [20], [24].
- Taking into consideration, awareness raising and the increase of the citizen's preoccupations

towards the environment damages caused by the businesses [17].

- Transparency in the unfolding of the business activities using new and modern in formations and communications technologies [4],[17][18],[31].

Essentially, CSR designates the company's attitude, which consists of: complying with the laws, the assumption of an ethical behavior, paying considerable attention to the environment and taking into consideration of the needs and interests of all stakeholders [35],[14],[21].

The integration of CSR refers to a varied range of principles that need to be consciously assumed and reflected in the actions of a company[30]. These include, among others, the respect for the human rights, equal treatment for all employees, clients and suppliers, the corporate citizenship, and the preservation of the natural environment. These principles are important in terms of morality, ethics, and especially for the organization's long-term survival [9],[29].

3. CSR Implementation in Organizations

The increase of the concerns related to the businesses' influences on the society had resulted in a boom of leading, measuring, communicating and rewarding methods for CSR results. This varies form the guides, through conduct rules and lead to desirable principles for corporative behavior, to complex management systems, to audit and to the diversification of the communication means.

The original contribution of the author of this work is to identify the next steps for implementing CSR:

1. Awareness – before starting any action they need to be aware, this awareness raising will dominate the organization and the top-management.

1.1. Stating goal for CSR implementation

The organizations situated at the beginning in the implementation of their CSR need to decide what their objectives are, how far they intend to go and which are the benefits to attain for the organizations and for their stakeholders. This step needs to be realized by the management team at the reunions for discussing strategy and the policy of the organization. The simpler the application of the method, the higher the achieved effect.

After determining the state of the firm, it is necessary to identify a list of causes for which the management team considers to have achieved the stated level.

1.2. The case of a profitable business

A case of profitable business will always compare the costs of the actions with the anticipated benefits from the results (in this case the CSR implementation), the management team being able to decide if an action should start or not. The business case compares the benefits with the costs.

The specific content of a CSR implementation case should include the following elements:

Benefits – financial perspectives, clients and internal businesses (tangible benefits and intangible benefits).

Costs – amounts of money or consumed resources.

1.3. The identification of an action

Generally speaking, each completed project needs to be formed by six detailed levels:

- Time level: For each major element there needs to be a list of actions with a given order in which these need to be solved, and fixed a date by the management team for the completion of the actions.
- Action level: Decision referring to the objectives. What is the goal? How can achievement be measured? How objective attainment can be tested?
- Resource level: What specifications are necessary for each action? How many persons, what kind of equipment and technology is necessary and when?
- Risk level: For each activity risks are inferred. For major risks decisions are made about their prevention.
- Costs level: For each activity the necessary investment is decided.
- Communication level.

2. Stakeholder identification – the identification of all stakeholders is an important beginning for every corporation that wants to be socially responsible.

In order to realize a exhaustive image of the stakeholders one needs to answer the following question:

1. Who are our stakeholders? With proper managers a list of all stakeholders will be realized.

2. What is the nature of each stakeholder?

- Basic stakeholders – essential for the organization's survival
- Strategic stakeholders – essential for the organization, for the opportunities and threats;
- Secondary stakeholders;

3. The identification of needs and expectations of the stakeholders – understanding of needs and risks is essential for the implementation of the CSR.

This part presents the most important factors that can influence the stakeholder perception, identifies the expectations to which stakeholders pay special attention and assesses the performance of the organization on these levels, by respecting the following:

- Preparing a graph application to identify each stakeholder's needs.
- Organizing an interview with each of them.
- Each stakeholder should rank the expectations from 1 to 5, according to their importance
- Each stakeholder should rank their performance level from -3 to +3.

Table 1: Stakeholder expectations – expectations and performances

Importance of expectation	Stakeholder expectation	Performance level
3	Safe and healthy environment	2
2	Employees' possibilities to get involved into community life.	-1
4	Non-discriminative politic.	0

After the completion of the table all client answers are checked and importance diagram can be realized, selecting the most relevant expectations, adding at the same time all the information of the document or of the data base for future uses.
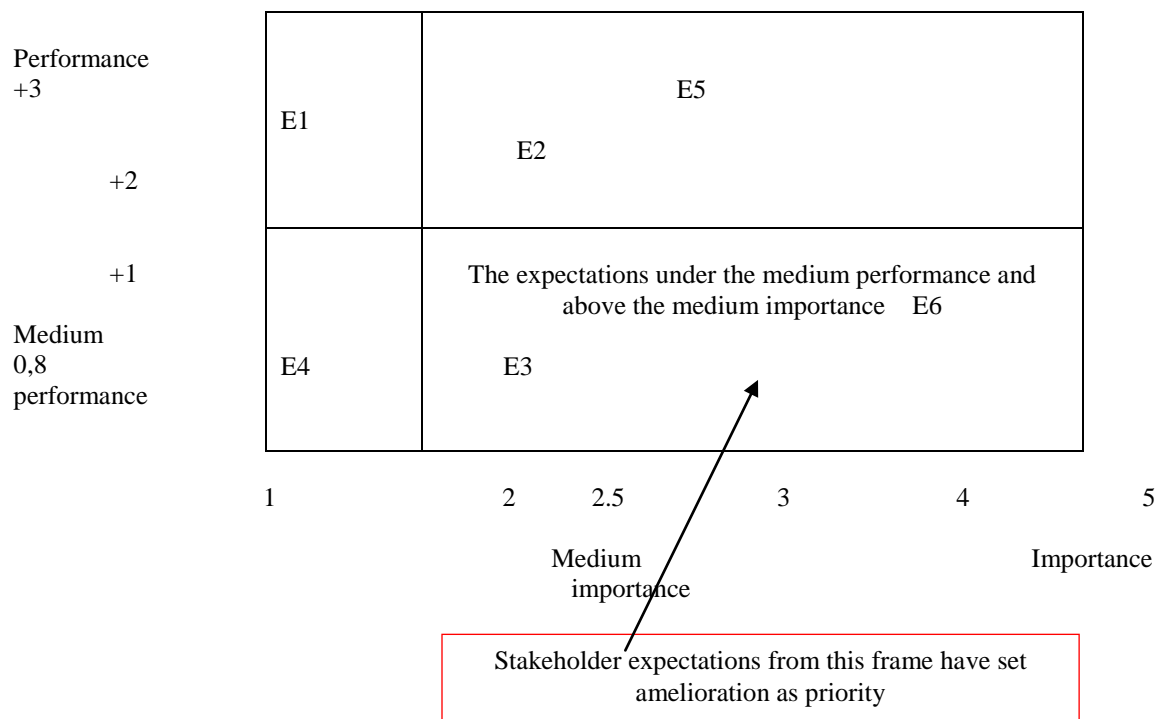

Fig. 1: The Importance Diagram of the Stakeholders Expectations

Realizing the importance Diagram in order to analyze the stakeholder expectations is done by tracing of a diagram that has the organization's performances on its ordinate and the importance of their expectations on the abscissa.

4. The CSR frame analysis – approximating CSR means a systematic revision of the organization concerning its activities and results.

The goal of this analysis is the understanding of the existing CSR implementation level in the organization and it can be realized by applying questionnaires and complying with the following steps:

- Selecting a form model
- Decision if the filling in will be realized by a group or by an individual
- Compare and analyze the results in order to identify problem questions
- Establish reasons for each low ranking

- Facilitate discussions in order to improve different aspects of the action plan

The questionnaire is a simple assessment method, helping the organization to establish strengths and weaknesses referring to the implementation of the CSR. We will refer to the following stakeholder groups: managers, employees, suppliers, clients, and the society.

The questionnaires need to have well-balanced questions, so that they obtained a broad view on strengths and weaknesses of the company. The sections obtaining the lowest ranking need improvement.

The questionnaire is centered on offering an image of the current position of the organization, substituting an improvement measures' recipe, facilitating a discussion with the management team for prioritizing fields to be improved and development of action plans.

5. Improvement of the firms' activities – the

organization needs to identify improvements on the basis of the approximation from the former step.

5.1. Developing and implementing and ethical code

The Ethical Code Method develops a series of ethical principles reflecting the values of the organization, of the stakeholders and of the society.

Every company that has created an ethical code, and respected it, has some advantages: the increase of the prestige and of the brand image of the organization, risk management improvement, creating a proper culture for the CSR implementation, avoiding fines and penalties.

5.2. The „Volunteer Day" Program

Principles for creating the „Volunteer Employees" Program:

- A management support team is created in order to prepare a guide mint to reflect the needs and expectations of local community.
- The guide needs to explain types of volunteer ship to be supported.
- Communication of the program in order to encourage volunteer work.

5.3 Investments for the community

Corporative investments for the community refer to a range of actions taken in order to realize an impact on the community, investing or donating money, time, products, science and other resources.

5.4. Open visits

The normal goal of a day in which visits are open is to inform and to entertain visitor in the working environment of the organization. The information of impact on visitors needs to be identified, and some examples would be: a welcome speech, informative brochures about the company, guided visit to each department, explaining the activities.

6. Revising and reporting of the CSR implementation performance – CSR report represent information about the functioning of the organization, of the stakeholders, and also helps to establish the prestige of the organization.

6.1. Public reporting

The CSR report is a starting point in the dialogue with the business partners. The CSR report follows, first of all, to acquaint the strategy of a company in this respect, the way it implements the values and is involved in solving problems in the field of activity. It is also important the role of a CSR report to promote this concept in the business environment, being at the same time a starting point in the dialogue with the partners.

4. Conclusion

A big number of studies have investigated the perception of managers social responsibilities of enterprises [1],[5],[10],[36],[22],[27]. To the authors knowledge, the investigation of managers perceptions, the CSR institutionalization is low. This study reports how CSR shall be implemented and managed by the company. Better than that, this paper analyzes the implementation of CSR.

Taking into consideration the scarceness of the natural resources of the Earth in a relatively near future, as a result of the intensive and extensive actual production, the accelerating pollution of the planet by producing uncontrolled wastes and the grey perspective to leave as inheritance for the future generations an uninhabitable planet, it is necessary the instantaneous implementation of the sustainable development concept. This process needs to be stimulated and improved, in an imperative way, in order to exclude or at least diminish risks and undesirable consequences to which the planet and the human existence are exposed.

The concrete and efficient way to satisfy this desire represents the conscious, realistic, brave and continuous approach of the combination, by all enterprises, of their existential interests, such as production and profit with aspects of Corporate Social Responsibility.

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