2020, Volume 14, International Conference Innovative Business Management & Global Entrepreneurship (IBIMAGE 2020), pages: 498-508 |
<https://doi.org/10.18662/lumproc/ibimage2020/36>

Social Responsibility- Sustainable Challenge for Public and Private Sector

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Abstract: The focus on social responsibility is even more pronounced given that competitiveness in the private sector can be surpassed by responsible business policies towards both the environment and the community. All institutions from public sector should act in the interest of the communities they represent, promoting at the same time the benefits of the “social responsibility” concept. Including this concept within the public sector creates an added value, in terms of both the morality of the decisions (taken by the legal representatives of the communities) and this kind of behaviour’s promotion by the organizations working for the public sector or by the companies which represent the private sector. Since ancient times, moral judgements were concepts debated by both psychology experts and within the church, however, at present, this area has been expanded so that major companies are building their development strategy by placing customer satisfaction as the central element; and the public sector has the same target: solving citizen’s needs. Making ethical decisions, by taking into consideration communities’ benefits, is a goal both public and private sectors are trying to achieve in their approach of carrying out their mission: act for the good of the community by including social measures and environmental protection in the foundation of their decisions. Competition between community initiatives and socio-environmental projects where companies get involved is getting tighter and tighter in a context where business practices are more and more visible.

Keywords: *social responsibility; public-private partnership; public sector; business environment; corporate ethic.*

How to cite: Pruteanu, S.-M., & Nita, M. (2020). Social Responsibility- Sustainable Challenge for Public and Private Sector. In I. Panagoreț & G. Gorghiu (vol. ed.), *Lumen Proceedings: Vol. 14, International Conference Innovative Business Management & Global Entrepreneurship (IBIMAGE 2020)* (pp. 498-508). Iasi, Romania: LUMEN Publishing House.
<https://doi.org/10.18662/lumproc/ibimage2020/36>

1. Introduction

We live in troubled times when the subject of sustainable development is more and more discussed, at a time when we're facing worldwide politics prone to consumer spending and indebtedness of future generations.

The threats in the fields of supra-industrialisation, supra-population and global warming makes it all the more necessary for the cooperation between all stakeholders in the identification of urgent solutions embodied in economic and social policies that incorporate companies' social responsibility concept. In this regard, the European Commission through its Communication 347/2002 assimilates this concept with the contribution made by companies to sustainable development [3].

Issuing policies which rely on social responsibility requires, in addition to all stakeholders' continuous involvement, the building of a transparent platform in which the administrative system is connected with both the private sector and the citizen, in this way it delivers transparency in relation to all decisions taken and mutuality for all actions related to each side's common good [13]. Inclusion of aspects concerning social responsibility in each organization's activity is an international regulation as it reiterates the fact that no organization can be sustainably developed if it doesn't interconnect social, ethical and environmental aspects in its field of activity.

Institutions, both locally and internationally, focus on the development of common objects in the social area, trying to engage as many entities as possible in the implementation of the actions synonymous with social responsibility of the business environment.

This concept's applicability has occurred after the transformations suffered by the management of both public administration and business environment, the review of legal representatives' attitude related to social responsibility determined the adoption of a complex and comprehensive vision, which aims for a firm support required by the impacted areas. From the analysis of studies relevant in this field, it looks like this concept is underrepresented among public authorities, as they do not involve themselves in the awareness-raising of the benefits provided by a responsible behavior [23].

The social responsibility of companies from private sector can be translated in the manner of their attempts of balancing the business activity with their environmental engagements, thus implementing recycling activities, harm reduction, protecting the quality of water and soil, which

contributes to the sustainability of both the business environment and the market share in which those companies operate. The commitment for development of a sustainable business lies with the following actors:

Fig. no.1 The stakeholders in applying the concept of social responsibility
Source: Adapted data from Business Ethics and Social Responsibility. Business Essential [10].

Mainstreaming aspects related to modern management in economic policies is not the easiest goal to achieve in the social reality from less developed countries, therefore the social responsibility concept related to the decisions taken by the management board can be integrated through educating the business environment to make profit by carrying out friendly activities for both the community and the environment in which they subsist.

2. Problem Statement

At a local level, the economic agents should adhere to a set of common measures which support the sustainable development, this guide should regulate their activities with respect to: human's rights, standards for environment and workforce, as well as decision-making transparency [7]. The way in which one can assess the performance of environmental protection and social measures is by building a data hub that provides interconnected data which can therefore support public organizations in improving citizens' living conditions. Globally, we identified a management tool called CSRHUB which is a hub major corporations adhered to in order to have an overview of sustainable actions [5].

The sustainability of a company is treated as an index for its performance, therefore well-known companies identify themselves by

correlating finance policies with the ones related to public health, safety, management and, respectively, resource handling. The image of an organization can be noticed when it creates and applies sustainability projects which support regulations regarding, for example, labour rules (e.g. the employees which are better paid can be considered the best brand ambassadors), the programs which deliver some specific benefits can reduce the turnover for some areas, but at the same time they're improving the services and the assistance of the client. Also, the environmental protection programme can align company's image with the image of all customers preoccupied by concerns related to environmental protection [21, p. 26].

The measures which a company can take to be associated with the concept of responsibility and social performance may vary from quantifying the actions by which a company can involve itself in the process of solving community's issues (resulting, mainly, in the amount of money which those companies allocate for sustaining social projects), as well as having allocated a certain part from employees' worktime for doing community-service or for integrating individuals from managing boards to ensure representativity in the public sector.

In the past decade, the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) was awarded to companies which voluntarily sustained actions for supporting community's needs, all of them by promoting "a cleaner environment" goal. This relationship with the government system determines, more and more obvious, reciprocity between all involved factors, respectively generates the transformation of the public agenda, being obvious that, if governments enhance their capacity to act and to have an impact over the social and environmental issues, which are noticeable in their relationships with companies (local strategies are correlated with respect to all stakeholders) [1].

3. Research Questions/Aims of the research

This article assesses the public policies from RSC in the advanced European democracies and offers explanative notes regarding the ways governments understood, designed and implemented their RSC public policies.

This approach of analysing the public policies issued by CSR from EU led us to notice the coincident lines of action between various countries which were analysed, and this gave us the chance to propose a typology model named "Four ideals": Partnership, Businesses in the Community, Durability and Citizenship. The main contribution of this article is to propose an analytic framework in order to analyse the public policies of CSR

which should offer a new perspective over the relationships between governments, companies and stakeholders from civil society and allows us to embody the analysis of public policies in the CSR field in a broader approach focused on a social governance.

4. Research Methods

The data obtained and panel discussions performed in this study demonstrate that CSR tools and standards are already being used by a limited number of organizations operating to assess CSR [6]. In addition to the identified need for more information, we explore different cases to identify institutions that can positively contribute to unblocking this information issue by focusing on quantitative and qualitative data needed to plan decisions and activities, as well as data on the benefits and impact of CSR or SR implementation on profitability and competitiveness.

The main motivators for implementing social-responsibility initiatives appeared in Romania with the trend of accessing European funds, when companies embedded this concept in the business environment, trying to develop themselves by being involved with community's issues. By analyzing the existent data, it was observed that the sectors in which initiatives were released are the ones who target the education, the environment, sports, culture, services for different social groups, as well as for improving the working conditions for its own employees or for potential clients [2, p. 28].

5. Findings

CSR will demand a nuanced approach; this concept must've been an alternative for the adequate role of the state and the workers' rights. It seems that the source for the current practice of CSR it arises from respect for the environment.

The idea of sustainability developed since 1980 from Brundtland Commission is linking with the workers' activist who fought for their rights to be recognized, so the social interconnection with the environment was achieved. The effect of public sector organisations but also those in the private system becoming aware of this idea is reflected in the following major benefits:

- non-financial performance of a company can be evaluated objectively doing good for environment;
- including this concept in each organisation will see a better financial performance, not only of improving the environment.
- is an actual debate before workers and company's, because is more easy to count social issues [8].

This concept help not only the public sector, but also play a major role during three dimensions: environmental, social and economic. All stakeholders are continually making financial value-added choices with show larger moral attention on the part of firms that are far more legitimate business ethics requirements [4, p.3].

The reasons why public sector should be aware of the benefits of integrating the concept of social responsibility in the business sector are:

- From a ethic point of view – the company's goal is not just to make a profit but to return the welfare to society , in a voluntary manner [25, p.103].

- From a logical approach: improving the company's image by putting on the wallpaper the company's vision of improving consumer behaviour or society in the long run, but by engaging in social projects the company maximizes its profit by adopting long term strategies

- Social pressure is an other reason to rethink the social responsibility policy.

This keys are include employees, customers and shareholding, but we think that it is the duty of company's management to make such decisios and also to implement change which will transform the objectives and well-being of society today. Social responsibility is a tool that governance systems must use to revitalize policy settings and interconnect citizens with corporations while maintaining long-term sustainability. It has been shown over time that civilized countries in which there is a growing trend of invisions that propagate this concept and do not apply it individually, but on a much larger scale, are much more prosperous financially [11].

As a form of guidance, European Union in Global Policy Forum Europe advises that businesses must conform to a set of values under which they will guarantee their sustainability, they also must encourage and incorporate activities that address social needs in their circuit [9, p. 20-22].

Companies need to work together to build a common framework for global competition, so building an innovative model of sustainability can be a lifeline for good corporate governance to be reflected in actions to boost reputation and accountability to all stakeholders [15].

In essence, CSR is considered a regulatory mechanism between the private sector and the public sector to decide ways of enhancing the organization's reputation and efficiency, thereby returning the benefits of corporate acts to the society in which it works. The interoperability of this concept has inspired several successful programs and good practice examples that support equal rights, workplace climate improvement, employee health, protecting the environment, or other initiatives that address of particular needs of vulnerable populations.

Fig. no.2 Global Compact Principles for CSR Guide

Source: Adapted data from Global Policy Forum Europe, Whose Partnership for whose development? (Global Policy Forum Europe, 2007)

There are several models under which the impact of actions can be evaluated, determining a matrix of actions which can maximize the efficiency of the organization. In terms of marketing, we will concentrate on its possible effects on the key marketing strategy that aims to compare the liability insurance proportion in big businesses such as Microsoft [16], as it focuses on activities with impact on humanitarian issues, the climate, cultural heritage, accessibility support and those that generate innovative software apps revolutionary software applications and devices hold the same line [17]. Fortunately, we have observed that many companies from the food industry, not only have resisted unethical business practice during their existence, but also have proactively engaged in various CSR activities: support younger people by star careers by giving them their first job or support refugees [18]. In the field of telecommunication, analysing the current data, sectors in which initiatives have been launched are those aimed at education, climate, sports, culture, services for various social groups [19]. Also the banking sector is turning its back on disadvantaged communities by sponsoring cultural, educational activities for young people [20].

Table no.1 Giant Brands Doing it Right

COMPANIES	FIELD OF ACTIVITY	SOCIAL RESPONSABILITY ENGAGEMENT AREAS	DIRECT BENEFITS
VODAFONE	Communication Sector	-Education -Environmental -Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Development of reputation ➤ Identification of risk situations and conflict management ➤ Selection workers ➤ Motivation and loyalty ➤ Investor partnerships and access to markets ➤ Training and innovation ➤ Competitiveness and market position - Performance management
ING	Banking Sector	-Education -Environmental -Culture -Social	
MICROSOFT	IT Sector	- Humanitarian issues -Environmental -Cultural heritage - Accessibility support	
SIEMENS	Digital Services	-Support Primary Healthcare and Health Education -Support refugees -Support upgradation of government Industrial Training Institute	
STARBUCKS	Food Sector	-Support younger people by star careers by giving them their first job -support refugees	

Source: Adapted data from Microsoft - Rapport 2019 CSR, Siemens Rapport 2019 CSR, Starbucks Report 2019, ING Group Report 2019, Vodafone Sustainable Business Report 2019

6. Discussions

Although at the beginning the responsibility was seen through its economic side, returning to the economic circuit: investments, innovative products generating decent jobs and working conditions for workers, along the way, the responsibility could be analysed through the perspective of society, confirming the hypothesis that responsibility legally, it is defined as a

business that was designed for the market, somewhat limiting the behaviour and the area of action [22]. From the research, we found that companies generally disseminate the concept for philanthropic effects, without quantifying the ethical, legal, economic benefits.

Although, for the most part, the actions are aimed at a certain area, they do not necessarily depend on the main object of activity of the company (if we take as an example the giant companies Microsoft, Siemens, we notice that although they normally produce software in the field of education, donating their products to different schools, getting involved in training children in the IT field) [14]. Different aspects of these findings are deserving of attention, business are part of the societies so is their duty to act according to strategies, switching the relationship between all stakeholders.

The government also provides information that influences private industry interventions, acts that will be transcribed through strategies to increase awareness among companies about the definition of CSR.

When the concern of the businesses is to optimizing outputs, and this reality becomes visible to the public sector, more it feels obliged to arrive and solve the obvious problems. Governments hence push businesses to boost their efficiency, achieving the minimum standards of social responsibility participation [12].

7. Conclusions

While the concept of corporate social responsibility is commonly use in the 21st century, there are activists suspicious about the social programs displayed by corporations because organizations are not recognized as vastly overrepresented in the public sector (they are considered independent entities). However, it is not possible to ignore the validity and efficacy of the actions, respectively the value of the alliances established to support the sustainable development goals part of the 2030 Agenda [24]. Each business is part of a local, national or global structure, so the contract between altruistic and strategic CSR has between indirectly assessed by evaluating the nature and social services chosen for investment and how they can match and optimize the company's unique capacities.

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