

EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY(CSR) ACTIVITIES OF “VODAFONE”

Vishwa Priya R.V.¹, Dr. A.S.Gayathri²
¹Research Scholar, ²Associate Professor
Department of Commerce
Ethiraj College for Women

Abstract :-

“It takes 20 years to build a reputation and 5 minutes to ruin it.”

-WARREN BUFFET

Corporate Social Responsibility(CSR) is the commitment by businesses to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the employees and their families, local communities and the society at large. CSR demands companies to acknowledge their social and environmental records also, apart from their financial performances. It is the responsibility of corporations to go above and beyond what the Law requires them to do. Any organisation's CSR activities have a significant influence on employees' opinions, interests and performance. Although most of the studies concerning CSR explored the effects of CSR on only corporate financial performance and customer-oriented factors. It is important to take into consideration the perceptions of employees of an organisation about various CSR activities undertaken and that are to be undertaken in future giving them due importance, thereby also encouraging a lot of ideas and participation from them. Employees are the most vital assets for any organisation. So are their perceptions and thoughts about serving the dimensions of the society legally, ethically and economically well.

Keywords: CSR, employees, perception, Vodafone.

1.1.INTRODUCTION

“It takes 20 years to build a reputation and 5 minutes to ruin it.”(WARREN BUFFET).Corporate Social Responsibility(CSR) is the commitment by businesses to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the employees and their families, local communities and the society at large. CSR demands companies to acknowledge their social and environmental records also, apart from their financial performances. It is the responsibility of companies and industries to go above and beyond what the law requires them to do. Nowadays, CSR is considered highly important by all the sectors and the telecommunication sector is no exception. In India, Vodafone holds a share of 22% of mobile market

as of 2018. It considers CSR activities to plan future social responsible business operations in different parts of the world. It not only implements CSR policies to contribute to the society but also with a view to establish its goodwill. Vodafone recognizes its roles and responsibilities to address some of India's most challenging issues relating to education, health, equality and access. It is committed to render innovative, affordable and customer-friendly services that enable people to connect and communicate with one another easily. Being a leader player in the telecom industry, it aims to lead the path not only through products and services, but also through sustainability and CSR initiatives. Vodafone employees have an intense desire to contribute positively towards the three pillars of CSR- "Social, Economic and Environmental". The company remains devoted to act responsibly and ethically to maintain the trust of not the customers alone, but also its employees and other stakeholders. It considers the perceptions of its employees about CSR policies as highly important, thereby creating awareness about CSR and developing employee involvement and participation strategy, which is also one of the reasons why they have been the leader in the industry for quite sometime.

1.2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Wang Qunand Adnan Tariq Alvi(2018) conducted a study on employees' perceptions of CSR impact on Employee outcomes. Also, it focused on providing various benefits and opportunities to the society and community that arise from CSR implementation. **Ewan Sutherland(2016)** conducted a study that focussed on the different aspects of CSR in the telecommunications industry and also considered about how the obligations and regulations imposed on employees and operators affect CSR compared to the other sectors. **Nana Danso Bofo and Doris A. Kokuma(2016)** conducted a research on impact of CSR on the organisational performance using Vodafone Ghana as a case study. The study focused on the various CSR activities in the Telecommunication Industry and the benefits of the activities to both the company and the community. **R.E. Slack and S. Corlett(2015)** conducted a study which explored the level of employee engagement with CSR and revealed that there were some employees who showed content with their own personal, but not organisational commitment with CSR. **Collier and Esteban(2007)** highlighted in their study that employees carry the main burden of CSR for implementing ethical corporate behaviour in the organisation.

1.3.NEED FOR THE STUDY

The importance of CSR activities is considered highly important by all the sectors of the economy. CSR contributes to the overall development of the economy and towards positive business reputation of any concern. CSR is the thoughtful and practical way to give back to the society and communities. It requires enterprises to acknowledge that they should be publicly accountable not only for their financial performance but also for their social and environmental record. It is the responsibility of every corporation under every

sector of the economy to go above and beyond what the Law requires them to do. More so, it is one of the legal requirements of any corporation to give due importance to its CSR activities and policies. The telecommunications sector is also increasingly focusing on their CSR. Amongst them, Vodafone carries out many CSR activities around the world, where employees play a major role in the execution of such activities. As such it is considered important to study the perception of the employees of such activities. Thus, the purpose of the study is to explore the various CSR practices of Vodafone and the employees' perceptions about its CSR activities.

1.4.OBJECTIVES

1. To analyse the perceptionsof employees of Vodafoneabout its CSR activities.
2. To examine if there is any significant difference in the employees' perceptions with respect to chosen demographic variables.

1.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A sample of 50 Vodafone employees in Chennai have been surveyed and the data was collected through a structured questionnaire measured on a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from Strongly agree(5) to Strongly disagree(1).Demographic variables chosen for the study include age and monthly income.Four factors of CSR chosen for the study include employee-oriented factors, ethical factors, legal factors and economic factors. The statistical tools used in the study are Percentages, Weighted Mean, T-test and ANOVA.

1.6.ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE NO.1.1
DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS

S.NO.	AGE	PERCENTAGE	QUALIFICATION	PERCENTAGE
1.	21-30	66.67	SSLC	-
2.	31-40	30.00	HSC	33.33
3.	41-50	3.33	Graduate	56.67
4.	51-60	-	Post Graduate	10
5.	61 and above	-	Professional	-
S.NO.	MONTHLY INCOME (Rs.)	PERCENTAGE	EXPERIENCE	PERCENTAGE
1.	Upto 15000	16.67	Upto 5 years	90
2.	15001 – 25000	50	6 – 10 years	10
3.	25001 – 35000	26.67	11 – 15 years	-

4.	35001 – 45000	3.33	More than 15 years	-
5.	Above 45000	3.33		
S.NO.	GENDER	PERCENTAGE		
1.	Male	70		
2.	Female	30		

The above table 1.1 shows the demographic details of the respondents. It is inferred that majority (66.67%) of the respondents are between 21 and 30 years of age. Majority (56.67%) of the respondents are graduates and none of them are professionals. It is also found that majority(50%) of the respondents earn between Rs.15001 and Rs.25000, 26.67% earn between Rs.25001 and Rs.35000 and only 6.66% earn above Rs.35000. The table also shows that majority (90%) of the respondents have work experience of below 5 years and 10% of them have 6 – 10 years of experience. It also shows that 70% of the respondents are males and the remaining are females.

TABLE NO.1.2

EMPLOYEE-ORIENTED FACTORS

S.NO.	STATEMENTS	WEIGHTED MEAN
1.	Vodafone supports employees who want to acquire additional education.	3.53
2.	Vodafone's policies encourage the employees to develop their skills and careers.	3.00
3.	Vodafone has flexible policies to provide good work-life balance for employees.	3.10
4.	Vodafone is primarily concerned with employees needs and wants.	3.10
5.	The managerial decisions related with the employees are fair.	3.30

The above table 1.2 shows the employee-oriented factors with respect to CSR activities of Vodafone. It is inferred that all the respondents agree with the employee-oriented factors since the weighted means of all the above factors are more than 3. Amongst the various factors, the respondents strongly feel that the company provides support to the employees for their additional education. (3.53)

TABLE NO.1.3

ETHICAL FACTORS

S.NO.	STATEMENTS	WEIGHTED MEAN
1.	Vodafone provides full and accurate information about its products and services to consumers.	4.00
2.	Vodafone respects consumer rights beyond the legal requirements.	3.00

3.	Customer satisfaction is highly important for Vodafone.	4.17
4.	Vodafone emphasizes the importance of its social responsibilities to society.	3.17
5.	Vodafone contributes to campaigns and projects that promote the well-being of the society.	3.07

The above table 1.3 shows the ethical factors with respect to CSR activities of Vodafone. It is found that all the respondents agree with the ethical factors since the weighted means of all the above factors are more than 3. Amongst the various factors, the respondents strongly feel that the satisfaction of the customers is highly important. (4.17).

**TABLE NO.1.4
LEGAL FACTORS**

S.NO.	STATEMENTS	WEIGHTED MEAN
1.	Vodafone endeavours to create employment opportunities.	3.20
2.	Vodafone complies with legal regulations safely and promptly.	3.37
3.	Vodafone avoids unfair competition.	3.07
4.	The Vodafone brand is very reliable.	4.03
5.	The Vodafone brand has good quality features.	3.47
6.	Vodafone is a credible company.	3.57

The above table 1.4 shows the legal factors with respect to CSR activities of Vodafone. It is found that all the respondents agree with the legal factors since the weighted means of all the above variables are more than 3. It is also inferred that the respondents agree with the fact that the Vodafone brand is very reliable which has the highest weighted mean score of 4.03.

**TABLE NO.1.5
ECONOMIC FACTORS**

S.NO.	STATEMENTS	WEIGHTED MEAN
1.	Vodafone implements special programs to minimize its negative impact on the natural environment	3.33
2.	Vodafone participates in activities which aim to protect and improve the quality of the natural environment	3.43
3.	Vodafone targets sustainable growth which considers future generations	3.37
4.	Vodafone makes investment to create a better life for future generations.	3.30

The above table 1.5 shows the economic factors with respect to CSR activities of Vodafone. It is found that all the respondents agree with the economic factors of CSR since the weighted means of all the above factors are more than 3. The respondents agree that their company participates in activities that aim to protect and improve the quality of natural environment, which is the factor that has the highest mean score(3.43).

TABLE NO.1.6
SUMMARY TABLE

S.NO.	FACTORS	OVERALL MEAN
1.	Employee	3.21
2.	Ethical	3.48
3.	Legal	3.45
4.	Economic	3.36

The above table 1.6 shows the overall mean of the 4 factors used in the study. It can be seen that the respondents feel that CSR activities of Vodafone are ethical since the weighted mean score is 3.48. It can be inferred that they are legally and economically compliant. The respondents also feel that the CSR activities are Employee-Oriented. However it can be inferred that a little more focus can be given for the welfare and betterment of the employees.

TABLE NO.1.7
T-TEST - EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS OF CSR AND GENDER

S.NO.	STATEMENTS	F	SIG.
1.	Vodafone supports employees who want to acquire additional education.	3.575	0.069
2.	Vodafone's policies encourage the employees to develop their skills and careers.	3.827	0.060
3.	Vodafone has flexible policies to provide good work-life balance for employees.	8.750	0.006
4.	Vodafone is primarily concerned with employees needs and wants.	12.305	0.002
5.	The managerial decisions related with the employees are fair.	0.000	1
6.	Vodafone provides full and accurate information about its products and services to consumers.	0.025	0.876
7.	Vodafone respects consumer rights beyond the legal requirements.	12.285	0.002
8.	Customer satisfaction is highly important for Vodafone	6.390	0.017
9.	Vodafone emphasizes the importance of its social responsibilities to society.	1.557	0.222
10.	Vodafone contributes to campaigns and projects that promote the well-being of the society.	12.052	0.002
11.	Vodafone endeavours to create employment opportunities.	12.584	0.001

12.	Vodafone complies with legal regulations safely and promptly.	16.612	0.000
13.	Vodafone avoids unfair competition.	1.232	0.277
14.	The Vodafone brand is very reliable.	3.394	0.076
15.	The Vodafone brand has good quality features.	8.602	0.007
16.	Vodafone is a credible company.	9.967	0.004
17.	Vodafone implements special programs to minimize its negative impact on the natural environment	0.197	0.661
18.	Vodafone participates in activities which aim to protect and improve the quality of the natural environment	3.397	0.076
19.	Vodafone targets sustainable growth which considers future generations	5.165	0.031
20.	Vodafone makes investment to create a better life for future generations.	30.155	0.000

The above table 1.7 shows the perceptions of respondents with respect to CSR activities based on their gender. 'p' > 0.05 for some of the statements, which shows that there exists no significant differences in the perceptions of respondents with respect to the above mentioned factors of CSR with gender. However, for some of the statements, p < 0.05 at 5% level of significance, showing that there are significant differences in the perceptions of the respondents with respect to gender. These include statements relating to company's employment opportunities, credibility of the company, investment opportunities and customer satisfaction.

TABLE NO.1.8

EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS OF CSR WITH AGE- ANOVA

S.NO.	STATEMENTS	F	SIG.
1.	Vodafone supports employees who want to acquire additional education.	1.300	0.264
2.	Vodafone's policies encourage the employees to develop their skills and careers.	0.066	0.799
3.	Vodafone has flexible policies to provide good work-life balance for employees.	0.597	0.446
4.	Vodafone is primarily concerned with employees need and wants.	0.000	1.000
5.	The managerial decisions related with the employees are fair.	0.566	0.458
6.	Vodafone provides full and accurate information about its products and services to consumers.	0.718	0.404
7.	Vodafone respects consumer rights beyond the legal requirements.	0.000	1.000
8.	Customer satisfaction is highly important for Vodafone.	1.562	0.222
9.	Vodafone emphasizes the importance of its social responsibilities to society.	1.666	0.207
10.	Vodafone contributes to campaigns and projects that promote the well-being of the society.	0.257	0.616
11.	Vodafone endeavours to create employment opportunities.	1.113	0.301
12.	Vodafone complies with legal regulations safely and promptly.	0.534	0.471

13.	Vodafone avoids unfair competition.	0.692	0.413
14.	The Vodafonebrand is very reliable.	0.014	0.906
15.	The Vodafonebrand has good quality features.	0.008	0.930
16.	Vodafone is a credible company.	1.630	0.212
17.	Implements special programs to minimize its negative impact on the natural environment	1.082	0.307
18.	Vodafone participates in activities which aim to protect and improve the quality of the natural environment	0.045	0.833
19.	Vodafone targets sustainable growth which considers future generations	0.302	0.587
20.	Vodafone makes investment to create a better life for future generations.	0.084	0.774

The above table 1.8 shows the perceptions of respondents with respect to CSR activities based on age. Since the 'p' value for all the above 20 statements is greater than 0.05, it is clearly understood that there exists no significant differences amongst the respondents with respect to perceptions of CSR and age., i.e. their perceptions are unchanged with differences in ages.

TABLE NO.1.9

EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS WITH MONTHLY INCOMES- ANOVA

S.NO.	STATEMENTS	F	SIG.
1.	Vodafone supports employees who want to acquire additional education.	0.993	0.430
2.	Vodafone's policies encourage the employees to develop their skills and careers.	1.296	0.298
3.	Vodafone has flexible policies to provide good work-life balance for employees.	0.832	0.518
4.	Vodafone is primarily concerned with employees need and wants.	1.223	0.326
5.	The managerial decisions related with the employees are fair.	1.088	0.384
6.	Vodafone provides full and accurate information about its products and services to consumers.	1.076	0.389
7.	Vodafone respects consumer rights beyond the legal requirements.	1.162	0.351
8.	Customer satisfaction is highly important for Vodafone.	0.551	0.700
9.	Vodafone emphasizes the importance of its social responsibilities to society.	0.407	0.802
10.	Vodafone contributes to campaigns and projects that promote the well-being of the society.	0.983	0.435
11.	Vodafone endeavours to create employment opportunities.	1.142	0.360
12.	Vodafone complies with legal regulations safely and promptly.	1.358	0.277
13.	Vodafone avoids unfair competition.	1.868	0.148
14.	The Vodafone brand is very reliable.	1.316	0.291

15.	The Vodafone brand has good quality features.	2.248	0.092
16.	Vodafone is a credible company.	1.250	0.316
17.	Vodafone implements special programs to minimize its negative impact on the natural environment	0.728	0.581
18.	Vodafone participates in activities which aim to protect and improve the quality of the natural environment	0.736	0.576
19.	Vodafone targets sustainable growth which considers future generations	1.846	0.152
20.	Vodafone makes investment to create a better life for future generations.	1.994	0.126

The above table 1.9 shows the perceptions of respondents with respect to CSR activities based on their monthly income. Since the 'p' value for all the above 20 statements is greater than 0.05, it is clearly understood that there exists no significant differences amongst the respondents with respect to perceptions of CSR and monthly income., i.e. their perceptions are unchanged with differences in incomes.

1.7. LIMITATIONS

1. The survey was restricted to 50 respondents in Chennai city.
2. The disadvantages of the questionnaire method of collecting data apply to this study also.

1.8.FINDINGS

1. It is found that the respondents feel that CSR activities of Vodafone are ethical. They are also legally and economically compliant. They also feel that the CSR activities are Employee-Oriented. However it is inferred that a little more focus can be given for the welfare and betterment of the employees
2. It is also found that here is a significant difference in the perceptions of the respondents with respect to CSR activities of the company based on their Gender.
3. Also, there exists no significant difference in the perceptions of the respondents with respect to CSR activities of the company based on their Age and Monthly Incomes.

1.9.CONCLUSION

CSR contributes to economic development while improving the quality of life of the employees and their families, local communities and the society at large. CSR demands companies to acknowledge their social and environmental records also, apart from their financial performances. It is the responsibility of every corporation in every sector of the economy to go above and beyond what the Law requires them to do. Any organisation's CSR activities have a significant influence on employees' opinions, interests and performance. The employees play a major role in the success of any organisation and thus their opinions and perceptions regarding any activity by the organisation matter the most. The study reveals that the respondents agree overall, with the different factors of CSR of Vodafone. Also, regardless of their age and

monthly income differences, their perceptions with respect to the 4 factors of CSR namely- Employee-based, Ethical, Legal and Economical do no change. All of them have uniform opinions. But, on the basis of Gender, there are some differences that can be identified with respect to their perceptions about the CSR activities of the company. Overall, the company can improve more on its Employee-oriented CSR factors in order to take care of the welfare of its employees to ensure success and growth.

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