

ROLE OF CSR INITIATIVES IN THE RURAL AND SCHEDULE CASTE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract: India is a country of villages and villages are the backbone of our country, our strength. Most of us have our roots in villages and when SC people improve themselves, only then will villages develop. We depend on the villages for our prime needs and one of those prime needs is food and this is majorly done in villages by our hard working farmers. They work hard throughout the year to feed the entire nation. But the question is, are they getting in return what they are worth for and what they deserve! The answer is No. This is very sad, but true!

In rural areas, people of scheduled castes are very backward and still struggling for getting access to basic necessities like clean water, proper infrastructure like roads, schools and basic healthcare facilities. Their miserable condition is raising an alarm for all of us to act responsibly for them. Hence, it is absolutely essential for companies, industries or the corporate sector to focus on villages and endeavour to eradicate socio-economic problems such as poverty, hunger, health problems, education, and unemployment by means of CSR initiatives to achieve the development of people belonging to schedule castes in rural areas.

Key Words: CSR, Rural Development, schedule caste, Socio-economic problems.

INTRODUCTION

“India lives in its villages” – Mahatma Gandhi

India is a country of villages and villages are the backbone of our country our strength. Most of us have our roots in villages. We depend on the villages for our prime needs and one of those prime needs is food and this is majorly done in villages by our hard working schedule caste farmers. Schedule caste people work hard throughout the year to feed the entire nation. But the question is, are they getting enough in return for what they are worth and what they deserve! The answer is No. This is very sad but true!

In rural areas, schedule caste people belong to a backward community and it is fighting and struggling to get access to basic necessities like clean water, proper infrastructure like roads and schools and basic healthcare facilities. Their fragile and deplorable condition is raising an alarm for all of us to act responsibly towards them. Hence, it is essential for companies, industries or corporate sectors to focus on villages and take steps to eradicate socio-economic problems such as poverty, hunger, health problems, education, unemployment etc., by means of CSR initiatives to achieve development in rural areas.

CSR involves development practices aimed at increasing solution for problems of rural areas for the schedule caste like hunger, health problems, education, unemployment etc., by means of CSR initiatives. The Government of India has made it a rule under the Companies' Act. India's new Companies Act 2013 introduced a provision for Corporate Social Responsibility, which rests upon the ideology that companies need to give back to the society in some way as they also take from the society in the form of raw materials and human resources. The Ministry of Corporate Affairs had notified Section 135 and Schedule VII of the Companies Act (Ministry of Corporate Affairs) as well as the provisions of the Companies (Corporate Social Responsibility Policy) Rules, 2014 (CRS Rules) which came into effect from 1 April, 2014. Every company, private limited or public limited, national or foreign which either has a net worth of Rs 500 crore or a turnover of Rs 1,000 crore or net profit of Rs 5 crore, needs to spend at least 2 % of its average net profit for the preceding three financial years on corporate social responsibility activities.

“Growing mobility and competitiveness with globalization, the safeguarding of human rights and respect for the environment and society to giving benefit have used many industrial sectors and companies. One way of addressing rural development has been through voluntary commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR).”

The quote points out that most of the Indian population lives in the rural areas. India cannot be considered as a developed country without reinforcing the growth efforts of the rural areas. A rural area or countryside is a large geographical area with low population density that is located outside towns and cities. Everything that is un-urban is considered as rural. Typical rural areas have small settlements and rural areas have poor people and they are generally schedule caste people.

Schedule caste;

Schedule caste is the most backward community among all other communities of our society; so it has important basic needs. Now a day's CSR initiatives are very helpful to them as educational or economical support.

Rural development;

Rural Development means socially, economically, educationally developed or improved villages where in the government provides opportunities or schemes for the development of rural areas and poor people like the schedule caste people. When poor people improve, rural areas will automatically develop.

Areas need to be focused on by the Corporate for rural and schedule caste development through CSR Activities;**Education:**

- Formal and non-formal education, adult education
- Scholarships for girls, merit scholarships and technical education for boys
- Distance education
- Girl child education
- Digital literacy / computer education

Social causes:

- Widow re-marriage / dowry-less mass marriages
- Social security (insurance)
- Culture and sports
- Women empowerment

Healthcare and family welfare:

- Pulse polio programme
- Healthcare centres and hospitals
- Mobile clinics — doctors' visits
- General and multi-specialty medical camps, cleft lips
- Reproductive and child health care, supplementary nutrition / mid-day meal projects
- Safe drinking water, sanitation — household toilets, community hospitals
- HIV / AIDS, cancer, TB awareness and prevention camps
- Blood donation
- Responsible parenting

Sustainable livelihood:

- Self-help groups (microfinance for schedule caste women and farmers)
 - Integrated agriculture development
 - Integrated livestock development
 - Watershed management
 - Microenterprise development
 - Skill development / vocational training through Aditya Birla Technology Park for integrated training programme and VT centres at most of our plants in collaboration with ITIs
- Infrastructure development**
- Community centres
 - Schools in villages
 - Roads
 - Homes for the homeless
 - Rural electrification

- Irrigation and water storage structures

Role of CSR in rural and schedule caste development

Corporate are operated in rural areas for gaining profit but they are equally accountable towards the society or community and for its betterment. The current outlook of funding in the shape of social investment under the new law by corporate houses, change can be made if proper investment policy visualised under UNO charter of "Millennium development goals" is adhered to. Social investments can be carried on in the rural areas in the form of agricultural system advancement and related livelihood along with Community development.

Agriculture: Which is the back bone of rural development needs a lot of support to increase the farm income. Agricultural workers or labourers are mostly people of schedule caste. Social investments in terms of creating knowledge parks for updating the advancement of improved agricultural practices and cultivation of high value crops will develop farm income and farm employment.

The other significant area for social investments is to set up **small scale industries and village based industries** which can employ large rural population in both in-season and no season for increasing the income.

Social investments in the area of **information and skill development** will develop the yield and profit with more rural livelihood. Information technology can be effectively utilized to provide the services in rural areas.

Health: Which is seen as an index of development needs an effective delivery system. Social investments can also be done in the health sector by establishing rural health care units, conducting health camps to prevent major diseases. Large population in rural India suffer from various health problems main due to ignorance and unawareness. Hence Awareness and Education programmes on health, wellbeing, communicable diseases and chronic illnesses require utmost priority.

Information huts: can be established by training the rural youth of schedule caste to deliver various services at the rural level. Training rural women of schedule caste in value addition to the farm produce and by creating market opportunities will help in addressing gender issues in rural areas.

A better infrastructure: in rural areas can help in developing the rural backward community as a schedule caste economy by making easy access to all the available services. Social investments in formation of infrastructure help in facilitating the urban facilities in rural areas and also prevent the migration to urban areas in search of livelihood.

There are many factors in rural India which hinder the development of the rural poor and its progress. Hence, proper planning by corporate sectors through CSR initiatives and government's policy need to be framed and legal policies should be made in response to Social investment.

CSR initiatives on Rural and schedule caste development in India

CSR initiatives are taken by many national and international companies in India. These corporate are working for developing rural areas and schedule caste in India. Some of the companies are listed below:

1. Aditya Birla group;

Before Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) found a place in corporate lexicon, it was already textured into our Group's value systems. As early as the 1940s, the founder Shri G. D. Birla adopted the trusteeship concept of management. Simply stated, this entails that the wealth that one generates and holds, is to be held as in a trust for our multiple stakeholders. With regard to CSR, company believes in investing part of their profits beyond business, for the larger good of the society. The Aditya Birla Group was named the AON best employer in India for 2018 - the third time over the last 7 years. The Group was earlier ranked fourth in the world and first in Asia Pacific in the 'Top Companies for Leaders' study 2011, conducted by Aon Hewitt, Fortune Magazine and RBL (a strategic HR and leadership advisory firm). The Group has also topped the Nielsen's Corporate Image Monitor 2014-15 and emerged as the 'No.1 Corporate', the 'Best in Class', for the third consecutive year.

Aditya Birla Group: deals in Manufacturing of Aluminium rolling, viscose staple fibber, Carbon black, Cement production, Plants Fertiliser and Insulators.

Their Activities in rural development include

Model villages:

It has engaged in creating model villages in rural India. This is game changing transformative project. It has chosen 300 villages for this transformation – whereby, in a five-year time frame, the villages will be self-reliant in every aspect, moving them out of the "below the poverty line" status. So far, more than 90 villages in India's have already reached the level of model villages. These are located in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, MP and Rajasthan.

Sustainable livelihood programmes

It's Vocational Training Centres and the Aditya Birla Rural Technology Park accord training in sustainable livelihood projects to 95,000 people.

Work in collaboration with the Watershed Mission of the Madhya Pradesh government to improve the standard of living of people in 21 villages in Neemach district.

Healthcare

Its project Village Social Entrepreneurs in healthcare covers around 3 lack people at 100 locations in 4 states (Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh).

It has installed 50 Reverse Osmosis Plants (RO) which provide drinking water to villagers. In its endeavours towards open defecation-free villages, the Company has helped to set up over 22,000 toilets, partly leveraging Government schemes for the social sector. In 50 villages, spanning over 2,000 households in Jammu & Kashmir, they have provided 2,010 toilets.

2. Infosys Limited

It has been an early adopter of Corporate Social Responsibility ('CSR') initiatives. Along with sustained economic performance, environmental and social stewardship is also a key factor for holistic business growth. They have established Infosys Foundation in 1996 as a not-for-profit nodal body aimed at providing a dedicated approach to community development and also to fulfil our CSR commitments. Infosys Foundation works towards removing malnutrition, improving healthcare infrastructure, supporting primary education, rehabilitating abandoned women and children, and preserving Indian art and culture. Infosys Foundation partners with non-government organizations (NGOs) to make a difference among local communities. The Company's focus has always been to contribute to the sustainable development of the society and environment, and to make our planet a better place for future generations.

Activities in rural and schedule caste development

- Strengthening the rural areas by improving the accessibility to housing, drinking water, sanitation, power and livelihoods, thereby creating sustainable villages.
- Providing training in hygiene, health, sanitation, skills and livelihood.
- Donated sewing machines to rural schedule caste women.
- Donation to mid day meal programme of Akshya Patra Foundation
- Implemented water supply scheme in Kerala.
- Contributed towards the maintenance of SC / ST tribal students hostels.
- Donated towards the construction of school buildings for visually impaired children.
- Contributed to the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations for corpus funds.
- Donated UPS batteries for various rural location of Ramakrishna Mission.
- Refill and Rehabilitation for the cyclone and drought affected victims of Orissa and AP.

3. Arvind limited

It is a fashion powerhouse and building new age homes. It is a global in apparel manufacturing and transforming water management. A denim pioneer that is a trailblazer in advanced materials. A wearable technology manufacturer and delivering state of the art engineering solutions we make textiles, and it is make homes. It fuses the offline and the online. It is challenge what's possible by fashioning newer possibilities. It is Arvind and this is its story. At 1897, a time when there was hardly any manufacturing activity in India, Lalbhai Dalpatbhai set up his first mill, the Sara spur Manufacturing Company. These accurately reflect the multi-sided nature of the organization, the name of the Company was changed to Arvind Ltd. from Arvind Mills Ltd in 2008 at Ahmadabad.

Activities in rural and schedule caste development; Low cost toilet:

In rural areas, at 2015 Arvind launched Project Asmita to provide for sanitation needs. It brought together highly skilled professionals, technicians and tasked them to meet the challenges for the strategies to raise the standard of sanitation practices in rural India. The result was a low-cost toilet that is a fusion of innovative modern and traditional materials that can be prepared and installed in just a day.

Empowering schedule caste women:

From the rural areas, Arvind has initiated a unique residential programme to work and skill the young. The young women are educated up to class XII they are chosen on the basis of their academic qualifications, dexterity test, and aptitude test and health check-ups. The company takes care of all their basic needs – housing, food, health and transport once selected, as well helping them to pursue higher education.

Conclusion

CSR is very important for developing rural area and poor people or schedule caste people in India in order to solve the problems faced by the villages because schedule caste people are very backward community in rural areas so car must give important to which community has very low level status in the villages then only will rural areas develop. A lot needs to be done in the areas of

social, economical, health and education. Companies are adopting backward communities and taking active participation in their welfare. India needs such CSR initiatives in more numbers and with more focus and commitment.

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