
CSR – An Important tool for Employer Branding.

Bhupendra Chandrashekhar Tope¹, Dr. Mrs. Anita Khatke²

¹*Deputy Manager - HRM&A, ARAI, Pune, Research Scholar, NWIMSR, Pune.
bhupendratope1974@gmail.com*

²*Director, JSPM's Institute of Management & Research, Pune.
anitakhatke7@gmail.com*

Abstract:

An employer branding can be understood as a set of procedures which instigates with the contact for the very beginning of the probable candidate with the organisation brand. This stream flows endlessly through every phase of the association journey. This journey may be referred as the "Talent Journey". It includes the details, additional information, and complete data required behind the recruitment and selection process, keeping the candidate pleased, engaged, and loyal to the organisation. It also provides insights into how keenly and enthusiastically employees of the organisation endorse working at the specific organisation.

"An employer brand is an intangible. However, many tangible practices and behaviors contribute to it." Edward E. Lawler.

Employees engaged in CSR activities perform to their best and create a special place for the organisation in the market. An organisation is considered successful where the employees of that particular organisation feel valued because of their loyalty. This feeling of loyalty comes with the exponential organisational support and the management standing by with their commitments. Providing such kind of support and fulfillment of commitments towards the employees gives that organisation a better identification in the industry because employees don't wish to leave such organisations. Employees working with such organisations always consider themselves accountable for the success in building the brand image. In these types of organisations, the attrition goes down, best talent stays back and hence the face value of the company automatically goes up.

The main objective of this research article is to understand importance of CSR in Employer Branding and elements of CSR in Employer Branding.

"Employer Branding," an essential aspect of the business, is considered a crucial element in every organisation's success. A factor that takes the business entity to a different level and proves to be one of the best practices in promoting the brand image. In recent times, aspiring candidates have become very vigilant in joining any particular organisation. They first check all the credentials of an organisation and then decide whether to join it or not.

Hence, from the employee's perspective, Employer Branding has gained an important place in promoting an organisation as an 'Employer of Choice.' A positive image portrayed by gaining employee confidence helps in gaining much popularity in the market.

Since this article has been written by referring to various journals, research articles and a book, Conceptual Research Methodology has been used to understand the topic in depth.

Keywords – Instrument, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Employer branding, Brand Image, Strategy, Employee Choice, Objectives.

1. INTRODUCTION:

“A word is a word, and a picture is worth a thousand...but a brand is worth a million.” – Tony Hsieh, Zappos.^[1]

An organisation always strives hard to gain popularity in the market by some or the other way. Mainly, either the products or the services are responsible for establishing the image of any organisation. As per Hank Stringer and Rusty Rueff - “If the reputation of a company’s products and services is its face, the talent brand is its heart and soul.”^[2]

Simply advertising about the products and services is not going to help an organisation make an impact on the employer brand. Nowadays, it has become common to know about any organization's brand before even joining it. A good brand, undoubtedly, attracts and retains its employees in many ways. To become an "Employees Choice", the employers are now giving more importance to other fields. Since the last few decades, the Corporate Social Responsibility field has been developed and is considered one of the significant areas for branding the company image.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the last few decades, the term Employer Branding and CSR has gained significant momentum, and a lot of literature is obtainable on the internet on the said topic. However, I have used only a few references in this research paper.

The author, Madhumita Chatterji, in her book Corporate Social Responsibility, the chapter Understanding Corporate Social Responsibility, has explained and defined Corporate Social Responsibility in a very distinctive manner under the chapter Understanding Corporate Social Responsibility. The book supports us to understand the meaning of CSR in depth.

The website of universumglobal through its URL <https://universumglobal.com/what-is-employer-branding/> has effortlessly explained Employer Branding. It says that employer branding is a long-standing concept that has found momentum in the interconnected world for a few decades. It also demonstrates that it is endorsing an organisation, as the employer of choice to a chosen group. If a company has an employer brand, whether one has actively pursued one or not. Thus, any organisation may signal what aspiring candidates can learn and achieve from working there. If Employer Branding is a process, the employer brand is its

identity as an employer of choice. In this digital age, talent attraction is becoming not only more problematic but also more significant. In a world better known for constant changes, the HR departments are always under pressure to steer among the new age groups and adopt new techniques. Therefore, getting rid of the old recruitment process. In today's era, the digital environment means distractions, and one needs to focus on grabbing talent's attention.

For effective promotion of the brand, a company can only attract current and future employees if it has a strategy. One needs to have an Employer Branding strategy that is true, credible, relevant, distinctive, and aspirational.

According to Simon Barrow and Richard Mosley (2011) 3), an employer brand defines an employer's status as a place to perform their duties, and their employee value intention, as contrasting to the more general corporate brand reputation and value intention to various clienteles. The term was first put to use in the early 1990s and has since become extensively accepted by the worldwide management community.

Tim Ambler and Simon Barrow have also emphasized this as an employer brand is a set of practical, financial, and psychological incentives provided by an organisation and identified with the employing organisation. The employer brand's crucial role is to give management a clear outline to simplify and focus urgencies, increase efficiency, and productivity and improve employment, retention, and commitment.

The conception of corporate social responsibility (CSR), which is nowadays standard activities implemented by companies listed on the stock exchange, can be multifaceted. The activities undertaken are relevant to the functioning of the enterprise itself, as well as building relationships with the identified groups of stakeholders. However, employer branding (EB) is not just a choice, but a necessity for companies in order for them to be able to acquire and retain key employees. The objective of the conducted research was to identify corporate social responsibility tools which significantly support employer branding in companies listed on the Warsaw Stock Exchange

For listed companies, employer branding is nowadays not only a choice within the framework of personnel strategies, but a business necessity addressed to the current employees of enterprises, and the future ones. The employer brand is a tool which is effective for the purpose of building a competitive advantage. It makes it possible to treat employees as internal clients, but also confirms the image of the organization as a desired place to attract the most talented candidates. A large percentage of enterprises follow a standard approach to corporate social responsibility tools, while differences result from diverse industries and organization sizes, but the overall strategy is similar.

The objective of this article is to present the results of research corporate social

responsibility tools which significantly support employer branding in companies listed on GPW (The Warsaw Stock Exchange). The applied research procedure combines the analysis of the literature with empirical research and is based upon searching for the answer to the questions about the relationship between corporate social responsibility and employer branding in the selected listed companies belonging to WIG 20.

The studied enterprises have a corporate social responsibility strategy and they have apply employer branding but separately. There is no common strategy in both management areas

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Magdalena M. Stuss has elaborated the topic of Corporate Social Responsibility as an Employer Branding Tool very efficiently in her article The Study Results of selected companies listed on GPW in the International Journal of Contemporary Management Volume 17 (2018) Number 1, pp. 249–267, doi:10.4467 / 24498939IJCM.18.014.8393. Few of the points are mentioned here for further reference.

For listed companies, employer branding is not a choice within the framework of personnel capacities, and a business obligation addressed to the current employees of enterprises and the future ones. An employer brand is a tool that is effective for building a competitive advantage. It makes it possible to treat employees as internal clients and confirms the organisation's image as "the desired place" to attract the most talented candidates. Many enterprises follow a standard approach to corporate social responsibility tools, while differences result from diverse industries and organisation sizes, but the overall strategy is similar. This research article's main objective is to present research on corporate social responsibility tools that significantly support employer branding in companies listed in GPW (The Warsaw Stock Exchange).

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

a) What is the significance of Corporate Social Responsibility in Employer Branding?

- b) What are the identified elements of Corporate Social Responsibility in Employer Branding?

4. OBJECTIVES:

- a) To understand the importance of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in developing the brand of an organisation.
b) To identify the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) elements in Employer Branding.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Conceptual Research Methodology has been used for this research.

6. DATA COLLECTION:

The corresponding data has been collected from various articles, research papers/journals on the internet and from books.

7. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

Importance of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):

The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) has stated CSR as 'the ongoing guarantee of business to perform decently and contribute to economic growth while refining the quality of life of their employees, families of employees, the local community, and society at large.' Simon Barrow, Richard Mosley.^[3]

CSR is understood as 'getting corporate behaviour up to such an extent where it is found to be compatible with the principal social standards, morals, ethics, and expectations of performance' (Sethi 1975).^[4]

CSR is generally understood as an essential element contributing to creating a brand's reputation at an organisational level. For any business entity or model to be successful, an organisation's social responsibility initiatives must logically be aligned with and must always integrate with that business model. In many organisations, CSR activities are performed to such an extent that they meet the compliance and go beyond the actual requirements. They get engaged in many social activities, which may not be needed but are done selflessly as a part of their duty towards society. Many business entities are now getting engaged more in CSR activities to increase their brand image. Becoming an "Employee's Choice" is now what is more important and is emphasized. Those days are long gone where an "Employer's Choice" ruled the industry. Today's employee has become smarter; even before joining any organisation, he or she first checks the credentials of that particular organisation and then takes a call of either joining it or not. Hence, a business entity needs to be more transparent by providing all the information about its business on its website.

Key elements of Employer Branding and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):

“Employer Branding is a long-standing concept that has gained exceptional momentum in the interconnected world. It is the process of promoting a company, or an organisation, as the employer of choice to a desired target group. One which a company needs and wants to attract, recruit and retain.”^[7]

However, employer branding cannot be considered a choice but a tool to attract, acquire, and hold the best talent.

Employer brand defines an employer's status as a place to perform their duties, and their employee value intention, as contrasting to the more general corporate brand reputation and value intention to various clienteles. The term was first put to use in the early 1990s and has since become extensively accepted by the worldwide management community.^[8]

In Tim Ambler and Simon Barrow's words, an employer brand is a set of practical, financial, and psychological incentives provided by an organisation as well as identified with the employing organisation. The employer brand's crucial role is to give a clear outline for management to simplify and focus urgencies, increase efficiency, and productivity and improve employment, retention, and commitment.^[9]

There are many tools used for building the image of an organisation. Marketing and advertising the product or services offered in newspapers, magazines, etc., use electronic media like television channels and social media. Recently, Corporate Social Responsibility used as an essential tool for image building of an organisation.

Organisations are nowadays using this tool very efficiently to gain more popularity in society and industry. It is used as one of the industry's best practices to attract new talent and retain the top performers. Plans, policies, and strategies are designed in such a way where the intellectual skills of getting involved in the philanthropic activities of employees are used to achieve the company goals.

The implementation of proper strategic management can prove to be of a greater relevance. These processes can benefit in reaching decisions that can have significant effect in the branding of an organisation.

Strategies need to be designed so that it gives maximum exposure to the employees in the society. Mostly, the top management of an organisation gets actively involved in creating and developing these strategies.

In such cases, the CSR strategy states "a strategy where all the philanthropic activities are used as the focal point to gain maximum popularity." This strategy should not only focus on

reaching the mandatory benchmark laid down by the government but also look at it as one of the most critical aspects in creating a positive image of an organisation in society.

Any strategy cannot be successful unless various dimensions support it. Donating a certain amount to some cause may not even get noticed. But if the same is given coverage in some newspapers, the chances are that it may get seen by people who prefer reading newspapers. We are just considering one medium, and there are so many mediums of advertisement. Employees are always happy when they are offered freedom of work. An employee satisfied at the job continues staying with the organisation for a longer duration. It gives a feeling of satisfaction and security at the position. This feeling of satisfaction gives birth to a sense of accountability. It should be the management's duty here who should identify such resources and use them as an ambassador of organisational CSR activities. Arranging motivational sessions with such ambassadors regularly will prove to be an essential strategy. A highly motivated employee never misses an opportunity to praise the organisation with his/her friends, colleagues, relatives etc. on the social media where his/her opinions and suggestions are valued.

An employee with high morale and satisfaction always thinks of doing something valuable and useful for the organisation. CSR is one such field where moral and encouragement automatically seeps into any human being.

The business community is more and more dedicated to integrating CSR into strategic business development. Nowadays, CSR is identified to be a prominent research theme and is also present in the organisation's value and mission statements. It is also understood to refining a business' competitive position and performance (Mahmoud et al., 2017).^[10]

Currently, CSR is looked upon from a very different perspective. It is no more only the philanthropic aspect but has gained more significance in building the image of the organisation.

“An employer brand is a tool that is effective for building a competitive advantage. It makes it possible to treat employees as internal clients and confirms the organization's image as the desired place to attract the most talented candidates. Many enterprises follow a standard approach to corporate social responsibility tools, while differences result from diverse industries and organization sizes, but the overall strategy is similar.”⁹⁾

We all feel proud and happy if our name appears in some newspaper, on radio, on television, or in any form of media. We immediately share such things with our family, friends, relatives, co-workers, etc. But... most importantly, we also share the name of our organisation...again and again!!! Why does one do that? Very simple...*Popularity!* One more motivational factor. When an employee sees his/her co-worker getting popular for CSR activity, he/she automatically gets motivated to volunteer/participate in the CSR activities.

An organisation, to promote its brand, needs to focus on a few important points like:

Areas of CSR activities to be performed:

An organisation needs to finalise the geographical areas where the activities are to be carried out. Carrying out an activity where it is not required would not help much.

Kind of CSR Activities to be performed:

It is essential for an organisation first to figure out what kind of CSR activities it would want to sponsor. Accordingly, carrying out a detailed and extensive study of society would always prove to be helpful. Sponsoring or providing assistance for an activity which is required the most could always be thought of, e.g. if a village is in requirement of drinking water supply, it would be a waste of resources if an organisation is working on constructing a pukka road for that village. Roads are going to be available there; it is the drinking water required on the most urgent basis. Planning and providing the kind of support needed should be given equal importance.

Funds to be utilized:

Although India's Government has given guidelines for the amount to be spent on CSR activities, an organisation must always try to spend more than what is mandatory.

Participation in various competitions:

This factor is considered as one of the motivational factors. Involvement of employees in multiple competitions motivates them and helps them understand different practices followed by other organisations and contribute to the CSR activities in a more structured manner. By participating in such contests, organisations get a chance to promote their brand. By doing so, it also gets an opportunity to reach the maximum crowd.

Personal interviews of employees:

Arranging personal interviews of those employees participating in CSR activities in local newspapers, on radio, television can also be an essential aspect of the employer's branding. Nowadays, organisations are using radio as a more preferred medium for advertising to reach the maximum crowd than the newspaper. Personal interviews of employees participating in the CSR activities on the radio give comprehensive coverage to the organisations. The public tends to listen to the radio while driving to the office or back home, making it the best medium for branding the employer.

Promotion of the brand by posting interviews on other social media channels like Twitter, Facebook, etc. is also gaining momentum.

8. CONCLUSION - THE TAKE AWAY.

Many organisations are using CSR as one of the best tools for branding their image. Organisations are adopting a large number of villages for community development.

Many organisations are using CSR as one of the best tools for branding their image. Organisations are adopting a large number of villages for community development.

Thus, it can be stated that to promote the Brand Image of any organisation by doing CSR activities; all the above components need to be considered for sure. Employees engaged in CSR activities perform to their best and create a unique position for the organisation in the market. An organisation is deemed to be successful where the employees of that particular organisation feel valued because of their loyalty. This feeling of loyalty comes with exponential organisational support and the management standing by with their commitments. Providing such support and fulfillment of obligations towards the employees gives that organisation a better identification in the industry because employees don't wish to leave such organisations. Employees working with such organisations always consider themselves accountable for the success in building the brand image. In these organisations, the attrition goes down, the best talent stays back, and hence the company's face value automatically goes up. All clubbed together, the CSR strategies, best practices, utilization of funds, and resources to the fullest are the ingredients responsible for employer branding.

Therefore, it can be said that the “Corporate Social Responsibility” function in an organisation acts as a significant key that can be used to unlock one of the locks of employer branding by propagating common CSR philosophy within and outside the organisation.

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