

# CSR and Rural Sanitation (Swachh Bharat) in India

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**Abstract** -According to the WHO and UNICEF (2013) in terms of human well-being and development, health and sanitation are very important aspects for every human being. The shortage of toilets and drainage systems in India are very relevant in this regard. Promoting and protecting the community is not only the government's job but also requires the involvement of every citizen of India, particularly the corporations. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is not charity work; rather, it should be purely based on the developmental oriented. CSR shares profits with all the stakeholders in a task oriented manner. In this regard, Swachh Bharat Abiyan was launched by the Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi on Gandhi's 145th birth anniversary on the 2nd of October 2014. Government believes that corporations can join hands with them in order to help implement the Swachh Bharat Abiyan, and therefore, CSR can play a vital role in achieving the "Clean India" mission. In order to carry out this research work, the researchers adopted a descriptive research design, and selected 25 respondents for this study using the simple random sampling lottery method. The data was collected by utilising a self-prepared Interview schedule. The study revealed the important role of CSR programmes in rural sanitation.

**Keywords:** Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Rural sanitation, Stakeholder, Swachh Bharat Abiyan

## Abbreviations

CSR: Corporate Social Responsibility

NGO: Non-governmental Organisation

WHO: World Health Organisation

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

## INTRODUCTION

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) shares profits with all the stakeholders in a task oriented manner. Promoting and protecting the community is not only the government's job, but also requires the involvement of every citizen of the country, and particularly corporations. CSR is not charity work but, it should be purely based on the developmental oriented. According to the WHO and UNICEF (2013), in terms of human well-being and development, health and sanitation are very important aspects. Inadequate sanitation and poor hygiene will incur more expenses to public health costs. It also affects the environment and has numerous other welfare impacts (Mane Abhay, 2014).

In this connection, Swachh Bharat Abiyan was launched by the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, on Gandhi's 145th birth anniversary on the 2nd of October 2014. Corporations are a part of society, and therefore have

some responsibility towards society. Through CSR programmes, it can help the community where the need exists.

Mohapatra (2015) suggests that a better and healthier India is not only the responsibility of government, but also the responsibility of all citizens of the country. Ali (2015) points out that government cannot sponsor the total cost of the clean India mission. Therefore, it expects corporations to implement the Swachh Bharat programme. In order to achieve the gram panchayats for sanitation, the government needs financial support from corporations, because they are relying on CSR and other funds.

## THE CONCEPT OF CSR

When corporations share its profits with the community, it is considered as CSR. In other words, corporations have to give back to society voluntarily, and that the giver (the corporation) has some specific task to perform (Rai, 2010). CSR is influenced by two major models. The first and primary model is the stakeholder model. The stakeholder model is concerned with not only following the shareholders values, but also to consider the stakeholders' perspectives. The second is the triple bottom line which is not only concentrated on economic perspectives, but also on social and environmental development (Siddiqui, 2014). Linking on to the latter, the company must be proactive, not reactive in its CSR approach. Companies must even go a step further into a CSR driven innovation mode which clearly reflects a more rewarding and harmonious synthesis between social and commercial concerns; being a so-called 'social purpose leader'.

## CSR IS NOT PHILANTHROPY

As indicated in the previous paragraphs, CSR is not charity work and should have some task and purpose. In order to create a good image among the target audience, corporations need to avoid the philanthropic way of CSR practice, and must think strategically about CSR (Rai, 2010). CSR is the involvement of corporations in terms of social, economic and environmental concern in a sustainable way (Siddiqui, 2014). This CSR programme should consider the developmental perspective of society.

## CSR AND CORPORATIONS

Through CSR, corporation's involvement in society can be determined. CSR is a continuous process to develop the

community. Good CSR is a fundamental business principle for corporations. After the introduction of CSR policies, there were some radical changes in the thought process and working of CSR programmes (Siddiqui, 2014). The Indian Government has implemented mandatory CSR legislation which forces corporations to invest in CSR programmes. According to the Economic Times, around 14 000 corporations have planned to spend Rs 15 000 cr on CSR programmes (Rai, 2010). Therefore, corporations can spend the money on the Swachh Bharat Mission in order to achieve the goal of a clean India. More detail on the relevant legislation is presented below.

#### COMPANIES ACT OF 2013 AND CSR

According to the Indian Companies Act (2013), every company with a net worth of Rs 500 cr or more, a turnover of Rs 1 000 cr or more, or a net profit of Rs 5 cr or more during any financial year shall constitute a CSR Committee of the Board consisting of three or more directors. The new Companies Act makes it mandatory for companies above these thresholds to spend 2% of their net profit on CSR activities (Ignatius & Mangaleswaran, 2013). The main intention of the government and the purpose of the bill are to develop society. It is therefore vital for corporations to change its strategy towards the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Siddiqui, 2014). In that way, CSR is not only helpful to corporations, but it is also helpful to the overall well-being of the society at large (Rai, 2010). Consequently, issues of sanitation and public health, as well as the Swachh Bharat programme will be highlighted.

#### SANITATION AND PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES

Without good health and proper sanitation facilities, real development of the country is impossible. Poor sanitation is a public health issue in India and has a negative impact on the country. Better sanitation is an investment in the nation's future. If the government fails to provide proper sanitation facilities to its people, it will lead to many illnesses and diseases, which could potentially lead to major social and economic problems for families and society as a whole (Mane Abhay, 2014).

#### SWACHH BHARAT

In a democratic country like India, people have the right to proper health and sanitation facilities. According to Tyagi and Hutton (2008), poor sanitation impairs the health of Indians and consequently leads to productivity losses (Mane Abhay, 2014). Currently, toilet shortages are a serious concern in India. The Swachh Bharat Mission was launched on the 2nd of October, 2014 on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti to achieve a "Clean India" by 2019. This mission is to be accomplished to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi has taken initiative with active involvement in the project and said that "Clean India" was the vision of Mahatma Gandhi and that the government is facilitating in order to achieve this (Mohapatra, 2015). In this regard,

corporations can help the government to reach clean India status through CSR initiatives.

#### CRITIQUE AGAINST "CLEAN INDIA"

Although the government has given special preference to the Clean India initiative, it should also consider the deeper root of the problem. It is a change in the inner feelings of the Indian people. If the government fails to find out the real issues of India, then it will not be able to achieve its mission.

According to Teltumbde (2014) "Modi must understand that India cannot be Swachh without the caste ethos being completely eradicated". Unless the disassociation of the Dalit's from sanitation work stops, and cleanliness by all people are promoted, India will not reach its goals (Ali, 2015).

Prabhat Patnaik (2014) and Ali (2015) state that "sanitation infrastructure needs to be ensured by the government to all the citizens of India." It should not be handed over to corporations. Through Swachh Bharat Mission, government should eradicate this issue first.

#### METHODOLOGY

##### Objective

The main objective of the study is to determine the role of CSR in rural sanitation work.

##### Limitations

This study is only applicable to the Livelihood CSR programme and community stakeholder perspective, as primary conceptual framework for the study. This study is also only applicable to the selected industry in India.

##### Research design

The research design for this article is descriptive in nature. The descriptive research design not only describes but also brings out suggestions from some of the solutions to fulfil the role of CSR implementation in rural sanitation work. By using the simple random sampling lottery method, 25 respondents were chosen for this study. This study revealed the important role of CSR in rural sanitation work.

#### EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

TABLE 1

Distribution of the Respondents by their Sanitation facility

Sanitation Facility	Yes		No	
	Frequenc y	Percentag e	Frequenc y	Percentag e
Toilet	15	60	10	40
Bathroom facility	15	60	10	40
Drainage Facility	18	72	7	28

Sanitation	Yes	No
Drainage satisfactoriness	12	48
	13	52

Source: Ignatius & Mangaleswaran. (2015)

The above table (Table 1) indicates that nearly half of the respondents (40%) are facing bathroom and toilet facility difficulties. More than one fourth (28%) of the respondents houses do not have a proper drainage system. The data also shows that more than half of the respondents (52%) are not satisfied with their drainage system. Therefore, some efforts have to be made by corporations, along with NGOs and government officials to implement proper sanitation facilities in the rural areas, in order to keep the villages clean.

Health and sanitation is an important factor for the development of the county, particularly in rural India, but more than half of the respondents (52%) not satisfied with their drainage systems. Although the government allocated the money for rural health and sanitation, it will not reach all the targeted people. Finally, it is directly affecting people in the rural communities. Nearly half of the respondents (40%) do not have toilet facilities. Some places in rural India with access to toilets are considered as luxurious. Government needs to ensure that the health and sanitation programme reaches all households, with the help of corporation's CSR programmes.

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Although the government has a lot of work to develop the nation, health and sanitation play a vital role to empower society, and should be seen as a priority. Unless the community receives good health and sanitation facilities, they cannot actively participate in nation building. Therefore, government needs to investigate the need of sanitation facilities in all areas.

Through the proper analysis, government can determine which areas are in need of sanitation facilities and can make suggestions to corporations for possible CSR programmes in a certain area.

Currently, corruption is a major concern in India. If government can correct this problem and give it the attention it deserves, only then can the government and corporations work together to reach the target of Swachh Bharat. This target can only be reached if government and corporations join forces and work together in this regard.

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