

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY DEVELOPMENT - RECENT TRENDS IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to examine the recent trends in corporate social responsibility and sustainability development in India. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is the ongoing commitment made by businesses to the economic and social advancement of the communities in which they operate.

The subject of sustainability has been studied significantly over the past few years, more businesses are embracing sustainable strategies and adopting more socially responsible practices as the restrictions of ever-dwindling natural resources compel companies to make more responsible decisions.

The practice of businesses pursuing environmental and social benefits in addition to financial benefits is known as corporate social responsibility (CSR). Businesses of all sizes are seeking for ways to integrate sustainable practices into their daily operations as the demand for firms that do good grows.

The present paper is a theoretical discussion on the recent trends through a study of available research literature. The discussion is on the understanding of concepts of corporate social responsibility and sustainability development and the recent trends being practiced in India and how this has benefitted the society and how it shapes the future progress of the country.

Key words: Corporate Social Responsibility, Sustainability Development, Corporate Sustainability

INTRODUCTION

Companies all across the world are increasingly incorporating CSR as a business strategy into their practises and policies. The desire to safeguard a company's reputation and brand serves as a motivating factor for businesses to implement CSR, from a business perspective. In response to the growing demands of many stakeholders' interests, competition for access to international markets, and most significantly, meeting societal needs, corporations are adopting CSR as a policy-matter of the business at the national level.

The idea of CSR has attracted a lot of interest in recent years from the academic, commercial, and nongovernmental sectors (NGOs). In order to increase their economic competitiveness and societal relevance, numerous corporations throughout the world are actively looking for chances to invest in CSR initiatives.

The majority of businesses today are implementing CSR strategies to create a positive perception in the eyes of customers, investors, employees, the government, etc. Companies use CSR reporting as a tool to share information about their CSR practises with stakeholders.

The primary goal of CSR is to maximise societal benefits from business, and as part of this effort, organisations are responsible for how their actions affect customers, employees, shareholders, communities, and the environment in all areas of their operations.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To study the recent trends in CSR and Sustainability Development in India.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to achieve the objectives, available secondary data on internet in the form of CSR survey conducted by various agencies had been used. Information had also been collected from journals, magazines and from various research reports.

The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

CSR is all about corporate giving back to society.

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) defines corporate social responsibility, “CSR is generally understood as being the way through which a company achieves a balance of economic, environmental and social imperatives (“Triple-Bottom-Line-Approach”), while at the same time addressing the expectations of shareholders and stakeholders.”

The International Organization for Standardization (IOS), defines CSR as “the responsibility of an organization for the impacts of its decision and activities on society and the environment, resulting in ethical behavior and transparency which contributes to sustainable development, including the health and well-being of society; takes into account the expectations of stakeholders; complies with current law and is consistent with international standards of behavior and is integrated throughout the organization and implemented in its relations.”

Sustainable development

Sustainable development (World Commission, 1987) is defined “as the respectful use of natural resources in order to leave possibilities for future generations to live on earth with the same or better conditions as present generations”.

Organizations such as the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) defines CSR as "business' commitment to contribute to sustainable economic development, working with employees, their families, the local community, and society at large to improve their quality of life.

CSR is an integral part of sustainable development. The fundamental idea of integrating sustainability into business management should be based on the moral principle of give and take in order to be successful in the long term. CSR denotes the need for an organization's business model to be both socially and environmentally responsible. The terms "socially responsible" and "environmentally sustainable" refer to how the corporation conducts its business in a way that benefits society and the environment, respectively. It is the business's commitment to preserving the environment or minimising its ecological impact.

Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goals or Global Goals are a collection of 17 goals that are designed to be a “shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future”. The SDGs were set up in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and are intended to be achieved by 2030.

The SDGs focus on the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development by keeping sustainability as the main agenda.

It's a action “plan to end poverty and inequality, protect the planet, and ensure that all people enjoy health, justice and prosperity”. By aligning business approaches with the SDGs, corporate leaders can begin to redirect investment flows in a manner that maximizes value creation opportunities on sustainable development. Further, it can assist organizations in reducing risk, identifying opportunities, and determining long-term innovation solutions for addressing the SDGs

Corporate Sustainability

Corporate sustainability is an approach that focuses on the ethical, social, environmental, cultural, and economic aspects of conducting business in order to provide long-term stakeholder value. The developed strategies aim to promote longevity, openness, and appropriate personnel growth inside business organisations. A statement of Corporate Sustainability Standards (CSS), which are typically policies and procedures intended to meet or exceed minimal regulatory standards, is a common way for businesses to demonstrate their commitment to corporate sustainability.

History of CSR IN India

To understand the history of CSR along with its changing nature, there is a need to go through different phase of CSR in India.

Although CSR is a relatively recent idea in India. The notion of CSR, which emphasizes that a portion of one's earnings must be shared with the underprivileged in the form of donations, was heavily influenced by our culture, religions and the idea of caring and sharing from a long period of time. There have been four major phases in the development of corporate social responsibility in India:

Phases of CSR in India

| Phase | Period | Nature of CSR |
|--------|-------------------------------------|--|
| First | Pre Industrialisation Period -1850s | Philanthropy and Charity |
| Second | Pre Independence era-1857-1947 | Mahatma Gandhi introduced Trusteeship and Trusts were created and donations were collected for the conduct of social welfare activities like Rural development, Women empowerment and Education. |
| Third | Independence era - 1950-1980 | Emergence of Public Sector undertakings to ensure proper distribution of wealth and food etc. PSUs were not successful, so shift from Public to Private sector. Social economic development of the country with focus on social accountability, transparency and stakeholder benefits. |
| Fourth | Post Independence – 1980s | Indian companies integrated CSR into a sustainable business strategy. Focus on charity has become a serious responsibility for the Indian companies. |

Corporate social responsibility regulation in India:

India became the first country to have statutorily mandated CSR for specified companies,

According to Section 135 of the Indian Companies Act, 2013, Social Responsibility is mandatory for all the corporates to spend 2% of their average net profits of the last 3 financial years towards CSR. This is applicable for companies with

- Companies with a turnover of 1000 crores
- Companies with a net worth of 500 crores
- Companies with a net profit of 5 crores

Nature of activities considered as CSR activities

Activities relating to

- Eradicating hunger, poverty and malnutrition – Reliance, Tata Company, Infosys Ltd.
- Promoting health care and sanitation, drinking water – ICICI Bank Ltd, Dalmia Cement(Bhart) Ltd, Hindustan Construction Company(HCC),
- Promoting education, vocational skills and livelihood enhancement projects – Aptech Ltd, Infosys Ltd, Infosys Technology Ltd, Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Consultancy Services, Hindustan Construction Company
- Promotion gender equality, empowering women – ITC Ltd, India Aluminium Company Ltd,
- Environmental sustainability, Animal welfare - Hindustan Construction Company
- Contribution to the Clean Ganga Fund for cleaning of river Ganga which was set up by the Central Government.
- Protecting of national heritage, art and culture - Infosys Technology Ltd,
- Setting up of public libraries.
- Promotion and development of traditional arts and handicrafts.
- Measures for the benefit of armed force veterans, war widows.
- Training to promote rural sports, paralympic sports, Olympic sports.
- Contribution to the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund or any other fund set up by the Central Government for the socio-economic development and relief and welfare of the under privileged – ITC Ltd, Satyam Computer Services Ltd,
- Contribution to research and development projects in the field of science, technology, medicine funded by the Central Government or State Government - Infosys Technology Ltd,
- Rural development projects – Avon Cycle Ltd built a charitable hospital, ITC Ltd,
- Slum area development.

CSR Amount Spent State wise

| State | Amount Spent FY 2016-2017 (INR Cr.) | Amount Spent FY 2017-2018 (INR Cr.) | Amount Spent FY 2018-2019 (INR Cr.) | Amount Spent FY 2019-2020 (INR Cr.) | Amount Spent FY 2020-2021 (INR Cr.) |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Andaman and Nicobar | 0.63 | 0.73 | 0.82 | 1.29 | 2.86 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 743.68 | 575.07 | 666.02 | 710.12 | 715.81 |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 24.05 | 11.91 | 24.56 | 18.02 | 10.58 |
| Assam | 256.92 | 211.33 | 210 | 285 | 167.78 |
| Bihar | 100.62 | 106.17 | 137.56 | 110.48 | 79.3 |
| Chandigarh | 21.96 | 20.51 | 11.46 | 15.58 | 13.19 |
| Chhattisgarh | 84.66 | 176.7 | 149.35 | 269.68 | 307.83 |
| Dadra And Nagar Haveli | 7.37 | 6.98 | 13.48 | 18.34 | 21.98 |
| Daman And Diu | 2.63 | 20.23 | 6.25 | 9.53 | 5.25 |
| Delhi | 460.25 | 579.37 | 750.76 | 829.5 | 713.58 |
| Goa | 36.25 | 53.77 | 46.77 | 43.91 | 41.78 |
| Gujarat | 865.3 | 967.97 | 1082.18 | 984.15 | 1443.62 |
| Haryana | 386.17 | 363.43 | 378.11 | 536.57 | 542.45 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 22.83 | 69.23 | 78.79 | 78.61 | 105.01 |
| Jammu And | 42.65 | 50.77 | 36.44 | 25.27 | 35.47 |

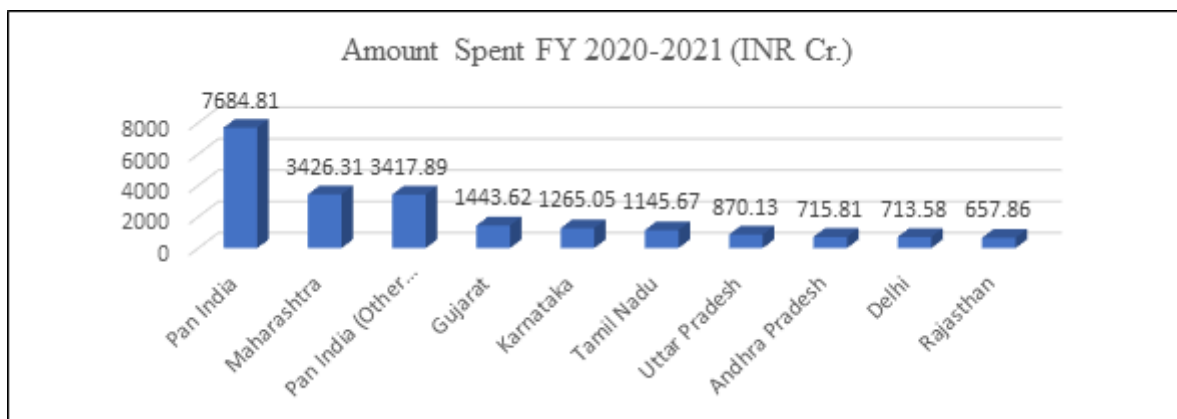
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|-------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Kashmir | | | | | |
| Jharkhand | 95.49 | 109.23 | 109.8 | 155.21 | 210.27 |
| Karnataka | 875.41 | 1145.42 | 1252.18 | 1448.08 | 1265.05 |
| Kerala | 133.82 | 219.73 | 354.78 | 298.56 | 286.52 |
| Lakshadweep | 0 | 2.27 | 0.39 | 0 | 0.01 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 161.11 | 163.92 | 243.55 | 215.33 | 354.5 |
| Maharashtra | 2414.8 | 2797.53 | 3147.67 | 3348.82 | 3426.31 |
| Manipur | 12.35 | 4.81 | 7.81 | 14.21 | 10.3 |
| Meghalaya | 9.75 | 11.18 | 16.54 | 17.65 | 12.46 |
| Mizoram | 0.08 | 1.28 | 0.11 | 0.25 | 0.97 |
| Nagaland | 0.53 | 1.81 | 2.12 | 5.1 | 3.57 |
| Nec/ Not Mentioned | 7.63 | 137.93 | 4.44 | 26.41 | 176.2 |
| Odisha | 325.89 | 504.22 | 697.88 | 716.81 | 567.63 |
| Pan India | 4567.46 | 5505.37 | 6429.81 | 9385.41 | 7684.81 |
| Pan India (Other Centralised Funds) | 787.22 | 799.18 | 1155.86 | 1789.15 | 3417.89 |
| Puducherry | 7.43 | 6.09 | 9.15 | 11.32 | 11.97 |
| Punjab | 75.05 | 112.36 | 166.85 | 188.52 | 137.29 |
| Rajasthan | 353.22 | 443.35 | 595.49 | 734.12 | 657.86 |
| Sikkim | 6.71 | 7 | 5.87 | 10.99 | 15.16 |
| Tamil Nadu | 547.94 | 669.65 | 877.08 | 1072.02 | 1145.67 |
| Telangana | 256.15 | 380.57 | 428.06 | 445.8 | 624.22 |
| Tripura | 1.25 | 1.88 | 23.06 | 9.4 | 9.29 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 321.23 | 435.21 | 521.32 | 577.91 | 870.13 |
| Uttarakhand | 102.37 | 85.79 | 172.31 | 124.7 | 155.43 |
| West Bengal | 275.68 | 338.32 | 382.23 | 422.95 | 464.65 |
| Grand Total | 14394.55 | 17098.26 | 20196.92 | 24954.78 | 25714.65 |

Source: National CSR Data Portal, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India

CSR Spent - Top 10 States

| State | Amount Spent FY 2020-2021 (INR Cr.) |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Pan India | 7684.81 |
| Maharashtra | 3426.31 |
| Pan India (Other Centralised Funds) | 3417.89 |
| Gujarat | 1443.62 |
| Karnataka | 1265.05 |
| Tamil Nadu | 1145.67 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 870.13 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 715.81 |
| Delhi | 713.58 |
| Rajasthan | 657.86 |

Source: National CSR Data Portal, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India



CSR spent- Development sector wise

| Development Sector | Amount Spent FY 2016-17 (INR Cr.) | Amount Spent FY 2017-18 (INR Cr.) | Amount Spent FY 2018-19 (INR Cr.) | Amount Spent FY 2019-20 (INR Cr.) | Amount Spent FY 2020-21 (INR Cr.) |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Education | 4519.24 | 5763.08 | 6102.22 | 7175.85 | 6607.64 |
| Environmental Sustainability | 1076.46 | 1301.99 | 1367.99 | 1470.26 | 1029.12 |
| Livelihood Enhancement Projects | 516.7 | 832.4 | 907.64 | 1077.59 | 821.16 |
| Prime Minister's National Relief Fund | 158.8 | 200.42 | 321.19 | 797.13 | 1678.76 |
| Rural Development Projects | 1561.45 | 1724.1 | 2433.44 | 2299.63 | 1847.15 |
| Safe Drinking Water | 156.32 | 220.87 | 228.23 | 253.18 | 202.32 |
| Slum Area Development | 51.49 | 39.16 | 51.01 | 42.94 | 88.85 |
| Conservation Of Natural Resources | 119.09 | 228.14 | 173.55 | 160.6 | 90.96 |
| Art And Culture | 305.57 | 395.22 | 225.94 | 933.47 | 484.68 |
| Socio-Economic Inequalities | 148.01 | 155.95 | 167.92 | 214.85 | 126.66 |
| Swachh Bharat Kosh | 184.06 | 272.07 | 95.5 | 53.42 | 160.85 |
| Training To Promote Sports | 180.76 | 285.41 | 309.59 | 303.72 | 242.49 |
| Women Empowerment | 142.14 | 251.37 | 236.54 | 259.37 | 204.8 |
| Armed Forces, Veterans, War Widows/ Dependants | 37.86 | 29.09 | 90.18 | 62.04 | 83.76 |
| Clean Ganga Fund | 24.37 | 33.96 | 8.11 | 6.63 | 13.39 |
| Gender Equality | 72.6 | 24.01 | 51.86 | 82.93 | 42.54 |
| Health Care | 2499.95 | 2776.95 | 3612.03 | 4902.69 | 7182.67 |
| Nec/ Not Mentioned | 388.96 | 15.2 | 87.61 | 503.59 | 282.65 |
| Agro Forestry | 45.48 | 66.79 | 64.75 | 67.38 | 19.24 |
| Other Central Government Funds | 419.99 | 292.73 | 731.06 | 931.97 | 1564.89 |

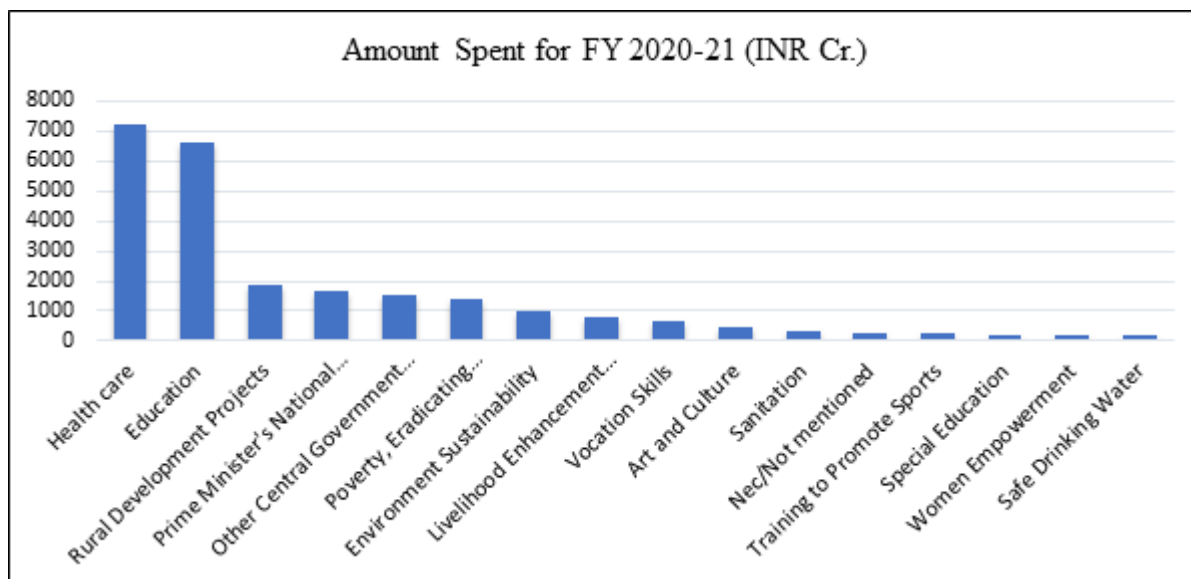
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|--|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Animal Welfare | 78.71 | 63.52 | 98.33 | 106.12 | 192.71 |
| Poverty, Eradicating Hunger, Malnutrition | 606.55 | 811.2 | 1192.59 | 1159.01 | 1380.27 |
| Sanitation | 423.74 | 460.68 | 506.66 | 521.72 | 335.45 |
| Senior Citizens Welfare | 27.75 | 40.1 | 46.51 | 52.18 | 55.96 |
| Setting Up Homes And Hostels For Women | 62.22 | 70.58 | 57.01 | 48.5 | 43.27 |
| Setting Up Orphanage | 16.8 | 39.87 | 12.89 | 36.5 | 21.76 |
| Special Education | 165.33 | 140.01 | 186.13 | 196.88 | 207.61 |
| Technology Incubators | 25.4 | 16.94 | 32.1 | 53.5 | 62.62 |
| Vocational Skills | 378.74 | 546.46 | 798.36 | 1181.13 | 640.43 |

Source: National CSR Data Portal, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India

Top 10 Development sectors

| Development Sectors | Amount Spent for FY 2020-21 (INR Cr.) |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Health care | 7182.67 |
| Education | 6607.64 |
| Rural Development Projects | 1847.15 |
| Prime Minister's National Relief | 1678.76 |
| Other Central Government Funds | 1564.89 |
| Poverty, Eradicating Hunger, Malnutrition | 1380.27 |
| Environment Sustainability | 1029.12 |
| Livelihood Enhancement Projects | 821.16 |
| Vocation Skills | 640.43 |
| Art and Culture | 484.68 |
| Sanitation | 335.45 |
| Nec/Not mentioned | 282.65 |
| Training to Promote Sports | 242.49 |
| Special Education | 207.61 |
| Women Empowerment | 204.8 |
| Safe Drinking Water | 202.32 |

Source: National CSR Data Portal, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India



Source: National CSR Data Portal, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India

The top 10 companies in India for CSR & Sustainability in 2021.

| Company | CSR Amount spent (INR Cr.) | Nature of CSR Initiative |
|---|----------------------------|--|
| Godrej Consumer Products Limited (GCPL) | 34.08 | Livelihood Recovery Programmes |
| Infosys Limited | 325.32 | Sustainable business practices, Holistic Community development, Institution-building, sustainability initiatives |
| Wipro Limited | 251 | Through Wipro Foundation – Humanitarian aid, health care support , livelihood generation, education programs |
| Tata Chemicals Limited | 21 | Conserve the environment and engage with local communities to build a sustainable ecosystem, provides support to rural women artisans of Okhai. |
| ITC Limited | 353.46 | Addresses societal issues like poverty and environmental degradation, Educational programme for children, Provide skills to youth under vocational training programmes, Water recycling programmes |
| Jubilant Life Sciences Ltd | 5.83 | Social development projects in health, education, livelihood, social digitalization programme |
| Grasim Industries Ltd | 84.66 | Education, Healthcare, Sustainable Livelihoods, Women Empowerment, Infrastructure development |

| | | |
|--------------------|-------|--|
| Vedanta Limited | 331 | Focus on Water management, enhance energy productivity, mitigate climate change, Environmental and community development, Sports & culture, Flagship CSR initiative for women and children |
| Tata Power Co. Ltd | 3.45 | Holistic development of its surrounding communities, To enable access to reliable & renewable electricity for 25 million Indians. |
| JSW Steel Limited | 86.49 | Quality products, drinking water resources, better sanitation facilities, Providing health care, Providing Quality education, Creating platforms for skill-building, Livelihood, Promoting sports. |

Source: thecsrjournal.in

Recent Trends of CSR and Sustainability Development in India

- Priorities to center around effects of COVID-19

As per the Government's G.O CSR Expenditure spent for Covid-19 is considered as CSR activity, Supporting covid-19 measures will be the trend for CSR in the upcoming years, support for healthcare and livelihood relief, investment in public health systems.

- For Livelihoods - Hybrid models for vocational training in sectors such as e-commerce, logistics, warehousing, healthcare along with the focus on digitalization of small businesses.
- Addressing the Pandemic's impact on education has been the major concern of many companies and majority of CSR funds will be spent for the education purpose.
- Keeping in mind the sustainability and ecofriendly system, plastic waste management, recycling etc are the areas of focus.

FINDINGS

- The number of companies spending more than the prescribed 2% amount on CSR activities has increased in the recent years.
- Out of the top 10 states with CSR spending, Maharashtra has consistently spent more on CSR activities.
- Health and Education has received the maximum amount spend on CSR initiatives.
- The CSR amount spent on Healthcare and Education, Rural Development projects, poverty and hunger eradication, Environmental Sustainability has consistently increased in the last 5 years.
- CSR spent on Livelihood enhancement projects, Special education, Technology incubation, vocation skills has increased in the recent years.
- The North-eastern region of India received the least focus in CSR with miniscule expenditure on companies.

CONCLUSION

Corporations are being encouraged to take on greater social responsibility because their most significant stakeholders anticipate that they will be aware of and responsive to the social and community issues that affect them.

Because there are so many interconnected business advantages, it is usually of utmost importance to comprehend what causes are significant to employees, other external stakeholders like customers, consumers, investors and also communities where the corporations operates its businesses.

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