

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Education: Attitudes of Bankers and Teachers working in Bangladesh

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Abstract: The study is the outcome of both the primary and secondary data. The main research issues of the study are: necessity of CSR education in Bangladesh, attitudes of the respondents towards CSR education, present scenario of CSR Education, problems hindering implementation of CSR education especially and measures to remove the problems. The major findings of the study are: i) necessity of CSR education in Bangladesh in terms of the levels of National Educational Policy (NEP), university and college, banking industry and other corporate firms has been increasing day by day as opined by the teachers and bankers groups, ii) as regards the attitudes of the respondents towards CSR education, the study reveals that the attitudes of the both groups of respondents have been highly positive in respect of course contents, influence of CSR education on NEP, university and college education policy, banking industry performances, research and training on CSR education, and iii) it is revealed in the study that most of the respondents opined in favor of quite inadequacy of existing course contents at BBA and MBA levels, highly inadequacy of research and training programs of CSR department personnel and negligible investment in CSR activities by the selected organizations, iv) the major problems identified by respondents are reluctance of policy makers and lack of adequate training on CSR education at NEP; absence of curriculum as to CSR education and shortage of qualified teachers and researchers at university and college levels and profit maximization motive and lack of good corporate governance at banking industry, v) Probable suggestions put forward by the respondents in order to remove problems are: formation of strong CSR education committee and arrangement of proper training at NEP level; incorporation of CSR education courses at BBA and MBA levels and curriculum reform at University and college levels and ensuring reasonable profit maximization and good corporate governance at banking industry level. The information generated in the study and its findings would definitely contribute to the existing stock of knowledge on the CSR education.

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1.0 Background

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has greatly evolved both in concept and practice mostly due to the ever changing society over the past few decades. The relationship between business and society has changed radically. Business firms have changed their approaches, philosophy, nature, and objectives in different time to time. As a result, the concept of CSR is not unambiguously defined. In addition, CSR often overlaps and synonymous with many features of other related concepts like corporate sustainability, corporate accountability, corporate reputation, corporate stewardship or corporate citizenship, corporate social opportunity or responsible business. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has gained an unprecedented global focus and attention because it touches on many salient issues in the present business world.

CSR is defined as the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectancies that society has of

organizations at a given point in time (Valentine and Fleischman, 2008). This definition is based on Carroll's study (1979) where he defined four components of social responsibility and broadened the scope of its understanding (Maignan, 2001, Popa, 2010). Carroll suggested that businesses have to fulfill economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic responsibilities in order to address its entire obligations to society. Economic responsibilities designate the obligations for businesses to be productive and profitable (Maignan, 2001). Legal responsibilities refer to the framework of legal requirements which businesses need to meet while practicing economic duties (Carroll, 1979). Unfortunately many companies awoke to the importance of CSR only after being surprised by public responses to issues they had not previously thought were part of their business responsibilities (Porter and Kramer, 2006). Especially after the negative public responses and global boycotts, there

has been a trend toward promoting corporate changes and CSR implications that has associated with business strategies of the companies (Filho et al., 2010). Moreover, in the implementation process, companies had realized that, if used properly, CSR strategies can be profitable and create value propositions such as competitive advantage and corporate reputation (Smith 2007, Porter and Kramer, 2006, Husted and Allen, 2001).

In general, competitive advantage can be achieved through internal resources and obtained by implementing valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable actions (Barney, 1991). Consequently when CSR actions are implemented properly and internalized within the company, the actions become at least and the actions can create a competitive advantage for the company. And yet, if a company can manage to develop CSR projects connected to its core business, it can also create valuable and this time rare CSR actions and thereby a strong and unique competitive advantage (Filho et al., 2010). Therefore it is suggested that reputation has also need to be based on accomplishments or worthwhile efforts to gain public's goodwill, it has to be more than mere publicity efforts (Mohamad et al., 2007). Moreover it is commonly accepted that a good reputation can create a strong competitive advantage (Filho et al., 2010, Smith, 2007).

CSR can be a source of opportunity, innovation and competitive advantage for companies. Changes in the operating environment have increased the importance of CSR aspects. Numerous research findings reveal that CSR practices add value to the business operations. It indicates without taking care of the society, no business activity can be transacted into the society. There are also cases where business enterprises have got all the expertise to initiate steps necessary to solve social problems. Four general types of the business case for CSR are cost and risk reduction, profit maximization and competitive advantage over industry rivals, reputation and legitimacy, and synergetic value creation meaning finding win-win situations between the company and its stakeholders. Weber (2008) lists business benefits deriving from CSR activities. These benefits are positive effects on company's image, reputation, employee motivation, retention and recruitment, cost savings, revenue increases from higher sales and market share.

The importance of CSR is gaining popularity in today's era and has certainly become an area of recent concern. While business organization focuses on these matters a lot more it has not been so much in consideration in other domains of work. Starting from the ground level it should be taken as a part of higher education where students & research associates take

up initiative for the betterment of the community & university in reference frame by the help of management of education & collaboration with the industry partners we can focus upon the objective to achieve CSR. Thus, in view of the topic in question it is required to incubate the CSR perspective at the higher educational level.

1.1 Objectives

- To highlight on the necessity of CSR Education in Bangladesh.
- To evaluate the present Scenario CSR Education in colleges and Universities.
- To know the attitudes of the respondents towards CSR Education and its major components.
- To identify the problems hindering implementation of CSR Education in education and banking sectors.
- To suggest probable measures to remove the problems of CSR Education and thereby to improve the CSR performances especially in Banking sectors in Bangladesh.

2.0 Literature Review

Under the new circumstances such as the globalization, privatization of the education institutions and competition in higher education industry, many higher education institutions are adapting a more business-like approach in order to compete and survive in the changing face of the industry (Weymans 2010, Gumport 2000, Goia and Thomas 1996). And during the adaptation of this business-like approach, some institutions are discovering the importance of corporate image, corporate identity, corporate reputation and mainly CSR as a reputation and an advantage building strategy (Atakan and Eker, 2007, Stensaker, 2007, Porter and Kramer, 2006, Melewar and Akel, 2005). Although issues of CSR have always been a part of the educational mission of higher education institutions, through implementing CSR strategies, higher education institutions are now using this approach as a part of their competitive strategy. Hence, by developing such strategies higher education institutions are also discovering the opportunity to move the focus beyond the classroom into their own institutional operations.

Although the industry and the demand is expanding rapidly, applications for the national university entrance examination have tripled since 1980 (Soktaris et al., 2011), private universities are still trying to prove their educational quality over the state universities, stay financially sustainable and compete with each other at the same time. Under the highlights of globalization, higher education institutions had to consider the competition in order to

attract high quality students and academic staff not only within national borders but also in an international level (Melewar and Akel, 2005). CSR has been discussed in different forums throughout the world. It has been recognized that like profit and other key result areas, social responsibility is an important area in which every business must set objectives and produce result (Singhe, 1978). In contrast, Friedman (1962) expressed the other view of CSR that business must play an active social role in the society in which it functions, since many business houses are large and economically powerful, this role may be played successfully. Thus, their social responsibility grows gradually when the organizations grow in size. Drucker (1964) said that the business enterprise must be managed in such a manner that it can make the public goods as the private goods of the enterprise.

Study related to Bangladeshi enterprises with reference to CSR activities is of recent origin in eighties. Hoque (1985) in an article titled "Social Responsibilities of Business: Myth or Reality?" explained the concepts of CSR, its major areas and the proper direction in which a firm can think of being socially responsible. Reviewing available literature in the field, the study identified the major areas to be focused for a business enterprise so as to be responsible to the different concerns of the society.

Mannan (1986) discussed the concept of CSR from the organizational contextual changes. The study reviewed literature on the areas of social responsibility. It also tried to focus the arguments of both for and against the concept.

Mahmud (1988) analyzed different aspects of the concept in a study, to show the practice of social responsibility in public enterprises of Bangladesh. After a brief discussion of the aspects of social responsibility the study examined the performance of social responsibility in different public sector corporations of the country. The study pointed out that public corporations of Bangladesh should have some sort of obligatory responsibilities to the society.

Arif (1990) conducted a study over ten private and ten public sector corporations in Chittagong. He found that employee welfare and national development were the objectives of a public sector enterprise management, while the objectives of private business enterprises were profit, growth and self sufficiency.

Chowdhury and Kabir (2006) argued that environmental marketing and management integrate all the three areas of business society environment interrelationships. But corporate social responsibility

or corporate citizenship are attributed to be more extensive terms than the business society environment relationships or the circle model.

3.0 Methodology

The study is the outcome of both the library and field survey. With the help of library survey requisite secondary data in the form of relevant text and reference books, research studies, articles, papers and M-Phil thesis were collected. Inductive research is carried out to fulfill the stated objectives. Samples size of 60 (30 teachers from 10 private and public universities and 30 bankers from 15 private and public owned banks) is purposively selected for the study with the help of a structured questionnaire prepared in line with the stated objectives. Only descriptive statistical methods (mean score, weighted average score, rank and percentage) are adopted to examine the necessity, present scenario, attitudes, problems and remedies of CSR education. The requisite data were processed with the help of SPSS. After processing data a report in the present form has been prepared in order to make the study more useful and analytical to the readers.

4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results from the primary data and findings of the study are discussed as follows:

i) Necessity of CSR Education in Bangladesh

Table 01 reveals that considering the Weighted Average Score (WAS) of the respondents, the necessity of CSR education at University and College levels has been ranked first with WAS of 4.67 for teachers group and 4.50 for bankers group. Again, the necessity of CSR education in Banking Industry has been ranked second position for bankers group with WAS of 4.33, but for teachers group the necessity of CSR education has been ranked 3rd position with WAS of 4.33. Necessity of CSR education at NEP level has been ranked 2nd position in case of teachers of WAS of 4.50 and 3rd position of WAS 4.00 in case of bankers. Lastly, the necessity of CSR education at other corporate firms' level has been ranked 4th position both as per the opinions of teachers with WAS of 3.83 and bankers with WAS 3.67 respectively.

If we compare the responses of teachers group with bankers group it can be said that in case of teachers group the per variable WAS has been 4.33; whereas, in case of bankers group the same has been 4.13. Thus, it signifies that the necessity of CSR education has been felt much more by the teachers group than the bankers group.

Table 1. Head wise WAS and Rank

		Teachers		Bankers	
		WAS	Rank	WAS	Rank
	Necessity of CSR Education in Bangladesh				
A	National Education Policy (NEP) level	4.50	2nd	4.00	3rd
B	University and College levels	4.67	1st	4.50	1st
C	Banking Industry level	4.33	3rd	4.33	2nd
D	Other Corporate Firms level	3.83	4th	3.67	4th
	WAS per variable	4.33		4.13	
	Attitudes of the respondents towards CSR Education				
A	Course contents of CSR Education for BBA Program	4.43	6th	4.50	3rd
B	Course contents of CSR Education for MBA Program	4.50	5th	4.33	6.5
C	Favorable influence of CSR Education on NEP	4.67	1st	4.50	3rd
D	Favorable influence of University and college education policy	4.60	2.5	4.50	3rd
E	Favorable influence on Banking industry performances	4.40	7th	4.33	6.5
F	Research on CSR Education	4.60	2.5	4.40	5 th
G	Training on CSR education	4.57	4th	4.83	1st
	WAS per variable	4.54		4.49	
	Present Scenario CSR Education in colleges and Universities.				
A	Level of CSR Education enhances organizational effectiveness.	4.60	6th	4.67	3rd
B	Level of training on CSR enhances organizational effectiveness.	4.67	4th	4.83	1st
C	Existing course content on CSR Education at BBA level is quite inadequate.	4.33	8th	4.50	6th
D	Existing course content on CSR Education at MBA level is quite inadequate.	4.40	7th	4.33	7th
E	Existing training program on CSR personnel is highly inadequate.	4.67	4th	3.93	8th
F	Investment in CSR activities enhances organizational performance.	4.67	4th	4.60	5th
G	Due emphasis needs to be given on CSR Education and Training.	4.73	2 nd	4.67	3rd
H	Existing investment in CSR activities is inadequate.	4.83	1st	4.67	3rd
	WAS per variable	4.61		4.53	

Source: Data has been compiled by the researchers based on field survey.

ii) Attitudes of the respondents towards CSR Education

Attitudes of the respondents towards CSR Education and its major components are important issues of CSR education. Responses from the teachers group depict that influence of CSR Education on NEP has stood first with a WAS of 4.67. On the other hand, bankers group opined the same with a WAS of 4.50 which has been ranked 3rd. Again, training on CSR education has been ranked 1st by the bankers group with a WAS of 4.83 whereas, by the teachers group it has been ranked 4th with a WAS of 4.57. A significant finding of the study is that both the respondents have marked low points for Course contents of CSR Education for MBA Program and influence on banking industry performances. These have been ranked the least by both the groups. If we compare the responses of teachers group with bankers group, it can be said that in case of teachers group per variable WAS has been 4.54; whereas, in case of bankers group the same has been 4.49. Thus, it signifies that the Attitudes of the respondents towards CSR Education and its major components have been felt much more positive by the teachers group than the bankers group.

iii) Present Scenario of CSR Education in colleges and Universities.

Present Scenario of CSR Education in colleges and Universities as identified through the survey of teachers and bankers group gives valuable information. Considering WAS of the respondents, "Existing investment in CSR activities is inadequate" has been ranked 1st by the teachers group with a WAS of 4.83; but by the bankers group it has been ranked 4th with a WAS of 4.67. "Due emphasis need to be given

on CSR Education and Training" has been ranked 2nd position by the teachers group but has been ranked 3rd by the bankers group with a WAS of 4.67. "Level of training on CSR enhances organizational effectiveness", "Existing training program on CSR personnel is highly inadequate" and "investment in CSR activities enhances organizational performance" have been ranked 4th position by the teachers group with a WAS of 4.67, but bankers opined for 1st, 8th and 5th positions with WAS of 4.83, 3.93 and 4.60 respectively. Teachers group has ranked CSR Education enhances organizational effectiveness in 6th position with WAS of 4.60 but the bankers have marked the same variable as 3rd position with a WAS of 4.67. If we compare the responses of teachers group with bankers group, it can be said that in case of teachers group the overall WAS (per variable) has been 4.61; where as in case of bankers group the same has been 4.53. Thus, it signifies that Present Scenario of CSR Education in colleges and Universities has been felt highly essential by the teachers group than the bankers group.

iv) Problems hindering for implementation of CSR Education

The respondents were asked to identify the major problems hindering implementation of CSR education in Bangladesh. The teachers group has opined the followings issues as the major problems hindering for implementation of CSR education. Among them policy makers' reluctance regarding CSR education has been ranked 1st with a score of 63% followed by absence of curriculum as to CSR education, lack of education and proper training on CSR education courses in their BBA and MBA

programs and lack of qualified teachers and researchers at university and college have been ranked as 2nd, 3rd

and 4th scoring 18%, 11% and 8% respondents respectively.

Table 2 Problems hindering for implementation of CSR Education

SL. No	Particulars	Percentage of respondents	Rank
Major problems that have identified by the teachers			
1	Policy makers' reluctance regarding CSR education	63%	1 st
2	Lack of education and proper training on CSR education courses in their BBA and MBA programs	8%	4 th
3	Absence of curriculum as to CSR education	18%	2 nd
4	Lack of qualified teachers and researchers at university and college	11%	3 rd
Major problems that have identified by the bankers			
1	Irresponsive motive of higher profit maximization	73%	1 st
2	Absence of direct benefit from CSR practice is not available	12%	3 rd
3	Reluctance of the top management	15%	2 nd

Source: Data has been compiled by the researchers based on field survey.

Based on the opinion of bankers group, "Irresponsive motive of higher profit maximization" has been ranked first scoring as opined by 73% respondents as a major problem that is hindering for implementation of CSR Education followed by reluctance of the top management and absence of direct benefit from CSR practice is not available as opined 15% and 12% respondents respectively.

v) Probable measures to remove the problems of CSR Education

Respondents were requested to identify some probable measures in order to remove the problems of CSR Education and thereby improve the existing CSR education. Respondents' opinions have revealed that "Formation of strong high level committee with proper education knowledge and experience", "Ensuring proper education on CSR and arrangements of proper

training on CSR" can solve the above mentioned problems at NEP has ranked top with the views of 55% respondents followed by "formation of adequate curriculum on CSR" "making available of qualified teachers on CSR education" and "incorporation of CSR related courses at BBA and MBA programs" have been ranked 2nd, 3rd and 4th with the views of 18%, 17% and 10% respondents respectively. From the bankers group, (Table 3) it has revealed that reasonable profit motive of corporations has been ranked top with the opinions of 65% respondents as a probable remedy for the above mentioned problems. Good corporate governance practices and mandatory supervision and monitory policy of regulators e.g. Bangladesh Bank have been ranked 2nd and 3rd with the comment of 19% and 16% respondents respectively.

Table 3 Probable measures to remove the problems of CSR Education

SL. No	Particulars	Percentage of respondents	Rank
Probable measures which have identified by the teachers			
1	Formation of strong high level committee with proper education, knowledge and experience, ensuring proper education on CSR and arrangements of proper training on CSR can solve the mentioned problems at NEP	55%	1 st
2	Incorporation of CSR related courses at BBA and MBA programs	10%	4 th
3	Formation of adequate curriculum on CSR	18%	2 nd
4	Making available of qualified teachers on CSR education	17%	3 rd
Probable measures which have identified by the bankers			
1	Reasonable profit motive of corporations	65%	1 st
2	Good corporate governance practices	16%	3 rd
3	Mandatory supervision and monitory policy of regulators	19%	2 nd

Source: Data has been compiled by the researchers based on field survey.

Concluding remark

The analysis of findings of the study reveals that academics are more concerned than the professionals regarding CSR education. Universities are the most important areas of imparting higher education, still in light of modernization of the basic objective of providing education must not suffer. Educational systems must not be of commercial

organizations stressing upon only growth in number of students and thereby maximization of profit. Implementing CSR strategies in a higher education institution should be considered in order to obtain a true competitive advantage and a positive reputation. Moreover, practicing what is taught and thereby generating a real example of the academic knowledge can create a unique proposition for any higher

education institution. Besides, as the complexity of higher education operations increasingly overlap with societal interests, higher education institutions are pressured for responsible practices. Thus, reasonable higher education practices not only will contribute to the well-being of the interest groups and the public in general, but also these practices will increasingly become a long-term value proposition for the institution itself. The information generated in the study and its findings would definitely contribute to the existing stock of knowledge on the CSR education. The teachers especially at university level may find the findings of the study useful in enriching their knowledge and skill in CSR as well as conducting research on CSR education. The university authorities may use the findings in order to develop the course curriculum in CSR course. The relevant authority of the corporate firms will be very much benefited by employing business graduates with special knowledge and skill in ethical issues and social values which are the subject matters of CSR education. The concerned authority of the government would also be able to modify the existing NEP incorporating CSR education which will be internationally acceptable and comparable in the context of globalization of business.

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