Corporate Social Responsibility in a Troubled World: Keeping Sight of Local and Global Community Problems

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1. Abstract

We live in a troubled world beset with numerous social and environmental problems. Some of these problems are local in that they affect people in a particular location or community while others are global in scale. The list in Table 1 has been compiled from several sources (see Matthews, 2007;). The list in Table 1 has been compiled from several sources (see Matthews, 2007;) with the present authors also contributing items to the list. Global warming, pollution, diseases, violence, war and a variety of other global issues global problems await our collective attention (see Table 1).

The range and distribution of problems differs in countries, regions and local communities. Table 2 shows some of the important issues that should also be addressed in the Australian community. We must address ourselves in what kind of world we want to live and then strive to achieve this ideal. Do we want to live in a world that is aesthetically pleasing and beautiful or one marked with misery and destruction? Health, happiness and a pristine environment must be put high on the agenda for all.

2. The Concept of Corporate Social Responsibility

The concept of CSR is largely a product of the 20th century, as is evidenced by the fact that the term itself wasn’t used until the 1920s and earlier (Thomas & Nowak, 2008). Various definitions, principles and models of CSR have been proposed (e.g., Drucker, 1984; Carroll, 1991;). The University of Auckland Business School. 2-5th December, 2008

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3. Appeal to Reason

Whilst many corporations are encompassing CSR initiatives because of the ‘good business’ it can provide, there are many more reasons (social responsibility) for companies making efforts towards CSR. Are companies making efforts towards CSR to fulfill their responsibilities to society or are they only making efforts towards CSR to improve their bottom line? There are also other reasons for companies making efforts towards CSR, including: economic, environmental, social, and ethical. Some of these reasons are:... (more text...)

4. Conclusion

In this paper we reviewed some important definitions/models of Corporate Social Responsibility. A number of important questions arise from this review. One of the main questions is how do we make sure that the social responsibility initiatives that are being put in place are actually having an impact? How do we measure the success of these initiatives? There is a need for more research in this area to provide a better understanding of how to effectively implement and evaluate CSR initiatives in different contexts.