CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: A STUDY OF SOCIETAL INITIATIVES TAKEN BY MAHARATNA COMPANIES FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT
This paper is attempted to examine the societal initiative taken by the Maharatna companies for rural development in India. Through this paper it is tried to elaborate the substantial role contributed by the maharatna companies for enhancing and accelerating the worst situation in rural section of the society by adopting the concept of corporate social responsibility companies promoting the cultural, social and economic activities and such companies have immense potential to grow further. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) refers to the way a company undertakes activities that positively affect the well-being of employees, local communities, the environment and society as a whole. These actions expected to earn the trust and respect from all the stakeholders. CSR initiatives for rural development were classified under five areas: livelihood, health, education, environment and infrastructure. Notable initiatives have been taken by seven maharatna companies. The main objective of this paper is to analyze the CSR activities carried out by maharatna companies in India.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility; Socio Economic Development; Definitions; Maharatna Companies; Community

INTRODUCTION
Corporate social responsibility is basically a concept whereby companies decide voluntarily to contribute to a better society and a cleaner environment. CSR which is synonymous to corporate conscience, corporate citizenship, social performance or sustainable responsible business etc. is a form of corporate self regulation integrated into a business model. CSR policy functions as a built-in, self regulating mechanism whereby a business house monitors and ensures its active compliance with the law, ethical standards and international norms.

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The basic objective of CSR in these days is to maximize the company’s overall impact on the society and stakeholders. CSR policies, practices and programs are being comprehensively integrated by an increasing number of companies throughout their business operations and processes. Effective CSR aims at “achieving commercial success in ways that honor ethical values and respect people, communities, and the natural environment.” Simply put it means “what you do, how you do it, and when and what you say.” Several kinds of terms have been used interchangeably with CSR.
OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY
The study has been conducted mainly to:

1. To analyse the concept of CSR.
2. To investigate and understand the CSR initiatives taken by maharatna companies in India
3. To Assess the impacts of CSR action on socio economic development of rural population in India

DATA AND METHODOLOGY
Secondary sources such as research article, journal, books, periodicals and some e-resources are used to carry out successful study.

Societal Initiatives Taken

BY MAHARATNA COMPANIES in rural section of the society: The followings are the major contribution made by the maharatna companies in various activities for the social and economic development of the society at large.

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited has contributed for the following activities: Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited, which is commonly known as, BHEL is the largest engineering and manufacturing enterprise of public sector company in India. BHEL devoted it entire CSR practices towards the social betterment since social improvements are its fundamental philosophy and central objective behind the CSR expenditure.

Education: BHEL established School to promote education nearby its manufacturing division so that the childrens of employee benefitted apart from this different types of financial benefits scheme was provided in that area, especially to the needy and poor children of the society.

Health: BHEL have contributed broadly by addressing issues like healthcare availability and accessibility, providing specialized treatments and medications. Their initiatives in partnership with specialized agencies have benefitted people from different backgrounds who previously had no access to healthcare or specialized treatments for their ailments. BHEL initiated medical care projects of Health Camps, Blood Donation Camps, Ambulances, Providing Safe Water, Up gradation of Medical Equipment, Construction of Hospitals.

Environment: Its an environment friendly company in all its activities, products services, besides providing safe and healthy working environment to all its stakeholders and has made UNGC programme as part of the Company’s strategy, culture and day-to-day operations. The company has formulated its Sustainable Development Policy as an integral part of the Company’s strategy

Livelihood: BHEL have actively taken steps to develop the necessary skills for people from different areas to make them employable. They were given training and also donated the equipment for imparting skill sets of varied nature. This scheme helped the trained people to generate income to support their families. BHEL provides Vocational training in beauty culture, cutting & tailoring for women for better livelihood, Technical education programs in Rural Areas Education for children of Labors, Short hand Training Centers, Computer Centers.

Infrastructure: BHEL worked hard to create infrastructure for schools and hospitals to build roads and boundary walls. These projects have been taken up on need basis or with a focus in identified backward districts. They have partnered with other CPSEs or Government or specialized agencies wherever the scope of any such project could be enhanced further through partnerships. BHEL initiated some of the infrastructure development projects of Vocational Training Institutes and Centers, Hostel Construction for Backward Classes, Constructing bore wells and hand pumps, Construction of Toilets.
Coal India Limited: Coal India Limited is the single largest coal producer in the world and its mission is to produce the planned quantity of coal efficiently and economically in an environmentally and socially sustainable manner. CIL is also a well performer in the CSR area.

Education: Its educational contributions include the activities like providing financial assistance to primary, middle and higher secondary schools, conducting adult literacy programmes, promoting girl education, counseling of parents, providing scholarships to the poor and meritorious students etc. CIL is also taking steps to promote professional education by setting up vocational institutes offering various professional courses.

Health: Regarding health care, CIL is organizing awareness camps on AIDS, TB, Leprosy, diabetic detection and hypertension, blood donation camps, alcoholism and smoking, child and mother care, diet and nutrition, family welfare, senior citizens health care, wellness clinics and tele medicines etc. Operation Jyoti is another effective programme of CIL to eradicate all cases of reversible blindness in the peripheral area.

Environment: The inherent tendencies of coal mining are degradation of the land and environment. CIL constantly addresses the impact of mining activities across environmental and social issues. Eco-friendly mining systems have been put in place in all of its mining areas. To make environmental mitigation measures more transparent, CIL introduced state-of-the-art Satellite Surveillance to monitor land reclamation and restoration for all opencast projects for this purpose Coal India has made a forestation over an area of around 32,000 Hectares while the total forest area degraded due to mining operation is around 12,800 Hectares, which means, for every hectare of forest land degraded, CIL has made plantation in 2.5 Hectares of land. CIL has initiated by ‘Clean& Green’ programme, massive plantation has been taken up by CIL wherever land is available. CIL has till date planted over 73 million trees.

Livelihood: In the area of social empowerment, it is providing training to rural youth for self-employment, providing assistance to develop mushroom farming, medicinal plants, and training programmes for women on different vocational courses etc. CIL is also promoting sports and cultural activities in the nearby villages by conducting tournaments and providing sports material to young and talented persons.

Infrastructure: CIL providing infrastructural support, it is taking steps for the construction, repair and extension of auditoriums, education institutes, shopping complex, bridges, roads, check dams, community center, playground.

GAIL (India) Limited: GAIL (India) Ltd., with a turnover of 7.2 billion US $ is India’s largest natural gas company and ranked as the top gas utility in Asia. GAIL to be consistently ranked among the top gas utilities in the world, also drives its CSR initiatives. GAIL’s motto statement ‘Tomorrow is yours’ is also a reflection of the hopes, aspirations and dreams of the many beneficiaries of the CSR initiatives. It follows global best practices in identifying, implementing, sustaining and monitoring its CSR programmes to maximize sustainability, scalability and transparency.

Education: Recently GAIL (India) limited has taken initiative for the students who belongs to backward strata where the initiative was taken by 23 students of the GAIL under Utkarsh-flagship programme at Kanpur. Under this programme, 100 students belonging to the economically backward strata of the society were provided.

Health: GAIL has supported numerous medical/ Health outreach camps in rural areas, Eye Screening & spectacle distribution Camps. GAIL also endeavors to strengthen the healthcare infrastructure and services by provision of ambulances, diagnostic equipment and construction of hospitals/ specialty wards. GAIL’s Project Arogya, a flagship GAIL CSR initiative, which caters to the gap in the primary health care system delivery by providing Medical outreach service through 16 Mobile Medical Units across 6 states Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Haryana and Punjab with a focus on Awareness, Diagnosis and Cure model.
Environment: GAIL’s commitment towards the Environment protection an implicit part of its Vision statement and though its CSR initiatives it has promoted the cause through specific environment-friendly programmes. Projects related to Rain water harvesting, water recharging, Ground water reuse systems, Provision of Bio-Gas Stoves have been widely supported by GAIL. GAIL have undertaken wildlife protection initiatives through Mobile Tertiary Services in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.

Livelihood: GAIL has undertaken skill development and vocational training programmes in Dari designing, blanket weaving, plumbing, house wiring, bee keeping etc. for effective empowerment and self-reliance. The Multi-skill schools established in M.P. (Guna), A.P (Tandur) & Gujarat (Dediapada) under Project Swavalambh, a flagship GAIL CSR initiative, have been imparting skills based training in retail, hospitality & facility management to rural youth of country along with placement support. In the FY 2013-14, over 2700 youth were provided training in the sectors of retail, sales, hospitality, BPO Service, Facility Management. In FY 2013-14, GAIL have also initiated Project Sreejan- Long Term Relief and Rehabilitation Project focusing on Livelihood promotion and capacity building for women and youth in flood affected regions in Rudraprayag, Uttarakhand.

Infrastructure: GAIL has also lent a helping hand towards boosting rural infrastructure. GAIL’s investment is rural infrastructure is driven by the welfare of communities that live close to its work centers. These include projects improving connectivity between villages and/ to towns and cities through construction of village approach roads, village adoption programmes, construction of community centers, community toilets, Aanganwadi buildings, school buildings and libraries to benefit the community at large. Also, projects have been undertaken for construction of check dams and water catchment areas which have successfully transformed farming practices and farmer’s lives.

Indian Oil Corporation Limited: Indian Oil, corporate social responsibility (CSR) has been the cornerstone of success right from inception in the year 1964. Indian Oil has defined a set of core values - Care, Innovation, Passion and Trust - to guide them in all they do. Indian Oil has supported innumerable social and community initiatives in India, touching the lives of millions of people positively by supporting environmental and health-care projects and social, cultural and educational programmes.

Education: Providing financial assistance to schools for construction/renovation/repair of hostels, school buildings, classrooms, computers to schools, books, furniture, laboratory equipment, awards to meritorious students, scholarships to poor students, adult literacy programme, delivery vans for distribution of mid-day meals to Govt. School children, sponsoring/organizing rural sports/games, sports meets/events, supporting education and research activities. IOC has also provide “Indian Oil Scholarships Scheme” for Graduate and Post-Graduate students:- Under the scheme total 600 scholarships (300 for Engineering, 200 for MBBS and 100 for MBA) are awarded every year @Rs.3000/- per month for all the four years for Engineering and Medical Courses and two years for Business Administration/Management courses.

Health: Organising Medical/Health Camps on Family Planning, Immunization, AIDS awareness, Pulse Polio, Eye, Blood Donation, Pre and Post-natal Care, Homeopathic Medicine distribution of free condoms, providing anti-mosquito fogging treatment, toilets, medicines to primary health centers, mosquito nets, ambulances to Medical Centers/Hospitals/NGOs, hearing aids/wheel chairs to physically challenged, financial assistance to hospitals, medical equipments.

Environment: IOCL has included CSR in its vision and mission statement and has built its corporate strategies around it. Environmental initiatives include: development of cleaner fuels such as diesel with low Sulphur content and biodegradable lube formulations; pollution control programme, in which all refineries are provided with facilities to control pollution from different sources; and ecological parks, which are scientifically designed green belts that have been developed at Gujarat Panipat refineries, to serve as a pollution sink and to enhance the aesthetic look of the refinery area.
livelihood: IOCL have begun Project called Rupanter for unemployed youth to lean alternate source of income, mostly in agro based industries, poultry farming, pig breeding, duck rearing, fishery.

Infrastructure: IOCL are providing different infrastructural facilities like construction or development of roads, electricity, water facility, sanitation, for rural development in India.

NTPC Limited: National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC), India's power giant, was established in November 1975 to play a major role in the Indian power sector. NTPC adopted a visionary approach to address the issue of corporate social responsibility since inception. NTPC management takes every care to promote and fulfill the recreational and health requirements of the youth; and the innate urges of different social groups to meaningfully project their cultural traditions and social values.

Education: Provide Merit scholarships to more than 2600 students every year. Support for construction of classrooms and installation of Solar Street lights at Sadhana Vidyalaya, village Kannamangala. Support to Cluster Innovation Centre (CIC) of Delhi University for 16 Educational Projects for Social Sensitization by students of B. Tech (Humanities), Delhi University. Setting up polytechnic at, Kaladungi, Dist. Nainital Uttarakhand. On regular basis, stations also take up activities related to development of infrastructure, Female / girl child education, adult education, coaching and personality development programs, providing scholarships, study material & uniforms etc to deserving students from neighborhood village schools.

Health: Provide support to Impact India Foundation for “Lifeline Express Project” (camp) at Dalmau Railway station in Distt. Raebareli, U.P for providing curative interventions for disabled poor by general treatment & various surgical operations. provide support three specialized Eye Centres at Bhubneswar Eye Hospital, Odisha. directly Observed Treatment cum Designated Microscopy Centre (DOTs cum DMC) with Mobile ambulance facilities being operated at 12 NTPC hospitals under Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme (RNTCP) that cater to villages upto 25-30Km have benefited about 5000 cases so far. In addition Stations regularly take up health related activities like Mobile Health Clinics, Health Camps & Operations, Family Planning camps, De-addiction camps / programs, Health related infrastructure in neighborhood villages besides providing subsidized medical facilities to surrounding community. About 1200 Medical Health checkups Camps and about 365 Eye camps organized at various locations.

Environment: NTPC has been carrying out its business activities with a deep sense of responsibility towards protecting the environment. “Going Higher on Generation, lowering Green House Gas Intensity” is vision statement on managing environment. NTPC adopted in the document are the company’s pro-active approach to environment, optimum utilisation of equipment, adoption of latest technologies and continual environment improvement. NTPC uses new technology initiatives and efficient utilisation of resources, thereby minimising waste, maximizing ash utilisation and ensuring a green belt all around the plant for maintaining ecological balance.

Livelihood: Provide Stations take up Vocational Training programmes like Computer training, Motor Driving, General Electrical Repairing, Motor rewinding, mobile repairing, fitter, refrigeration & air conditioning repair, masonry, shuttering etc. Skill up gradation programs for women, to promote self-employment, include Cutting, Tailoring, Stitching, Dress Designing, Beautician, Embroidery, Food Preservation/Processing.

Infrastructure: Provide Installation of about 50 High Mast Lights (HMLs) in Bihar, Jharkhand, Kerala, West Bengal and Tripura. Provide 5 Km road from NH–200 to State Highway-63 in Angul & Talcher subdivision. Lighting Area is around Shri Jagannath Temple, Puri. Provide Comprehensive village development including Drinking Water, Sanitation, Education and Health Infrastructure in six villages, 3 villages each in Bhagalpur and Godda District and Comprehensive village development including Drinking Water, Sanitation, Education and Health Infrastructure in six villages, 3 villages each in Bhagalpur and Godda District. Laying of cement concrete road in various villages in district Chhindwara, MP. Also provide laying of cement concrete road in various villages in district
Chhindwara, MP.NTPC also takes up activities related to. Stations also takes up activities related to construction of Community Halls / Buildings/ Centre, Anganwadis, Local Markets, Panchayat Ghar, Cremation ground, bus shelters, Construction and Deepening of Ponds, Lakes & Bathing Ghats.

**Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited:** Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) is state owned Oil and Natural Gas company founded on 14 Aug 1956. It is the second highest profit making corporation in India. Indian government holds 74.14% equity stake in this company. The 2009 CSR guidelines define ONGC's role on corporate social responsibility emphasizing transformation of the organization from "Philanthropy" to "stakeholder participation". It is a Fortune Global 500 company ranked 413, and contributes 77% of India's crude oil production and 81% of India's natural gas production.

**Education:** ONGC provide financial assistance to Anganwadis in Western region and Akshay Patra foundation for modern kitchen to facilitate mid day meals for school children in Andhra Pradesh. In addition also provide support Tamana special school for computer center for disabled children, Braille machine for blind children of north Eastern states Himalayan school society, Dehradun for scholarship to adopted underprivileged girl students affected by Tsunami, Vocational educational centers for women in southern region, Support for Institution of engineers.

**Health:** ONGC organising Medical camps, Mobile dispensaries and Supplementing the efforts of already existing health centers in the rural areas Health care for women, children and disabled for rural development.

**Environment:** For sustainable management and development of natural resources, ONGC have been working for Environment protection, ecological conservation, promotion.

**Livelihood:** ONGC initiated Project Utkarsh- Livelihood Project in Sibasagar in 2011-12, this project seeks to expand livelihood opportunities for 400 households in one year through training of women in skills like tailoring, soft toy making with linkages for income generation as well as training the elderly in vocations like goatery, piggery, mushroom cultivation etc. while establishing adequate forward and backward linkages.

**Infrastructure:** ONGC providing infrastructural support, it is taking steps for the Development of infrastructure facilities-improvement of roads, bridges, street lighting, drainage systems, Sponsoring / co-sponsoring professional meets, conventions, seminars for rural development of India.

**SAIL:** Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) is the largest steel maker of India and amongst the top public sector enterprises in terms of turnover with the prestigious status of ‘Maharatna’. Apart from the business of manufacturing steel, the objective of the company is to conduct business in ways that produce social, environmental and economic benefits to the communities in which it operates. One of SAIL’s Core Values Concern for People also reflects the company’s commitment towards society at large, which it endeavors to fulfill through wide-ranging and diversified initiatives and activities under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

**Education:** 146 schools have been set up in the steel townships to impart modern education to about 70,000 children and assistance has been provided to over 286 schools of villages surrounding steel plants/units for free education of more than 55,000 students. SAIL is providing midday meals to more than 18,000 students in different schools of Bhilai every day. SAIL has achieved a girl-boy ratio of 1:1 for all levels of education as well as a survival rate of 96% in SAIL primary schools and 90% in SAIL secondary schools.

**Health:** SAIL has established 54 Primary Health Centers, 12 Reproductive & Child Health Centers, 17 Hospitals and 7 Super-Speciality Hospitals for providing specialized healthcare to more than 30 million people since inception ions for poor and needy people, where free medical treatment and medicines are provided.
Environment: SAIL is committed to protection of the environment and the promotion of responsible corporate policies that conserve and optimally utilise resources and at the same time, sustain the economic environment for growth. Air Emission Management The company is progressively introducing state-of-the-art technologies for air emission management. Over 500 numbers of air pollution equipment are installed in the steel plants to keep the pollution load and ambient air quality within permissible limits. Solid Waste Management Earlier steel plants in India produced nearly 700-800 kg of solid wastes for every tons of crude steel. Utilisation rates were also not so high and waste dumps occupied large tracks of land. However, with concerted efforts, nearly 80% of the wastes are today being recycled or re-utilised through safe disposal and re-use. Greenery Efforts Extensive forestation programmes are being followed in all.

Livelihood: SAIL provided vocational training in areas such as improved agriculture, mushroom cultivation, animal husbandry (goatery, poultry, fishery, piggery), achar / papad / agarbatti making, etc. Also provide training for skill enhancement as welders, fitters and electricians, in sewing & embroidery, smokeless chullah making. One of the outstanding success stories of SAIL-supported Self Help Group programmes is ‘Kiran’ which is run by 97 lady artisans of nearby villages of Kiriburu Ore Mines. Kiran branded towels, bed sheets, sarees, Diwali candles and agarbattis are being sold through door-to-door marketing efforts and through cooperatives.

Infrastructure: Roads are a means of communication and help economic and social activities to multiply. Involved in the construction and repair of roads in far-flung locations since inception, SAIL has constructed roads in 435 villages helping around 73 lakh people. SAIL has been involved in the construction and repair of roads per year, thereby providing communication facilities to nearly 2 lakh people across 329 villages every year. This compares well with the national average of 25.82 km per million populations. In the year 2009-10, 103.35 km of road were constructed benefiting 17, 24,114 people. Till March 2010, more than 73 lakh people across 435 villages reaped the advantage of the modern network of roads built by SAIL.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

this study is extensively focused on the presents practices of maharatna companies as societal initiative taken by the companies for the development of rural part of the country but merely little of bit initiative cannot set aside the further greater attention for ensuring and providing the education, healthcare services, environmental sustainability and livelihood in an appropriate manner. So that the maximisation of welfare level can be achieved at certain point of time. Hence there is scope for further research in that area.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study is that social responsibility is regarded as an important business issue of maharatna companies irrespective of size, sector, business goal, location of the company. Because maharatna companies are realizing that without socio-economic development of the local communities, there can be no stability and sustainability for doing business so as to compete with the global market. The study shows that all surveyed maharatna companies present themselves as having CSR policy and practices. maharatna companies which design and implement CSR initiatives in the vicinity of their works cover entire community. CSR initiatives ranging from income generation activities for livelihood, health check-up camps, education, agricultural development management and development of natural resources, infrastructure facilities being carried out by these maharatna companies.CSR initiatives being implemented by the maharatna companies for rural development have a positive impact in overall development of society and their business.

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