Empirical exploration of relationship between Ethical leadership and CSR in Manufacturing Sector in India

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Abstract: The study aims to empirically explore the underlying relationship between leadership and CSR with a special reference to manufacturing sector in India.For this study Descriptive research design was being used. Formulated hypothesis were tested by sample based methods, using questionnaire and convenience sampling method. A sample size of 335 senior and middle level employees of the manufacturing companies of Delhi and North central region (NCR) was analyzed using ANOVA using SPSS 22 to test the proposed hypothesis.

Based on the findings the study indicates that there is a significant impact of leadership on CSR activities in manufacturing sector organisations in Delhi and North central region (NCR). It is to note that there is great importance of leaders in manufacturing sector.The present research work emphasizes on the growing importance of efficient and strong leadership that can influence the magnitude and direction of various CSR activities for the welfare of the society.

Keywords: Ethical Leadership (EL), Corporate Social responsibility (CSR), Human resource management (HRM), Organisation development (OD).

1. Introduction

In this era of ever changing business environment in order to maintain sustainable development the organizations need to develop a well knit framework through which it can achieve social, economical as well as environmental objectives (Sachs J. D, 2015). But developing this holistic framework is the biggest challenge being faced by the business organizations. The business firms should assume a distinct role in the society which is much beyond its core business operations and legal requirements and which adds some value not only to business but also to the society in large (Graafland et.al, 2004). The present research paper aims to throw some light on the importance of ethical leadership in implementing CSR activities of the firm. In keeping with Keith Davis, "management is the capability to persuade others to be seeking for described objectives enthusiastically." (B.J. avolio, 2005). Leaders are the torch bearers who play a vital role in inculcating ethical and moral behaviour in their workforce and through their own examples they should try to shape the organization and motivate their followers to adhere to the ethical behaviour. The employees look up to their leaders when faced with any ethical dilemma (Treviño, L. K,1986), so the behavior of the leader should be consistently ethical within and outside the organization (Knowles R. N,2006, Gorski,H, 2017) . CSR is an automated business alternative that helps to make any organization socially responsible. By method for rehearsing corporate social commitment, also known as organization citizenship, gatherings might know about the type of effect they are having on all components of society alongside monetary, social, and natural. From a moral frame of mind, a couple of organizations will embrace CSR guidelines and practices because of moral standards of senior administration. For instance, a CEO may likewise believe that hurting the surroundings is morally frightful. (Elenkov et.al. 2005). Thus , in the paer ahead the researcher will empirically try to explore the relationship between ethical leadership and CSR through the eyes of relevant literature and findings

2. Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis Development

CSR and ethical leadership has become the buzz word nowadays with availability of extensive literature. Many social, economical and environmental challenges are being faced by present day leaders and the rapidly changing scenario forces them to seek innovative and creative answers to deal with varied stakeholders whose requirements, demands and interest areas could sometimes result into conflicts. Therefore in this complex and challenging times the leaders should work as a catalytic agent to identify the changes and thrusting their organizations towards a sustainable society.

The most important role that is played by CSR for sustainable development of the organizations is to build 'Trust'. Inclusion of CSR by the organization is for various reasons. Gaining fame and popularity and gaining trust both are different activities, so it is very important to differentiate between these two. Companies have started investing more on CSR activities as attention to the ethical, moral and social duties of companies has increased. As per the detailed survey conducted by KPMG Cooperative in the year 2019 about the CSR activities in India, it was highlighted that as per the compliance requirements of companies act 2013 by India Inc there a tremendous growth being observed in terms of formulation of CSR policies, Annual Disclosures on CSR etc. As per this act

which came into effect on April 1, 2014, companies with net worth of 500 Crores or with a turnover of Rs. 100 Crores or more or a net profit of 5 Crores or more in the immediate preceding financial year are required to spend 2 per cent of their profits on CSR programmes. The survey showed that almost 76% of the companies have already spent more than 2 percent on CSR activities which is more than 100 % increase over the last five years. The expenditure by N100 companies have totalled to Rs. 35,077 Crores from 2014 till 2019.

 CSR can be used as an important tool to foster a strong bonding among organizational members to form a channel for upward influence. CSR activities greatly influence the relationships between all its stakeholders and at the same time contributes to improve the societal well being through their clearly defined business practices (Korschun et al., 2014).When stakeholders are focused by both leaders and subordinates to maintain good relationships, then both leaders and their subordinates will be more inspired and motivated to put upward influence.

Organization's always strive to attain a positive CSR image and want the society to view their image as socially and ethical responsible through their involvement in CSR activities (Lii and Lee, 2012). Many studies and surveys suggest that there are several positive effects of maintaining a good CSR reputation. Some people think that CSR broadly as a result of social pressures (Husted and Allen, 2000). Others see organisations as driving social change (Dawson and Bartholemew, 2003). On the contrary literature suggests that society should not expect anything other than profit maximizing actions from the organizations (Friedman, 1970; Doane, 2005).

The CSR activities of the companies can be measured using the four dimensions of sustainability i.e. social, human, financial and environmental (Dahlsrud, 2006). Social and human sustainability consists of maintenance of long term social relationship and developing and fulfilling people's aspirations. Financial sustainability refers to organization's capability of fulfilling its stakeholders current and future needs whereas environmental sustainability means protecting and renewing the environment for present and future generations

Hence as the literature suggests the leaders should develop techniques for understanding assumptions and values which were enrooted in the existing framework. Thus the ethical leaders should try to identify political, economical, social, technological and environmental forces that hinder or encourage sustainability. If learners in the process of creating change can at the same time apply a critical self reflection and critical thinking then they can become leaders (Schon, 1984; Tilbury and Wortman, 2004, pp. 31-2). It through critical thinking and reflection one can challenge and confront the facts what regarded as logical and true.

Recent studies on leadership identifies two types of leaders, Mindful Leaders or leadership and Ethical leaders or leadership A mindful leader is one who believes in collaboration by taking others along with them in a personally satisfying and sustainability ways. A recent approach to leadership has focused on mindful leadership or leaders (ML) & EL and suggested that it is also supportive of sustainability outcomes. Mindful leaders behave collaboratively, taking others with them in personally satisfying and sustainable ways (Sinclair, 2006, p. xv). Leadership basically requires building and valuing relationship with others and in this process the leaders serve as role models before others (Sinclair, 2006, vol. xv, p. 31). Research done earlier suggests that EL & CSR are vital foundations for success of any business like increase in employees commitment and satisfaction level (Dirks and Ferrin, 2002; Peterson, 2004) and improvement in stakeholders satisfaction (Arrigo, 2013; Hsu, 2006). Hence the EL and CSR play an important role in highlighting the organizational values which in turn affects employee turnover intentions. The CSR and EL can be easily traced back from the self concept theory in HRM (Campbell et al., 2013; Shantz et al., 2016).

On studying the available literature it is difficult to trace reasons for the growing interest of the organizations in CSR activities apart from fact that their previous prevalent practices have led to corruption, unethical behaviour, frauds, exploitation etc. to name a few (Jensen, 2002; Monks and Minow, 2004). The 'economic man' model (Smith, 1991) has also failed in its promise of benefitting the masses. So this comprehension has led to two schools of thoughts, the first which addresses misbehaviours which can be analyzed financially like cheating, bribery, frauds (Ashforth and Anand, 2003, Anand et al., 2005, Ashforth et al., 2008) whereas the second thought addresses the more wider CSR issues like community, workplace, environment and market place (Moir, 2001).

Researchers suggest that responsible leaders contribute for the development of social capital and sustainable business as they believe in long lasting relationship which offer a mutual benefit to all relevant stakeholders leading to a stable network of relationships, infact these RLs act as weavers to weave social ties for a sustainable business which in turn will leade to sustainable future (Maak, 2007). Other researchers like Pless (2007, p.438) have defined RL as a value based ethically driven relationship between stakeholders and leaders who are joined together through a mutual sense purpose and meaning through which they can lift each other upper levels of motivation and commitment leading to creation of sustainable values and social changes, moreover RLs are the persons who

combine the idea of effectiveness with CSR by following and propagating active citizenship within and outside the firm. Hence CSR is an strategic issue which should be incorporated by top level management of the business organization (Werther & Chandler, 2005; Baumgartner, 2014; Orlitzky et al., 2011;). Top most CSR firms have Chief officers for CSR activities who is directly under the CEO (Strand, 2013, p. 721). Thus, the top executives beliefs affect the organization's CSR initiatives and so it is important that there should be strong commitment from the top level executives for the successful implementation of CSR activities of the organization (Chin et al., 2013, Goyal et.al, 2017). The top executives commitment towards CSR may also motivate their workforce for the same ensuring successful implementation of CSR in the organization. As per a study by Waddock et al. (2002, p. 140), it was concluded that top executives support will strengthen CSR implementation and their lack of proper support may curb any progress in inculcating CSR issues in the organization's practices and culture.

So, from the above literature review following hypothesis are formulated based on the constructs identified i.e. EL and CSR:

H1- there is a significant importance of ethical leaders in manufacturing sector.
H2- EL significantly impacts CSR activities in manufacturing sector.

3.   Objectives of study and Methodology

The present study seeks to fulfil following objectives:
*   To identify the role of ethical leader in enhancing CSR activities.
*   To understand the influence of leadership on CSR activities of manufacturing organizations

For the present research work descriptive research design was used. Data was collected from primary as well as secondary sources. Secondary data was obtained from authenticated sources that included books, magazines, research journals and internet resources. Questionnaire method was used for primary data collection. A self-administered questionnaire was prepared covering different dimension of leadership and its importance for CSR activities. Questions related to corporate social responsibility were developed on the basis of measurement scale Currás-Pérez et al.(2009).Questions related leadership were developed from instrument by Brown et al., (2005). Non probability sampling particularly convenience sampling techniques was put to use to select sample respondents from the total population. The questionnaire was distributed to 380 employees working in various organizations of manufacturing sectors like Havells India Ltd., GHCL Ltd, Bata India Ltd to name a few in and around NCR and Delhi. Out of 380 questionnaires only 335 completed questionnaires were returned, yielding 88% return rate. For measuring the importance of leadership on CSR activities of the organization, researchers asked participants to express their beliefs about the various practices on likert scale. For analyzing data, SPSS -22 versions was used to for analysis and hypothesis testing. Descriptive statistics and regression analysis was carried out for model estimation and testing. Table 1 indicates the demographic characteristics of respondents

Table 1

Description	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Age Categories		
Upto 20 Years	19	5.6
20-30 Years	173	51.5
30-40 Years	103	30.8
40 Years and above	40	12.1
Gender Categories		
Male	242	72.3
Female	93	27.7

Demographics are the statistical characteristics of human population such as age, gender, education level income level or professional experience. Demographic data is useful in helping the management for human resource planning as well as succession planning. Demographic information presented in the above table indicates that sample is dominated by employee of middle age ranging from 20 to 30 years as 51.5% employee falls in this age group. Another 5.6%, 30.8%, 12.1% respondents belong to age group of Upto 20 Years, 30-40 Years, 40 Years and above respectively. It is found that almost three fourth (72.3%) employees are male and remaining 27.7% are female denoting the domination of male members in the sample.

The reliability test is used to measure the statement defined in questionnaire and also tell the relationship between the individual items of the scale. It explains how construct is related to each item and describes the inter consistency of all statement in the questionnaire.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics of datasheet

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.736	10

From Table 2, it can be seen that the value for Cronbach's Alpha is 0.736 which can be considered as 73.6%. It simply concluded that our questionnaire is 74% reliable for proceeding to further analysis.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
CSR	3.6400	.66553	335
Leadership	3.5375	.69033	335

Table 3 tells about the mean and standard deviation of the dependent and independent variable. The mean and standard deviation of CSR is 3.6400 and .66553 respectively, and the mean and standard deviation of leadership of leadership is 3.5375 and .69033 respectively. The number of items is 335.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.668[a]	.447	.439	.49984

a. Predictors: (Constant), leadership

The R column represents the value of R which is the Multiple Correlation Coefficient. The value of R is .668 it indicates a good level of prediction.

The R square column represents the value of R square which is also called the coefficient of determination. It tells about how much variance is explained by the dependent variable on independent variable.

As we can see from the table that value of R Square is 0.447 i.e. our independent variable explains 44.7% of the variability of our dependent variable.

The ANOVA table of the study is as shown below.

Table 5: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	15.504	1	15.504	62.058	.000[b]
	Residual	19.488	78	.250		
	Total	34.992	79			

a. Dependent Variable: CSR
b. Predictors: (Constant), leadership

From table 5 we can see that the significance value is .000, which is less than 0.05, therefore this implies that the alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted and there is a significant relevance of independent variable (Leadership) with dependent variable.

To study the influence of each independent variable over dependent variable, coefficient statistics is given in table6 .

Table 6: Coefficient Statistics

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		

1 (Constant)	1.370	.294	.666		
Leadership	.642	.081		4.667	.000
				7.878	.000

From the above table 6 we can see from the significance column that all independent variable coefficient are statistically significant different from 0 zero.

Table 7: Collinearity Diagnostics

Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	Variance Proportions	
				(Constant)	leadership
1	1	1.982	1.000	.01	.01
	2	.018	10.410	.99	.99

a. Dependent Variable: CSR

The collinearity diagnostics confirms that there are serious problem in multicollinearity. If the eigen value is closer to 0 it indicates that the predictors are highly intercorrelated. From the above table we can see that the eigenvalue is 1.982 which is less than 2. So we can say that variables are correlated.

4. Discussion and conclusion

The present study aims to analyze the influence of leadership on the various CSR activities being undertaken by organizations in the manufacturing sector. The study reveals that there is significant relationship between leadership and CSR activities of the organizations. Previous study supports the fact that leadership matters a lot within the organization. It has also been documented that employee performance are the outcome of efficient leadership. The reliability of the data was checked by using the reliability analysis through SPSS. The value of Cronbach's Alpha is 0.736, which can be considered as 73.6%. It simply concluded that our questionnaire is 74% reliable for proceeding to further analysis. The R value of .666 indicates that there is high degree of correlation between the individual factors of leadership and CSR. The significant value is .000, which is less than 0.05 therefore, this implies that alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted and there is a significant importance of leader in manufacturing sector. The R square value is .443 which explains that the independent construct 'Leadership' shows 44.3% of association dependent variable 'CSR'. The value of R square lies between 0 and 1. The degree up to which R square value is closely approximated to 1, regression model is considered as highly fit. In our study, it only reaches to 44.3% which is good and appropriate enough. The significant value is .000, which is less than 0.05 therefore, this implies that alternative hypothesis (H2) is accepted and there is a significant impact of leadership on CSR activities in manufacturing sector. Many organizations may not pay heed to charitable causes. Leaders under study may also consider environmental, workplace and market related issues but community welfare issues may not be significant for them as they think they have no impact on their businesses. Actually leaders fail to identify the wide range of benefits which may arise by working with their local community. So the need of the hour is that the leaders should understand that social issues and society in large have an huge impact on their businesses. Therefore leaders should motivate their workforce to volunteer for social causes and donate for charitable causes. So the changing business environment requires a kind of leadership which promotes CSR ideals for the sustainable development of the society and business.

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