CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, MOTIVATION AND ORGANISATIONAL IDENTITY - FUNDAMENTALS FOR STABILITY IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

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Abstract: In times of dynamic change, uncertainty, natural and political cataclysms there is a lot more scrutiny on our behaviour and the example we are being given by both people and organisation. Technological advances create an opportunity for improving how institutions work and implementing innovative approaches for recruitment, retention and development of the workforce. Conversely, individuals are increasingly aware of their unique identity and value, and have more nuanced demands for appreciation and opportunities from employers. This new environment imposes new challenges on management and shifts the patterns of the relationships between employer and employees, as well as those between institutions and individuals. To be even more attractive to potential employees, both public and private sector organisations turn to unconventional and innovative approaches and techniques for motivation. These activities are fast becoming the mainstay in the development and prosperity of every institution, company or non-government organisation.
More intangible incentives are gaining share in the motivational policies of organisations, offering a better work-life balance, and addressing the individual's social responsibilities and personal values, primarily by way of the organisations themselves fast adopting new policies on social responsibility. Specifically, corporate social responsibility allows organisations to help address issues in areas such as climate change and the environment, urbanisation, extending education opportunities and advancing the development of people within the organisation.
This paper analyses the state of corporate social responsibility by exploring key European legislation and national strategic documents in the area. The focus is on the good practices in place at various domestic or foreign institutions in either the public or private sectors. Personal motivation is also explored as a key element in executing socially responsible policies. The paper concludes that social responsibility is a key factor in keeping employees engaged and motivated.
Keywords: social responsibility, motivation, strategy, good practices

> *"A good company delivers excellent products and services, and a great company does all that and strives to make the world a better place." William Ford Jr., Chairman, Ford Motor Co.*

1. INTRODUCTION

'Responsibility' means that you fulfil a duty or a commitment, and is such a core principle of civilisation that it is being taught since early childhood - taking care of the environment, writing that homework assignment, etc. The concept of responsibility is an essential part of both our personal and professional lives.

A changing world demands new paradigms and new rules in the domain of organisations. The new breed of management would: embrace technological advancements, monitor the shifts in competition, customer behaviour, take note of professional skills becoming dated and of the growing need of effective work behaviour and of the necessity for constant development. (Vasilev, Chorbadzhiyska & Belyovska, 2017, p. 11)

With the advancement of technology and the maturation of the information age, the social role of the individual grows, preconditioning a change in the nature of their professional behaviour and reinforcing their sense of responsibility.(Vasilev, Stefanova & Angelova, 2017, p. 172) These changes create an environment where management needs to put an even greater emphasis on applying innovative methods for attracting and retaining the best employees. Organisations realise their responsibilities not only before their employees, but also before society, which now has certain expectations.

Social responsibility is more and more the focus of an organisation's mission, vision and goals. An organisational culture by socialising and recruitment has an impact on behaviour and driving the organisation to meeting its goals. (Vasilev & Efremovski, 2017, p. 180)

Social responsibility is not only a core aspect in motivation of the employees, but also in incentivising management to meet goals by way of innovative and unconventional practices and policies.

This paper aims at defining the core of corporate social responsibility and its elements by analysing fundamental strategic legislation. A number of good practices are listed, bridging the gap between theory and practice and between 'social responsibility' and 'motivation'.

2. LEGISLATIVE AND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Green Book of the European Commission defines corporate social responsibility as the concept of companies "establish[ing] a framework to ensure that businesses integrate environmental and social considerations into their activities".(Commission of European communities, 2001, p. 8)

Social responsibility is a diverse set of policies and aspects that have an impact on the behaviour of an organisation's employees, organisational development and public opinion.

As discussed above, responsibility is the concept of fulfilment of a duty or a commitment. Meanwhile, organisations are required to offer their employees the right working conditions, remuneration and security. Notably, an increasing number of organisations include their social responsibility policies as part of incentives opportunities and wider working conditions. This allows organisations to improve employees' motivation, by allowing them more active time with their families, for instance, while also leveraging the company's influence and resources for addressing societal concerns. Motivation and happiness at the workplace can be improved by increasing the variety of physical and social environments in which an employee operates, organises, achieves and develops. (Vasilev & Efremovski, 2017)

We define several core aspects that outline the domain of corporate social responsibility:
- – Society - activities like cleaning and improving the urban environment, volunteering to help disadvantaged societal groups, etc.
- – Environment - activities that address environmental and climate change concerns
- – Workforce and working conditions - providing a safe working environment, offering training and development, motivation and engagement by employees
- – Education - incentivising learning by offering opportunities like paid internships and stipends (https://www.csr.bg/social-responsibility/range)

Analysing the concept of social corporate responsibility and the areas it touches, we conclude that the social corporate responsibility of an organisation is the group of activities and policies that allow an organisation to develop and grow in a way that does not endanger, and in fact helps the growth and development of living things. (Peycheva, Veysel & Dineva, 2016, p.23)

The European Union regularly publishes strategies, acts, instructions and other documents related to social responsibility and the strive for the improvement of living and working conditions. For example, the European Pillar for Social Rights, which is a social strategy geared towards ensuring a more effective legal framework for protecting civil rights. The Pillar contains 20 major principles, including: education, lifetime development, equal opportunities, secure and flexible employment, work-life balance, etc. (https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/deeper-and-fairer-economic-and-monetary-union/european-pillar-social-rights/european-pillar-social-rights-20-principles_bg)

This strategy ensures that no matter their social status, each citizen has their rights protected at the highest level.

As an extension to the European Pillar for Social Rights, the European Commission has sent a communication to the European Parliament, European Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the European Committee of the Regions entitled "A STRONG SOCIAL EUROPE FOR JUST TRANSITIONS". This communication elaborates on the application of the Pillar, whereby institutions at all levels - european, national and regional, work in sync towards achieving social justice. (COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPE AN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS "A STRONG SOCIAL EUROPE FOR JUST TRANSITIONS)

One of the socio-conscious topics that drive the European Union is protecting the environment. The issues of pollution, fine dust and particulate matter in the air, recycling and global warming are only growing in importance, necessitating the expansion of the legal framework and drafting of various directives. (https://eurlex.europa.eu/summary/chapter/environment/2004.html?root=2004)

The level of engagement of the European Union, including the strategies, acts and directives, showcase social responsibility and a desire for helping build and maintain a society that is itself educated on the topics of social responsibility and is actively caring for the environment. Meanwhile, the growing role played by the Republic of Bulgaria on the European scene has gradually set in motion a movement of growing expectations for the effectiveness and efficacy of the public administration in the country, posing a number of new challenges for organisations in the public sector. (Vasilev, Kresnaliyska & Chorbadzhiyska, 2017, p. 21)

On a national level, Bulgaria has showcased a desire to establish the conditions for application of effective public policies geared towards addressing social issues, by issuing a number of strategic and legal documents in the past few years, including: National Air Pollution Control Program (2020-2030); National strategy for management and development of the water sector; National strategy for Lifelong Learning 2014-2020; National Strategy for Promoting and Raising Literacy (2014-2020); The Strategy for Development of the State Administration 2014-2020, which is a key driver of modernising the public administration and ensuring a positive environment for employee

development and motivation; Stategy for Corporate Social Responsibility (2019-2023),etc.(http://www.strategy.bg/StrategicDocuments/List.aspx?lang=bg BG&categoryId=1&typeConsultation=1&typeCategory=0&docType=1)

The strategy for corporate social responsibility is expected to be a major tool in driving both public and private organisations towards integrating socially responsible practices, thereby strengthening their competitiveness and helping the country achieve goals for sustainable growth. (Strategy for Corporate Social Responsibility 2019-2023, adopted with Protocol № 36 of the Council of Ministers on 28.08.2019) The document builds on top of the earlier 'Strategy for corporate social responsibility 2009-2013', by updating the vision and strategic goals. The overall objective of the new strategy is to grow the adoption of socially responsible practices, as compared with presenting the concept of corporate social responsibility to society and the inception of legal and educational frameworks, which was the goal of the earlier document. The new strategy builds on top of the achievements of the earlier one, and closely ties the concept of corporate social responsibility with social economics. (Strategy for Corporate Social Responsibility 2019-2023, adopted with Protocol № 36 of the Council of Ministers on 28.08.2019)

Despite the achievements of the 2009-2013 campaign, a number of major challenges still stand before Bulgaria in the domain of corporate social responsibility, namely:

- Lack of adequate information on successful corporate social practices both within Bulgaria and outside
- Lack of incentives for applying widely accepted best practices
- Low rates of integrating the tooling and organisational systems required
- Lack of focus on corporate social responsibility in collective labour contracts
- Low rates of public-private partnerships and lacklustre incentives for local authorities to integrate such policies (Strategy for Corporate Social Responsibility 2019-2023, adopted with Protocol № 36 of the Council of Ministers on 28.08.2019)

The country apparatus is expected to carry the burden of overcoming these weaknesses. It is expected to incentivise local authorities, civil organisations and private companies and to seek a catalogue of best practices and channel this information to stakeholders. Approbation and application of practices and policies related to social responsibility is expected to become the norm within organisations in both the public and private sectors. To get there is required a fundamental change in how corporate communication is conducted, which in turn builds organisational identity. (Dimitrova, 2013, p. 333). This enables employees to not only get engaged with socially important topics, but also feel responsible for building a modern society.

3. BEST PRACTICES

Bulgaria also produces legal documents and expands the social responsibility framework on a local level. For instance, the municipality of Razgrad requires employees to engage with various social responsibility campaigns - a result of its 'Strategy for Social Responsibility'. The document is designed to lift engagement rates of employees with major social responsibility topics, like: social responsibility within an organisation; protecting the environment and sustainable growth; personal development of children and young adults; traffic safety, etc. (https://www.ipa.government.bg/sites/default/files/dokladi_na_lektori_plovdiv_2019.pdf) Each of the areas explored in the document contains various initiatives and campaigns that are intended to fine-tune the organisational apparatus to better suit achieving responsibility, which in turn moves society as a whole forward.   We view the Razgrad strategy as an example worthy of emulation by organisations of both the public and private sectors. Despite difficulties, we observe an increase in the level of charitable campaigns as part of the corporate social responsibility drive in recent years. One example is the campaign that evolved into the national 'Bottle caps for the future', which collects plastic bottle caps for recycling and donates the return for incubators. A multitude of cities and towns join the initiative and show their social commitment and responsibility. Apart from the good cause for which a plastic cap is used, it should be noted that this is an effective way to recycle this type of product.

One other popular campaign has become the practice of waste sorting, whereby recycling bins are made available for waste of various recyclable materials, like glass, metals, etc., as well as for donation purposes, like textile bins for used clothes, footwear, etc. All major cities in Bulgaria apply this practice.

The "Green and accessible urban environment for the city of Smolyan - city centre" is another example of how improving the urban environment is intimately linked to major social topics, like helping disadvantaged people. (http://www.smolyan.bg/bg/menu/sl/57)

The 'Together for more children smiles' initiative, by the municipality of Stara Zagora, sees renovation of playgrounds throughout the region, so that these places again become an attractive and safe place for children to play. The initiative succeeds in engaging not only employees of the administrative structure, but also a number of other citizens. The campaign is also supported by Orgachim, which donates the required painting materials. The campaign sees groups of volunteers renovating playgrounds with the organisational help of employees from the

administrative bureau. (https://www.starazagora.bg/bg/novini/obshtina-stara-zagora-kani-dobrovoltsi-za-kampaniyata-si-zaedno-za-poveche-detski-usmivki) The initiative showscases a successful partnership between organisations in the public and private sectors that leverage civil sense of social responsibility, in particular child safety.

Helping children to develop a habit for reading, the 'Donate your children's books' initiative, organised by the public mediator of Blagoevgrad, together with the Regional Library "Dimitar Talev", collects second-hand children's books to be made available for children in the library. (http://www.blgmun.com/?show=news&nid=4816) This campaign sees how charity dovetails with building a better tomorrow by educating and guiding the future generations of Bulgaria.

The aforementioned initiatives and campaigns are all designed and realised primarily by organisations within the public sector, and are observed to increase the level of engagement and retention of employees. We postulate that wider application of such practices will inevitably lead to a more driven workforce within the public sector, where employees see their job as a mission to make a better society and to implant a sense of social responsibility in the younger generations.

However, practices related to the domain of social responsibility are much more widespread and integrated on an international level. On a European Union level, countries work at ever-greater rates for the realisation of public policies in the fields of workforce development, the environment, education, etc.

One such project is SEREN in Wales, the United Kingdom. The project is designed to help small- and medium-sized enterprises switch to low-carbon energy sources, by making available technological know-how and support (https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/panorama/pdf/mag62/mag62_bg.pdf). The project integrates the socially important topics of protecting the environment and workforce development by creating innovative jobs.

Addressing the key fine air pollution issue, the Italian city of Montieri has installed a new geo-thermal heating system in the 'Impianto di teleriscaldamento dell'abitato di Montieri', leveraging the geo-thermal energy that also fuels the new power station in neighbouring Travale. Access to this new safe, cheap and secure heating source has led to widespread discontinuation of heating by burning solid fuels or methane and natural gas, leading to greater value for homes and less harmful emissions in the air.

(https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/panorama/pdf/mag62/mag62_bg.pdf)

Finland's Li municipality saw an accelerated switch to renewables, and has allowed citizens to become a part of the change by suggesting steps and sharing ideas on protecting the environment.

 (https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/panorama/pdf/mag62/mag62_bg.pdf)

The international practices explored above showcase the global nature of the desire for change in the space of social responsibility, most notably - in protecting the environment. Clean air, drinking water, forest preservation, recycling, etc. are of critical importance to our quality of life. The earlier we as a society realise that, the sooner we act and improve the lives of not only ourselves, but also future generations. Vasilev and Dimitrova note that "modernisation of the administrative apparatus is a priority for every member-country of the European Union. What unites them is the goal: serving the people, and serving each citizen with respect and guaranteeing their rights, welfare and social security." (Vasilev & Dimitrova, 2017, p. 21). Achieving this is more and more the result of organisations integrating social responsibility as part of their core identity.

4. CONCLUSION

Regardless of whether domestic or foreign, which sphere, industry or domain they concern, social responsibility sits within the core of the motivational strategies in the practices analysed in this paper. All of the practices explored showcase members of an organisation realising the potential positive impact they could have, not only on younger generations, but on society as a whole, and leveraging their influence and resources for good.

Realising your potential for good is the first step in the journey of making a better tomorrow, and our responsibility is crucial for the whole of society. This elevates the importance of corporate social responsibility even higher, and organisations are expected to embrace such practices as a means for organisational development. It is necessary for social responsibility to become a core aspect in how companies identify themselves and their values, and in how they define their incentives and motivational policies. We postulate that this will raise the standards of effectiveness of organisations and its employees, and will offer a way, perhaps the only way, to secure lasting success.

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