

# Is Charity a New Tool of Branding?

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## Abstract

Charity or social work is often seen as a tool for improving the image of the company and enhancing the goodwill among the customers. But, this paper goes beyond the purview of reputation and goodwill and tries to understand the impact of these activities on the brand. Specifically, this research paper states that charity activities generates social goodwill—even when they are not related to the company's core area of business, as in the case of charitable giving—can somewhat change the perception towards the product or service, such that products & services of companies engaged in social activities are perceived as better in delivering the value to the customer. More important, the data show that inferences drawn from a company's social actions are strong enough to alter the product evaluations even when consumers can directly observe and experience the product. By documenting that charity work can benefit consumer perceptions of product performance, these findings show that doing good like a charity work can indeed translate into doing well for overall image of the brand.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Corporate philanthropy is the practice of companies in corporate world allotting a part of their resources or profits to the various non-profit organizations or themselves getting involved into several welfare activities like nature conservation, education etc. Corporations can give to a wide variety of nonprofit organizations; including education, the arts, human services, health services, environment services, and public benefit (Shelley Frost, 2019). To make focus on the element of corporate philanthropy, it includes those programs and activities that help in the board members, stockholder, and other interested

parties to understand the sound strategic value of giving back. It also includes those programs that can create a powerful competitive advantage by adopting a planned strategic and focus on the organization code business and the target market that carried out effectively (Elkington, 1994). For example, within the month of distributing applying the gift card to the customer with the help of Donor, the campaign to organize and provide benefit in the field of education. As a result, Crate and Barrel noted a 16% increase in sales by receiving the cards effectively. By developing the corporate philanthropy programs, it is known as a secondary business goal and also known

as a CSR activity that is adopted by the managers to achieve the greatest success by demonstrating the values by giving back to the senior company leadership (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2016, September). To make focus on the advantage of the corporate philanthropy, it mainly used in the branding and Name Recognition as it was found that charitable contribution highly increase the brand recognition and achieve the competitive market place by the help of advertising effectively. It is also known as an important factor that ensures the reputation by making the presence of the organization in the consumer mind and connected to positive things, which made a direct impact on the individual and branding to promote the Goodwill effectively. The corporate philanthropy also improving the quality of life by involving various causes that directly impact on the member and local community (Nazeer, 2011). As a result of the company always try to improve the quality of life by making a bulk of the consumer base and their workforce both current and future manner. It also helps to improve the relationship with the government official and community leader. As a result, it was examined that donation is the worthy cause and known as a strategic Geographic area that helps the organization to make a valuable relationship with the government official and community leader and prove very useful to solve the regulatory issues that arrived and make complicated legislative landscape which is negotiated in an effective manner (Nuttman-Schwartz & Gadot, 2003). Corporate philanthropy also helps to build and improve the customer base such economically, socially and improving the education condition. As a result, the company will be able to achieve long-term strategic Outlook by making a good relationship with the customer. For example, a publisher highly involved with the committee referred to by reducing and eliminating illiteracy among the inner city youth (Smith, 1994). By doing this activity the company will be able to make a good relationship with the thousand of the people because all these efforts done by the organization is beneficial for the people. Corporate philanthropy also focuses on driving recruitment and retention by making factor commitment over the long-term period by acquiring talented employees. They also try to build greater opportunity by adopting innovation, for example giving grants to the Universities and other education

facilities and Foundation Company will be able to gain the new ideas with technical expertise, a valuable resource that makes a great positive impact on the growth of the organization. It also makes a good strategic corporate philanthropy program which is the core business objective of the companies which is successful by providing the value of giving back (Edmondson & Carroll, 1999), (Chris Joseph, 2019).

To make focus on the significant role of Corporate philanthropy in building consumer perception and process of branding, it can be said that it helps to improve the brand awareness and reputation by analyzing the perspectives of employees, customers, partners and community as a large number to improve reputation the Corporate Finance highly focused on donating. To charities by the name of the company from a standard account and showing the brand is directly connected with the corporate giving the companies also offers the employees matching gift program, crowd funding tools so that they help to amplify the impact. In respect to this, matching gift programs create a Buzz among employees and promoting the brand with the help of word of mouth. On the other hand, crowd funding campaign also gets the other individual in business by involved them especially by using and increasing the fund in the form of donation that helps to make a public connection with the brand with the help of donation and charity initiatives. Hence, it can be said that corporate philanthropy in the context of scope and object of charity that makes a significant step in the formation of a positive brand image, including overcoming the prejudice of society, distorted understanding the real meaning of charity in the literature (Varadarajan & Menon, 1988), (Fioravante, 2010). According to 2015 IEG Sponsorship Forecast, corporate cause sponsorship spends was up by 3.9% to \$1.85 billion. In another study by Cone and Duke University, 79% of polled consumers said they would switch to another brand of similar price and quality, if it were associated with a cause they cared about.

## 2. RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The present study aimed to determine the significance of charity branding and its role in the process of consumer brand perception. This study aims to know clearly about the philanthropic activities of the corporations and their role in building

consumer perceptions of the product. Here, the very purpose of preparing the paper would be highlighted. The primary objective of this research is followed as:

- To determine the role of charity branding through philanthropy on the corporate social image.
- To understand the role of corporate philanthropic activities on consumer perceptions of products.
- To understand the role of corporate charity on the performance of the brand in creating a value of public generosity.

### 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 3.1 Corporate Charity

According to Madрахimova, (2013, July), Charity companies are usually non-profit and works in socially important areas that include charity particularly to the individual goals and needs of different target audiences. The practice of using charity tool shows that by selecting the scope and objects of charity, makes a significant step in the formation of a positive image. As per Leisinger & Schmitt, (2011), Carroll & Shabana, (2010) point of view, corporate charity is defined as an umbrella term that mainly includes the number of different values, interest, mindset and alternative approaches which are based on various perception shaped by culture construction and professional factor.

As per Schwartz & Carroll, (2003) point of view, to make focus on corporate philanthropy, it mainly described as a voluntary active nonreciprocal effect which are in the form of financial, organization, human resource depending by the entity for the main purpose of benefiting human being by fulfilling their social need, specific return on investment for the donor.

According to Godfrey, (2005), the main purpose of corporate charity is to generate positive moral capital amount with the committee and stakeholder which make a direct relationship with the business activity. It also provides is strength in the form of motivating their employees by making them are proud of their company. They also focus on what is capital stock, which highly based accumulated outcome of the process of assessment, evolution, and computation by the stakeholder and community with

the help of various charitable activities done by the firm. In addition to this, they also provide the company is stakeholder with this insurance-like protection for a company is an intangible asset to recover the employees from the accidental unfortunate incidence to make focus on a good example of the corporate Charity.

According to Gardberg, Zyglidopoulos, Symeou & Schepers, (2017), it may be in the form of designs and market computers donating a computer to the high school in a poor neighborhood and University students from low-income group families. They also created the social value by enabling the student to work with the state of art, equipment and also focus on pre-investment in the future market success and attract the potential future with the help of customer by donating the technology so that all these efforts will be able to increase the living standard of the poor people in the form of opportunity. In case of business, it also creates the better brand recognition and loyalty reputational capital with high employee morale, customer commitment and strategic benefit which is useful for the company to make a good brand image and achieving the competitive advantage in the global environment.

#### 3.2 Corporate philanthropy and sponsorship

As per Zach Lazzari, (2018), Nazeer, (2011), Andrew Means , (2017); SiliconIndia, (2013); Tom Gresham, (2018) point of views, the concept of corporate philanthropy is referred as the contribution that are made by the organizations in the form of financial, time or resource assistance. To make focus on corporate sponsorship is defined as the financial business contribution to help fund an event or project. In respect to this, the companies use strategic philanthropy (public relations or advertising) and corporate sponsorship (media, cash, in-kind, promotional) which make a great impact on the image of the company in the competitive market. For example, companies like Accenture, Deloitte in India provide expertise solution and they also offer other professional services to non-profit partners such as NGO. On the other hand, companies like Tata Group practice corporate philanthropy and sponsorship like Tata Steel's tribal welfare programs help in raising different underprivileged communities like scheduled caste and scheduled tribes by upgrading of society



and spreading of the image of the company. Additionally, Aditya Birla Group has initiated centers like Aditya Birla Centre for Community Initiatives and Rural Development to conduct social activities like the provision of education, dowryless marriages, micro financing to women. It helps to bring positive changes in society and increase the image of the company in the market among the customers and employees.

### 3.3 Philanthropy activities in Branding

As per Dareen DeMates, (2019); Laura Entis, (2016); Baryshnikova, (2017); Victoria Greene, (2017), Gaurav Vohra, (2018) point of views, philanthropy activities mainly includes charitable giving to the people on a large scale. It may be in the form of organization undertaking or sponsorship that improves human welfare. To make focus on the persuasion tactics are referred to as the art of influencing people to commit activities that are beneficial for them as well as the organization. It is mainly related to the promotion of company message related to product or service, identification of the target audience and recognition of the competitors. Hence, to build strong company presence, brand value and image the marketers practice different persuasion tactics like repetition, using of Maslow theory, Forum Research, Blemishing effect, Disrupt and Reframe Technique is used to attract the attention of the customers. For instance, Repetition strategy is used by TRIVAGO Company to promote itself (through social media sites and television) and reach to a wide range of customers. On the other hand, emotional and technical persuasion techniques are used by Mahindra & Mahindra Maruti Suzuki and many more companies to influence more clients. For example, technical persuasion activity like data mining is used by Indian private banks to gain a competitive advantage over each other. Whereas, credit card companies use data mining to forecast the risk associated with customer purchasing patterns and recognize profitable sections.

Lauren parker, (2017) wrote - As many brands turn to philanthropy and consumers assuage "fashion guilt" with items that offer percentage-based donations, having a cause-based element in the retail formula is smart business. When choosing between two brands of similar quality and price, 90% of U.S. shoppers are likely to go for a brand, which is

involved with some positive cause, according to a Cone Communications/Ebiquity Global CSR Study.

Ron Greasley, (2015) examined that philanthropy is related to the charity or donation that is given by the organization against a cause. The activity is done as a sign of good will and is performed without any expectation of returns. It is the activity that is performed by the company in truest sense without any desire of public recognition or acknowledgments. It gives way to the sponsorship, which is mainly conducted with a motive to earn returns. The sponsorship occupies a very essential position in the corporate activities to target the appropriate audience, get a good opportunity to promote itself and business and adopt unique customer hosting ideas. It also makes provisions for the funds by the company to organize an event and involves a contract with the return of investment details.

### 3.4 Format of Sponsorship

According to Jeff O'Kelley, (2017) corporate sponsorship is defined as the financial donation that is made by a company for a cause to other individual or company. Menon, & Kahn, (2003); Menon & Kahn, (2001) examined that corporate sponsor provides two types of philanthropic activities which are cause promotions and advocacy advertising that helps in conducting charitable actions. To make focus on advocacy advertising, it mainly includes the use of marketing strategies like television promotions to spread awareness about a specific cause of the message. On the other hand, cause promotion includes a wide range of ethical and social activities like raising awareness or supporting a cause to raise funds. To illustrate it, the example of Johnson & Johnson Company is taken into consideration. The cause promotion is promoted by Johnson & Johnson Company in India and has initiated a movement to donate 10% of the sales of Johnson & Johnson baby shampoo to the World Wildlife Fund. The advocacy advertising provides more information related to animals like dangers to them, extinction and tries to get the support of people to save the endangered species. As a result, funds are raised to protect the wildlife and perception of Corporate Social Responsibilities is spread among the people that increase their brand value, image, and goodwill among the consumers.

Nikki Carlson, (2019) said that – Philanthropical activities helps in increasing brand loyalty when it is practiced genuinely. The process of giving back increases customer engagement by sharing a mission and purpose. Taking an example of corporate responsibility, TOMS is usually among the brand which comes up. Its popular “Buy one, give one” campaign not only provided millions of shoes to people in need, but also built a loyal fan base of customers.

According to a Unilever Consumer study, 33% of consumers are now choosing to buy from brands they believe are doing some welfare activities in social & environmental fields. And Catalyst’s Revelations at the Register noted that 72% of consumers have donated to charity at the register and 65% of consumers felt positively about the retailer after giving.

### **3.5 Role of branding in contemporary societies**

According to Vikas Shah, (2012) brands are the key resource to modern-life, which plays a major role in the economic and social world. Autor invitado, (2016); Trivedi, (2007) branding is essential to enhance the company and the community by giving a voice and pointing up the hopes and desires of the thousands of people. The brand culture helps in developing partnerships and cultivating public trust which allows conduction of community practices effectively. By taking the case of Reliance Group, the company provided dry ration kits, utensils, shelter, shoes and clothes to 15000 families who have been impacted by the floods in Kerala. The contribution given by the company through The Reliance Foundation team brought a positive impact on society and increased the brand image of the company among the people. Moreover, branding also helps in revitalizing the economic development by involving people into the conduction of charitable activities at a large scale. It helps in establishing a relation between the community and brands, which helps to improve the societal affairs positively. For instance, communities collaborate with brands to create public art, and culture which helps in community growth. Hence, it can be said that branding plays an important role by which company will be able to expand its scale and economies by adopting unique identification of product and services that attract the customers towards their initiatives.

### **3.6 Conceptualization, Theories, and models of corporate sponsorship in branding**

As per Grzesiak, (2015); Keller, (2009) Steve Olenski, (2016) point of views, traditional branding mainly involves all these activities by which company promotes their product services with the help branding of the traditional method such as branding by thinking, branding by imagery, branding by self-expression and branding by user experience. If a company wants to reach the customer, traditional branding plays an important role. It has highly dominated the market by placing advertising strategies. For example, Coco-Cola Company highly focused on commercial and car dealership advertisement by announcing the sales in newspaper or magazines in previous times. On the other hand, to make focus on modern strategies, it is mainly known as new phenomena that are used by the organization in order to build their brand making an effective judgment with the help of electronic media such as digital marketing, content marketing, various social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, and e-marketing.

According to Jagre, Watson & Watson, (2001), Solomon (1996) to make focus on the theory, and models of corporate sponsorship in branding, Congruity theory has been applied to make an investigation of the memory in the context of social psychology and also explains the attitude formation. It is based on cognitive consistency principle, which defines the value of people harmony among their thought, feelings, and behavior.

According to Stangor and McMillan (1992), memory is a key variable of congruity theory that is derived and influenced by prior expectation so that it is based on the expectancy driven process that highly influence social memory. Fiske (2014) suggested that attitude is also defined as a relatively stable opinion, which mainly includes cognitive element and emotional element that highly affect the schema. According to Heckler and Childers (1992), Congruity theory is also related to the consumer behavior and sponsorship that highly focus on creating a theoretical understanding of the process, which involves incomprehension of consumer and memory of advertisement. Hence, it can be said that congruity research is highly applied in the case of celebrity

advertisement but it was not supported in the in-congruity effectively.

### 3.7 Enterprise philanthropy challenges

According to Avinash Chandrav, (2019) brand management is the creation and maintenance of a brand, which is necessary to enhance so that proper alignment between the expectation of consumers and brand experience is achieved. To make focus on the challenges faced by the companies to establish the conceptualization of brand is the absence of cash. The scarcity of adequate funds restricts the executives to deliver short-term financial gains, which negatively impact the image of the brands. To make focus on another major challenge, it is mainly related to consistency. Due to the absence of consistent customer and brand association, the message and experience that is provided by the companies do not reach the customers. As a result, the customers lose trust in the brand and change their preferences. Additionally, clutter and connectivity are regarded as other major challenges, which hamper the conceptualization of brand equity. Due to clutter, and lack of connectivity between the brands and associates the promotion of products or services does not take place adequately. The lack of communication is also regarded as another major challenge, which highly impacts the measurement and conceptual disarray of brand equity. Due to lack of proper communication, the interaction between the brand and customers are not established properly, which reduces the value of the brand in the market.

### 3.8 Contemporary concepts, the methodology of Brand equity and Brand equity taxonomies

Brand equity is the symbol of business esteem that gets from the view of the purchaser of the brand name of a specific item. It also includes the perspective technique that analyzes the true opinion and feeling of the consumer. Additionally, it also includes brand personality and values, which mainly defined as Big five-factor of equity such as sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness. Srinivasan, Park & Chang, (2005) examined that the sources of brand equity mainly include a free association that identifies the range of possible brand association in consumer mind which mainly term of relative strength, favorability and uniqueness of brand association.

Keller & Lehmann, (2006) examined that to measure the brand equity, it highly focuses on the outcome at product market level that is mainly measured in the unit in price premium which the brand commands over the base product (price level product). The second approach is related to the customer mindset, which mainly includes attitude, association, and attachment toward the brand.

According to Smiriti Chand, (2018), there are various methods of leveraging brand equity. It may be in the form of brand extension. Under this process, the company categories the product by establishing the brand name and services provided by it. The brand extension also helps in releasing new products that reduced the risk and loss and less costly in nature. It also includes line extension, which is useful to reach out to new customer segments that seek new benefit in the form of brand. For example, to launch a new shampoo variant company highly focused on seeking customer solution by providing different variant shampoo, itchy scalp, and oily scalp and so on. In addition to this, brand stretching is the one of another way of leveraging the brand by which company highly engages in existing, market and finding the new opportunity in the premium and popular segment of the market. It may be in the form of up scaling or downscaling, introducing a totally new brand and treating the original brand as "Mother Brand."

### 3.9 Research Gap/Summary

Based on the literature review, a research gap is derived to ascertain the ways in which the current research will contribute towards filling this gap. The study mainly analyzes the corporate charity and various activities in branding by identifying the format of sponsorship and analyzing the role of branding in the contemporary societies, In addition to this, the study also describes the challenges of enterprise philanthropy and identifies of the concept of brand equity. This study tries to put an emphasis on how the brand managers are using the charity as a tool for the upliftment in the image of the brand and statistics have proved that charity done in right sense has actually helped the brands a lot.

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