SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN PUBLIC ENVIRONMENT

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This study is an analysis of the amount of problems regarding Social Responsibility in the Public Environment. Practicable in the institutional communication process of responsibility, it is not involved only by the social aspects, but also by other two adaptable components that comes to develop this segment: the moral and the political responsibility. In this way, the social responsibility problem must be reconsidered in a relation with the involving degree of institutional engagement in the social economic environment, typical to each human community. Today, we can see a tight connection between institutional image and the competitive advantage from a domain or another.

Key words: public environment, communication, corporate social responsibility, social responsibility

Introduction

Corporative social responsibility is become to have new dimensions at all European levels. This situation is generated by at least two major aspects: the global communication, as a dominant feature of the modern society, and the new challenges caused by social-economic and environment issues. These are the new confrontations of the modern business world.

Not so long ago, the social responsibility was considered only a link between competition and continuity in each organisation. Today, the institutionalism and the social responsibility are unite and is seems to show brand new coordinates. This demonstration of the modern institutionalism, adequate with its own prerogatives, leads to the organisation need for creating an innovative identity and image. Stephen Downey (1983), consider as a major issue : "…the company obligation to early redefine its own image (identity), during all significant changes of economic, technological and demographic nature, related with business areas." (Downey, St. 1983, page. 15).

Organisational environment and its new challenges

The organizations incapacity to guarantee a coherent image, credible and stabile, can guide at an unrealistic projection of image management. As follows, is imperative to reconsider the corporate communication regarding not only the interaction of the organisation with the internal and external environment. More, the assembly of the organizational communication matrix means, in the first place, the organizational needs adjustment to the public preferences. Also, in the organizational environment level, new other challenges are emerging. These challenges are generated by the follows: The rapid changes of the public value system; the consultative requests released by the public targeting the corporations; the mass-media aggressive pressure; the high expectations from the public.

To face these challenges, any organisation will establish its own objectives and real system politics. These corporate politics must be proactive but in the same time reactive. The corporate communication can not be any longer regarded as a monologue of a transmitter to its receivers. It becomes communicative in both directions, so, the communicational feed-back is essential. In the most cases, the big corporations are presently developing a new philosophy in analysing and processing of all informational system. In the first place is the public needed and therefore new monitoring systems are created to survey all the reactions in high details. The interaction between the business environment and the society is generating the

development of a full set of public politics. The public politics represent the essential element through assuring the communication at the modern democracy level. These are offering a large view and decent analyses to all the governmental institutions, and bring in the same time to the citizens, the possibility to exercise an important amount of control.

Therefore, the public politics can declare the action or non-action directions that will be chosen by the public authorities as a communicational answer to a certain problem. "The public politics are the products of some collective decisions, accomplished through successive negotiations between many social players actively involved in a certain domain of the society. Thus, involved in decisions connected to the type and shapes of the public politics are not only the politic and administrative players but also all the other social factors from public, semi-public or private sector that activates in a specific domain. As a consequence, the public politics is not a pure politic or ideological product – it is also the result of the structural manner of interests of many social players." (Pop, L.M., 2002, page. 702). Near by social players and also in vicinity to the mechanism of social knowledge, the public politics are representing key factors that give directions and self-adjusting creating a new kind of communication: the institutional communication. According with institutional communication precepts, the public organizations (governmental / non-governmental) which will conceive the public policies set that is needed to solve the community problems, are nominated as policy-makers. Analyzing this set of public policies from the institutional communication perspective, we can conclude that those policies will be absorbed also by other components of the society, the policy-takers. Those organizations will use them in a specific conditions emulated by new situations and conditions. (Pal, L., 2001)

We can show that the interactivity between government and corporations is isomorphic with interactivity between public and private sector and it is self conductive to the public policies debut. If we will look, under dynamic aspect, at the government-corporation interactivity, we notice that the business environment is solicited to draw the future public policies coordinates. Therefore it will not be necessarily to wait from the legislative structure to tardy adopt laws and norms. A new approach of the public policies is the institutional comportment perspective. The link between this and public policies already implemented and developed at a certain time on communitarian level, where debated by Mintzberg and Jorgensen. According with them,"…the public policies are the result of communication between institutions and civil society" (Mintzberg, Jorgensen, 1987, page. 214 – 229), by using so called emergent strategies.

The emergent strategies are the result of corporative and institutional comportment joint. Through this, the politics of the organizations will be inserted in the public politics area, from local level at a certain point. This will help at the development of prestige in the institutional communication and also of authority for institutions. As a conclusion, the contents elements of a public policy can be resumed under three aspects: the define of the civil society issues; the purposes of the created public policy; the practicable instruments in policy-taker case.

Even if, from logical point of view, the problem defined that will be at the base of the elaborated set of politics, is primordial, we can not neglect the previous determination which was at the conclusion – the public politics purposes. As a consequence, the public politics purposes are obligatory to be identified before the solving of the civil society issues, to be able on time, with the full set of specific instruments, to give the right orientation to these politics. By creating the link between these three base elements of a public policy, and by right functioning of them, will be realized the coherence of all public politics. A certain politics will have a high level of transparency and coherence, only if, will solve the citizen problems, and it is right recognized under the shape of help and support for the civil society.

At the society level, the inserting of complete set of public policies able to assure the correct functioning needs the use at least one of the types of communicational coherence. The vertical communicational coherence – all programs, projects and activities included in the area of a public policy must result in logical order, and the institutions involved in these activities to communicate dynamic and flexible. The horizontal communicational coherence - based on building a communicational system of feed-back between the singular public politics, which correct manifests the vertical coherence, and the rest of public policies, from different domains, that working at communitarian level. The public policy must not be confounded with the inserted program or with the public employ that carry it on. The public politics are the result of a human mental construction, transposed at the institutional level and in society. A public policy is necessary and also just only if will end with the solutions for the majority issues that society is confronted, realising in this manner, a good communication between person state – corporation – society.

Social responsibility – between corporations and public environment

Continuing analysing of this situation, we can observe that the negative elements appear at the corporatist social responsibility level. Therefore, we can conclude that we assist at a change of paradigm. The organizational identity is superpose with the institutional one and is transmitting to the public, through the corporative communication vector, the symbolic and also the material projection of the organisation. (Tasnadi, Al., Ungureanu, R., L., 2004). We ask our self's: "Why is so attractive in those days, especially in European space, the concept of corporative social responsibility (CSR)?" Because, "CSR can contribute at the success of the public policies by: increasing trust and competitive actions, innovation, the developing of practice that can be applied beyond, by inserting a learning process for a future implementation. Also CSR can have a decisive contribution at the assuring social enclosure and the integration of labour market, the poverty reducing and carry out the objectives from Millennium Development Goals." (Dodd, T., 2006)

Referring only at the enclosure issue, we can observe a serious interest in the domain. UE treat the social enclosure in Lisbon Strategy where is perceive like a pro-active way of implementation of certain viable social politics. The acts taken in this field must not be regarded only as communitarian tasks. It must be extended in a variety of different shapes and approach modality's, for each state, member of UE. In Romania, the social enclosure politics has as a prime objective the growth economy sustaining, in the advantage of the life standard of the population. The actions carried out by Romanian authorities, are: increasing the number of work places for young citizens; the support provided for the persons over 45 years old, to help their integration in the new labour market; creating new work places in the rural areas by developing local resources and traditions in services or industry field; organizing free courses for qualifying and re-qualifying for the applicants that need new work places; developing and diversifying the social services of general interest (The Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family, 2006)

The social enclosure can be approached also from communicational perspective. At this point, the person is involving actively in civil social life, having in sharing equally the rights and the obligations. Starting from these motives, Romania has taken the obligation to sustain and promote the enclosure social politics. Therefore, the Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family, carry out the role of forum coordinator, suited with the Common Memorandum regarding Social Enclosure, signed in 2005. The process of implementation, sustainability and development of social enclosure, can not be separated by the social responsibility coordinates. So, at European level, the social responsibility is created from moral and politic point of view. "What is needed to implicate ethics and politics?" Because, is ethic that the durable development issue, the one of global worming or the economic growth, to represent the assembly of base activities included on work addenda of all members of UE.

We can conclude that the implementation of social responsibility in European area is a necessity. For public and private sector it can be transposed into a veritable politic coordinate. We can observe the increasing need of collaboration and growth of the partnerships, between public and private sectors. In this case, the Public Private Partnership is considered by the specialists as the only viable solution necessarily for solving the problems that civil society is confronted. (Commission of the UE, 2003). Using Public Private Partnerships is necessarily because can conduct at the growing of the institutional consulting degree. If we observe only at the extremely complex problematic of social enclosure, we can conclude that those partnerships will be on the first page of UE members addenda. Regarding this, a series of major preoccupations exists at the Romanian authorities' level. In the Strategic Report of Social Protection and Social Enclosure, presented in September 2006 to European Commission, Romania has exposed its main goals and coordinates regarding the implementation of the new institutional context, the opened method of coordination, sustained by UE in the field of social and enclosure protection. (Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family, 2006). Returning at the social responsibility issue, we can observe that fact, that Romania makes effective steps. For the development of programs regarding social responsibility, the Romanian companies have invested, only in 2005, over 10 millions of Euro. (Saga Business & Community, 2005)

For Romania, CSR represents a solid base, necessarily for applying the Lisbon Strategy in UE. As follows we have the bases of partnership with: UNDP (United Nations Development Program), UNGC (United Nations Global Compact) and WBC (World Business Council) regarding the durable development issue in Romania. Referring to UNDP (2005), the Bulgarian business environment has same preoccupation as the Romanian counter part, in the implementation and development of social responsibility in community. Here, as in other Central and East European states, the business environment is involving the automatic

integration of all social responsibility processes, by activating the institutional component. Also, the social responsibility involves a serial of manifestations of civil society area. The civil society must action pro-active, using: educational activities needed to the growing of civic spirit for CSR, the changing of self practice regarding this field, and the development of communication with other social players. In these conditions, we consider that the social responsibility is the connection between organisations, state and civil society. Today, according with Page and Bernays (1992), CSR is tending to develop only in the measure that social society is validating its activity by the growth of consume. Therefore, CSR "…is the expression of civic sense of the organisation. This is imposing the creation of superior quality products, to give trust to the consumers. On the other side, CSR is reflected also under the aspects of inter-human relationship, and is contributing in positive sense at the political and social-economical health of the society." (Rogojanu, A., Hristache, D., A., Tasnadi, Al., 2004)

CSR is the modality through the companies is voluntary integrating the social and environmental problems in their businesses and representing theirs shareholders. Meaning, at the level of organisations, and also at the European area, is shaped a new strategic vision: the finding of obvious modalities in assuring the equilibrium between business profitability and investments needed for the developing and protection of the environment that they operate. So, is appearing again the ethic issue of CSR. This is related with the normative and value system of individuals, companies and society where activates at a certain moment. We consider that CSR must not be percept as a unitary and universally accepted concept. It must be implemented, adapted to the culture, history and economical situation specific to each human community. Even if the new members of UE, as Romania and Bulgaria, are at the beginning of this process, must not mean that those countries can not recover the distance that separate them by the countries with tradition in this field. As an example, starting with 2006, in each spring and autumn seasons, in Romania is applying the program "Millions of people, millions of trees". This communitarian program is requested to activate the CSR component at the level of Romanian companies, to send sensitive signals to public opinion, to educate it, in the natural environment issues. I chose this program as an example because of its objectives, which are extended at national level. PRAIS Corporate Communications (2006) is synthesising the objectives of this national communitarian program, on five essential coordinates: the growth of the role of the Romanian society in preserving and rehabilitating the surrounding environment; the contribution at the development of the civic spirit of young generations regarding the environmental problems; obtaining measurable results at national level, in the CSR area; realizing of a national ecological movement; the sustaining of national image in UE environment, regarding the involvement of the Romanian civil society in volunteer actions, determined by the recreation of environment.

Desirable to intensify the CSR component at the Romanian society level, a series of governmental and non-governmental organisations are supporting this project. Participants in this environment are a serial of powerful companies as: URSUS Breweries, Lafarge Romania, Quadrant Amroq Beverages, Smithfield Romania…etc. These companies, even if works in Romanian business environment, are not different as experience in the domain by the great international corporations that create them. We assist at a readjustment of the CSR component at the Romanian society level, by using the experience of the organizational culture of some important international companies that have developed business activities in Romania.

In UE vision, the implementation, and later, the development of CSR, can be realized only by creating of an adequate economic environment. Therefore, the European Commission is declare the support for creating the "European Alliance for CSR". Meaning an organisation opened to all companies from European Communitarian area that promote and encourage: the knowledge and good practices exchange between companies; support for initiative acts that involve more then two companies that are in partnership; the cooperation with member states of UE; the information and transparency in the relation with the consumer; the research and the education; IMM (Small and Medium Enterprises) and the international dimension of CSR (CEE, March 2006). Embracing the ideas formulated by European Commission regarding CSR, Romania has hosted, in 2006, the first "International Conference of Social Responsibility of the corporations from East Europe" – CSR06. At this conference was debated a serial of aspects concerning: CSR; the company's behaviour in businesses; The relationship between companies and employees; The safety and health in labour field; The monitoring and commitment systems.

Not at the last place, the need for creating a favourable social dialog between corporations and ONG (non-governmental organisations) was brought for analyse. For this reason, many ONG, representatives in social environment, has come public with their opinions. Some of them are: Youth for Peace (YAP); Millennium

Centre; AIESEC, Leaders Romania, The Association for Lobby and Negotiation; CENTRAS. The massive participation to this international meeting, lead us to the conclusion that in the Romanian civil society environment new and deep mutations are happening and tending to situate the social responsibility at the same level with the institutional one , in the centre of activities. The social responsibility is tending to have more and more quality valence thru all European space. Meaning that, starting from 2006, the companies that will commit an active involving in the community life, and will develop the social and environment responsibility, will be able to be recognized by a standard of excellence for their activities – ISO 26000 (social responsibility).

"What is the meaning of ISO 26000?" Is an international certification of involvement degree for organisations that are solving with success the problems of civil society. The purpose is to encourage the voluntarily assurance, by the business environment, for some social and environmental responsibilities, based on concepts, definitions and common evaluation methods.

Conclusions:

We are in a period of new researching. The modern society is confronted by problems more and more complex, that can not be solved without the convergent action of all economical-social, political and psychological factors. Therefore, investing in CSR means education and continuous modernisation of business environment. The social responsibility and the institutionalism are constituted as base pylons of a modern society that is searching its identity.

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