

ASSESSING THE EFFICIENCY OF THE SOCIAL POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN THE CONTEMPORARY ORGANIZATIONS

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Making the contemporary world become aware, under the impact of the current economic crisis effects, resulted in increasing the pressure exerted by the society on the field for economic affairs in order to review its fundamental mission in terms of a larger responsibility.

Thus, the contemporary organizations must contribute, in developing their activities, to the protection of the natural environment integrity, to the creation of a business environment that works with the observance of the ethical principles and to the improvement of the social conditions, in the communities where they operate. To achieve this desideratum, the contemporary organizations must develop social policies integrated in their business strategy, on long term.

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JEL Classification: M14 – Corporate culture; Social Responsibility.

The social policy of the organization represents a variety of motivations, resources and objectives that set up the company's vision and strategy in what regards providing services to enhance the social welfare of the communities upon which it acts and also of the entire society in order to acquire good economic and social results.

Any organization that wants to elaborate or improve its social policy must begin with an objective and integral evaluation of the level of present moral, ecological and social consciousness. The development of a study at the employees' level represents a simple and accessible method for the companies that start such a process.

We developed such a study at S.C. Cord Romania S.R.L. Slatina, considering that it is the oldest Romanian component of Pirelli Group. The study was developed only at managerial level within the organization, at all hierarchical levels, and it regarded 39 employees. Thus, we made up a survey to collect the relevant information for the study, which was applied between 18 February – 03 March 2008.

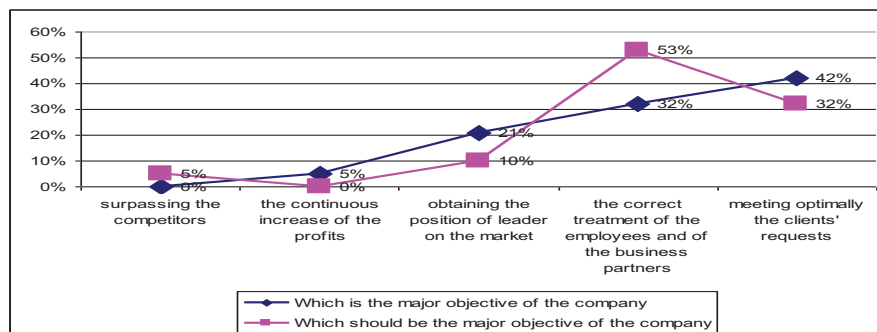
About the surveyed persons holding managerial positions we may say that 10% attended higher education, 58% attended technical universities, 16% attended economic universities and 16% attended high school. Also, about the persons surveyed for the study we may say that 79% are masculine and 21% feminine.

The first important aspect that we considered in analyzing and interpreting the information was the employees' length of service within the organization, because there is a direct link between the period of time spent within the company and the acceptance degree, understanding and organizational value assimilation by the employees. According to the survey's results, 47,5% of the managerial staff have a length of service higher than 2 years, while 52,5% have less than 1 year.

Regarding this aspect, it is very interesting to compare the organizational objective, considered to be the most important by the employees, and the objective considered to be the most important by the organization.

Thus, the employees appreciate that the organization tries, first of all, to meet the clients' demands (42%), then to fairly treat employees and business partners (25%), and, finally, to obtain a leader position on the market (21%). In spite of all these they did not entirely accept these organizational objectives and consider that the organization should try, first of all, to fairly treat employees and business partners (53%), then to meet the clients' demands (32%), and to obtain a leader position on the market (5%), as presented in the following figure:

Fig. 1 Correlation between the organization's view and the employees' view regarding the most important activity objective



These results demonstrate that the managerial staff did not accept and assimilate entirely the fundamental values of the company, which may generate misunderstanding of organizational objectives. So, it would be useful to organize some discussions with the employee groups and popularize and support the role of values and organizational principles on a long term.

A support factor is the manner in which communication is made within the organization, considering that the majority of the managerial staff (79%) appreciated that the information fluctuation is double-sensed, respectively from the superior hierarchical levels to the inferior ones and vice versa.

This demonstrates that managers take into consideration the subordinates' proposals and observations in their process of decision-acceptance. Still, 21% of the surveyed persons considered that within the organization communication is made only from the superior hierarchical levels to the inferior ones. This aspect may indicate that there is a series of autocrat managers within the organization, or can be determined by the short length of service within the organization;

It is important to underline that the managerial staff's opinion regarding the factors that provide company's success and the company's opinion, presented within their code of ethics, are divergent meaning that, while the innovation and adaptation capacity at the clients' requests get the first positions of organizational objectives on a long term, according to the managerial staff's opinion they occupy the 8th position, respectively the 5th.

Factors that provide the company's success, according to the managerial staff's opinion

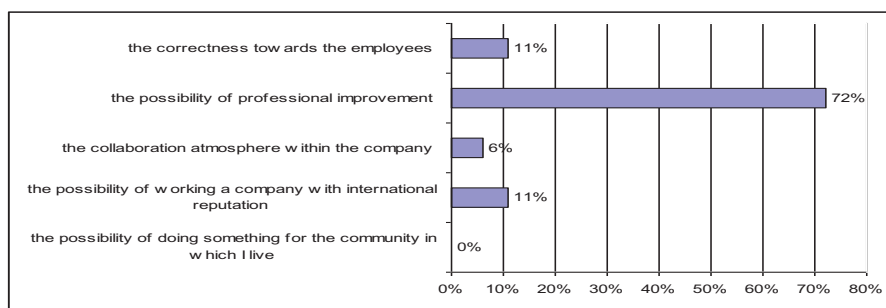
Table no. 1

Conferred importance	Considered element
1.	<i>Respect to the employees</i>
2.	<i>Quality of products</i>
3.	<i>Fairness to partners</i>
4.	<i>Respect for the environment</i>
5.	<i>Adaptation to the clients' requirements</i>
6.	<i>Transparency of operations</i>
7.	<i>Open communication with partners</i>
8.	<i>Innovation capacity</i>
9.	<i>Supporting various social causes</i>
10.	<i>Initiative capacity</i>

On the other hand, the respondents considered, in a large majority (95%), that it is important for the organization to pay the same attention and offer fairness to all clients, since all clients are important for the business success, attitude that must really support the organizational success on a long term. Also, 5% of the respondents considered that since the clients' needs are different, they should be treated differently and no respondent considered that the value of contracts should not influence the company's behavior to the clients.

Another element of large importance in the moral, ecological and social conscience process regards the factors generating employee satisfaction at the work place in correlation with the factors that generate dissatisfaction. Thus, within the studied organization, employee satisfaction is mostly generated by the possibility of continuous professional training (72%), but also the fair manner of treatment (11%) or the pride to work in an internationally known company (11%). The organization should take into consideration the employees' desire for continuous professional training, especially as 79% they consider that both they and the organization must deal with this aspect.

Fig. 2 Factors generating work satisfaction

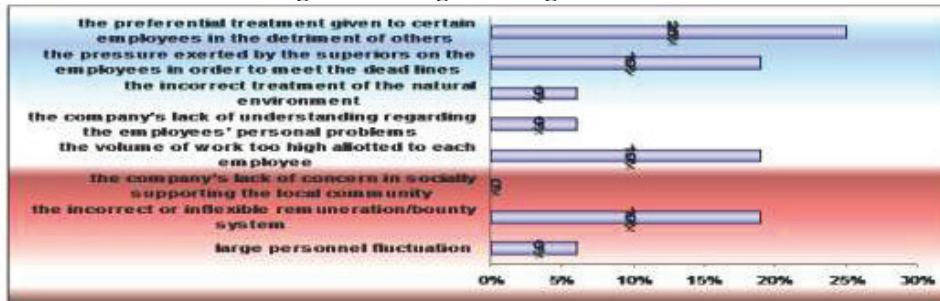


The aspects generating the highest work dissatisfaction are: the preferential treatment of various employees, the superiors' pressure to meet deadlines, too much volume of work and the unfair/inflexible salary system or bonuses.

The organization must identify the causes of the factors that generate work dissatisfaction, and if these causes prove to be pertinent they must be alleviated

It is interesting to see that the organizational involvement or non-involvement in supporting the community does not represent a source of work satisfaction or dissatisfaction within this organization.

Fig. 3 Factors generating work dissatisfaction



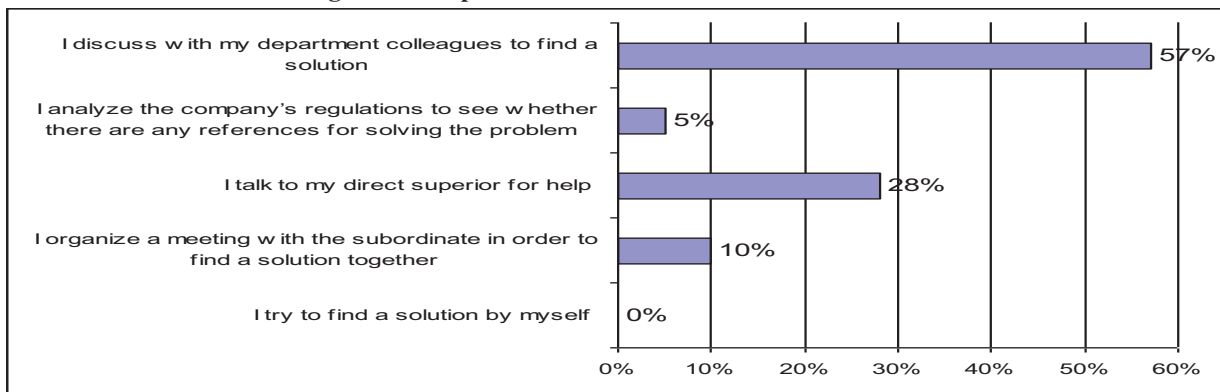
The opinion expressed by the managerial staff at S.C. Cord România S.R.L. Slatina regarding work behavior is determined by their perception of appreciation at work place. Thus, 55% of the respondents consider that, to be appreciated at their work place, they must achieve their duties, 30% consider that they must be creative and have initiative in solving problems, while 15% think that they must obey organizational rules, which means getting professional training or strictly respecting superiors' orders.

More than that, none of the subjects considered that meeting deadlines represents a factor that could bring them an increased work appreciation, although it is considered an extremely important source of dissatisfaction.

Within S.C. Cord Romania S.R.L. Slatina the managerial staff does not entirely know the existing stipulations of any codes, even though 79% of the respondents stated that work regulations are very important and useful, and they respect them in any situation and, more importantly, they do not use them. As a result, these regulations are considered to have more a declarative character than a practical one and consulting them does not represent the final solution in solving a problem.

On the other hand, when they face a problem that they cannot solve, the existing rules within the company represent the final solution to solve the problem after they debate upon it with their colleagues or superiors.

Fig. 4 The respondents' behavior to an inedited matter



Further on, the study was concentrated on identifying the perception of the managerial staff at S.C. Cord România S.R.L. Slatina regarding the role of social policy that provides the organization's future success.

Thus, the company has a code of ethics that was distributed to the employees as a presentation brochure and is, also, available on the web page of the Group.

More than that, 62% of the respondents said that they participated at various actions that were intended to facilitate the understanding and the daily usage of the organizational code of ethics. Still, a percentage of 11% respondents said that they are not aware of the existence of such a document.

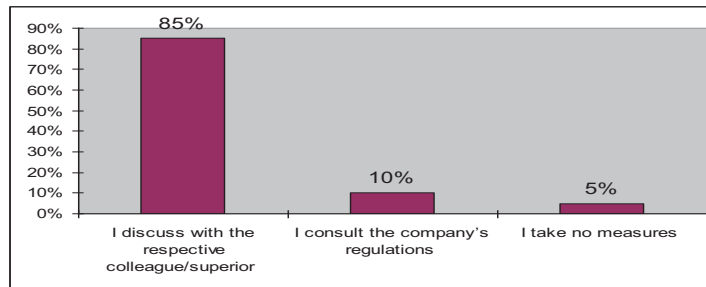
At the same time, the respondents' opinion regarding the utility of the code of ethics in the organization's activity is not unitary; about 55% of them consider that the code of ethics does not provide solutions that could solve the problems with an ethical character, while 45% appreciate that the role of the code of ethics is to give orientating advice on the significance of a fair behavior at work.

It is even more relevant that, although 48% of the respondents said that they know exactly what the code of ethics contains, and 48% said that they know some things about the code of ethics, and when they were asked to identify

some of its rules on a list with more variants, around 30% of the indicated variants cannot be found among the stipulations listed in the code of ethics of Pirelli Group.

All these aspects demonstrate that, within the analyzed organization, the code of ethics is not considered as a standard to be followed in the activity development but as a simple declarative document, without too much practical value. Thus, the company must popularize its stipulations at the level of the managerial staff and evidence its role in providing the ethical character of the organizational activity;

Fig. 5 The way in which the respondents act when they face unethical work behaviors



It is a known fact that when an employee faces unethical behavior from his superior or colleagues, 85% prefer to discuss about it with the respective person, 5% they take no measures, and only 10% consult the organizational regulations. Further more, although 37% of the surveyed persons said that in their organization there is a person that deals with ethical issues, 21%, said that there is a department specialized in ethical issues, when they are in doubt about the lack of fairness regarding any decision or behavior, none of the respondents go to this person or department when facing such practices.

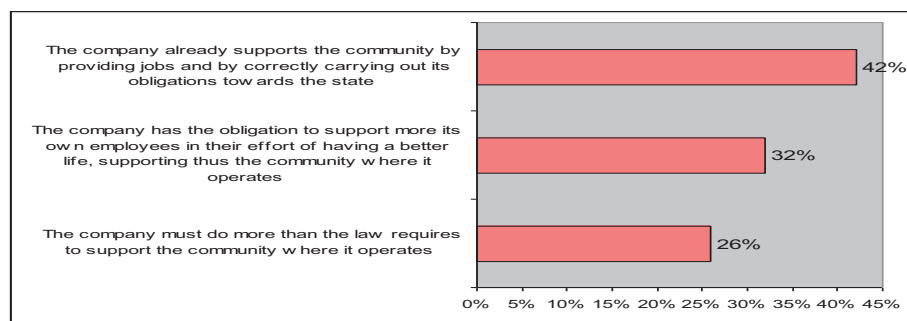
The managerial staff at S.C. Cord Romania S.R.L. Slatina also consider (63%) that the implementation of a new system of rewards/punishments for unethical work-related attitudes would stimulate the employees to adopt an ethical behavior.

A source of competitive advantage for S.C. Cord Romania S.R.L. Slatina, both at national and mostly at international level is the active and pro-active preoccupation to maintain the integrity of the natural environment.

This preoccupation is proved by the organization's activities and appreciated by the employees (95% of them said that, in their opinion, their organization is actively preoccupied with protecting the environment integrity).

Another important aspect in the study was identifying the managerial staff's opinion about the connection between the community and the organization in developing its activity. Thus, 84% of the respondents considered that companies, in general, can and must do more than impose rules for sustaining the communities where they are located.

Fig. 6 The respondents' opinion regarding the organization's utility in getting involved in supporting the community



Also, the managerial of the company considers that the organization where they work supports the community and the society for mutual benefit. In spite of all this, the way in which they understood the principles of social responsibility is a pretty narrow one, as 74% appreciate that an organization's responsibility to the society means safe jobs, supporting the employees, being always updated with all taxes owed to the state.

This opinion is expressed by the fact that S.C. Cord Romania S.R.L. Slatina was mainly preoccupied, by the social programs it developed, to increase its own employees' welfare and less to solve any social problems manifested within its community.

As a result, it would be useful if the organization could diversify its portfolio of social causes in which it takes involvement, without neglecting the ones that were already mentioned.

Another interesting aspect emphasized by the survey was that 50% of the managerial staff of S.C. Cord Romania S.R.L. Slatina donated, in 2007, 2% of the global income to a social cause, but only 40% of them knew that they could have this opportunity within the organization. We consider that the organization could popularize more this governmental initiative which, though it does get direct implication to it, does not require too much effort;

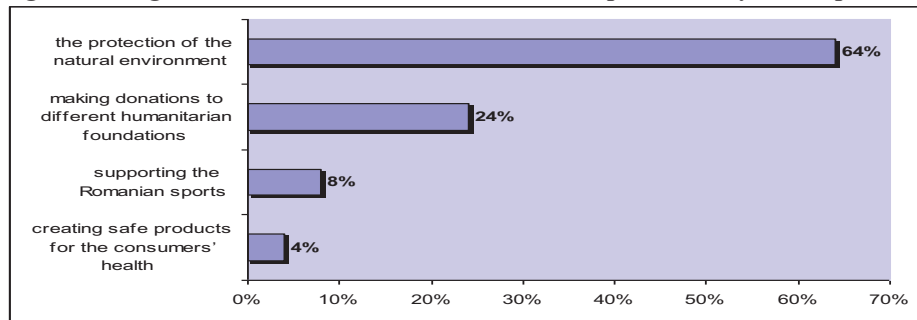
The initiatives at S.C. Cord Romania S.R.L. Slatina in the field of social responsibility demonstrated that 53% of the managerial staff is aware that there is a person responsible for its involvement in the community's social support. Also, 42% of the respondents participated at individual or group debates on social responsibility, within their organization, while 53% said that they never participated at such manifestations.

More important, 37% of the respondents participated at a series of events that demonstrate the organization's involvement in the society's amelioration process of social involvement, events represented by offering various scholarships for the employees' family members (32%), offering financial support to the employees with health problems (32%), making various humanitarian donations (26%), and offering presents to disfavored categories, with the employees' involvement (10%).

According the opinion of the managerial staff of S.C. Cord Romania S.R.L. Slatina, the main social fields that the organization must support should be protecting the environment (64%) and making donations to various humanitarian foundations (24%), and they mentioned SMURD, CNRG and Casa Speranței.

Regarding this aspect, the modalities of social involvement at S.C. Cord Romania S.R.L. Slatina preferred and mentioned by the respondents within the study were mainly represented by various donations, occasional or systematic, for various social causes (55%), creating a foundation that will be in charge of the company's social activity (15%), sponsoring some cultural, sports events (15%) and the employees' willingness to volunteer (15%).

Fig. 7 The organization's fields of social involvement preferred by the respondents



It is interesting to remark that the respondents consider responsibility assuming to society, by the organization in which they work as an attribute of it, proving to be reticent about the volunteer work or making donations from their salaries, even if they are minimal, to support some social causes.

We consider that a very useful method of social involvement is the employees' volunteer work which, though it does not get too much appreciation among them (15%), has positive results regarding the team spirit and increase of their loyalty towards the organization.

In conclusion, in the organization under study, the international social policy of Pirelli Group has not been fully implemented, but by observing the proposals and recommendations made on the basis of the study results, we believe that the organization can successfully finalize this process.

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