ABSTRACT

This article looks at the expanding relevance of the practice of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Till lately CSR was largely viewed as a philanthropic activity of companies. This inspite of the fact that researchers like Carroll identified four dimensions of CSR as early as in the 1950s. These were the economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic dimensions respectively in the order of importance given by him. This article looks primarily at human rights which is fundamental to human existence and corporate social responsibility. It looks at the factors that have coalesced to bring the concept of human rights into the fold of CSR. It also high lights how human rights can no longer remain within the purview of the governments alone. The article looks at the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) which is becoming a reference point for the understanding of this linkage. Beyond the UNGC the “Protect, Respect, Remedy” framework of John Ruggie is also designed to play a key role in this context. The article also looks at the importance of human rights and CSR in the Indian context.

KEYWORDS: Corporate social responsibility, Human rights, International guidelines, Role of Government.