

# ON A MISSION FOR VISION – THE CASE STUDY OF SANKARA NETHRALAYA

**GAYATHRI.S**

Associate Professor, School of Management Studies,  
Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies

**MIRA JANANI.V**

Research Scholar, School of Management Studies,  
Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies

## **CASE ABSTRACT**

***Corporate Social Responsibility was made mandatory for the companies having net worth of INR 500 crores or having the annual turnover 1000 crores on April 2014. The companies have to dedicate 2% of their net profits for CSR. In spite of the clearly stated guidelines provided to the companies on the areas which constitute CSR, the Indian companies have 3 issues regarding the implementation of CSR. Inability to find appropriate avenues, ii. Not being able to manage the CSR funds iii. The failure of the all NGOs to carry out the CSR activities of the companies. This is where the companies need to look into organizations such as Sankara Netralaya. This case study talks about how Sankara Netralaya provides an avenue for the companies to carry out CSR as well as the services that it renders on the funds of the companies. Sankara Netralaya follow a very unique business model which had made them to create an edge in the eye care sector. Aravaindh eye hospital had been the main source of inspiration for Sankara Netralaya in providing free eye care services to about forty percent of its patients. The organisation is able to do it through its collaborative programmes with the other corporate companies as well as educational institutions thus paving the way for these organisations that collaborate with Sankara Netralaya to carry out their CSR.***

## **INTRODUCTION**

Corporate Social Responsibility was made mandatory for the companies having net worth of INR 500 crores or having the annual turnover 1000 crores on April 2014. The companies have to dedicate 2% of their net profits for CSR. This has resulted in a massive change in the CSR scenario in India. The guidelines laid down by the Ministry of Corporate affairs regarding CSR is as follows:

1. Conduct and govern themselves with ethics, transparency and accountability.
2. Provide goods and services that are safe and that contribute to sustainability throughout their life cycle.
3. Promote the well-being of all employees.
4. Respect the interests of, and be responsive towards all stakeholders, especially those who

are disadvantaged, vulnerable and marginalized.

5. Respect and promote human rights.
6. vi. Protect and make efforts to restore the environment.
7. when engaged in influencing public and regulatory policy, they should do so in a responsible manner
8. support inclusive growth and equitable development (1)

In spite of the clearly stated guidelines provided to the companies on the areas which constitute CSR, some of the Indian companies have issues regarding the implementation of CSR. According to Humbad and Bajpai (2018) Indian companies go through these three problems of conducting CSR in India

- i. Inability to find appropriate avenues,
- ii. Not being able to manage the CSR funds
- iii. The failure of the all NGOs to carry out the CSR activities of the companies.(2)

The projected rate of blindness according to the survey of 2015-2018 is 0.45% which is on a decreasing trend compared to the earlier 1.1% from the year 2006-2007(As per the Directorate General of Health Services records) (3). But still, the 0.45 percent is high, considering the population of the country. India constitutes to one third of the world's visual impairment with 12 million Indian citizens suffering from some kind visual impairment. India's out of pocket medical cost accounts for 62% of the entire expenditure. This means that an average Indian citizen has to spend 62% of his medical expenses out of his pocket and the rest 28% is taken care of by the either the

Government or other agencies. That contribution of 62% cannot be afforded by everyone (4). India's 22% of the population lives in the below poverty line (3). This entails that not all the Indian citizens can afford to spend for their ailments especially their visual ailments. This gap still largely remains untouched. The vicious gap of high medical expenses and poverty is taken up by various Government and Non-Government organisations. Thus, a gap can be seen where there is a social problem and the companies which struggle for avenues to contribute to the society.

Sankar Netralaya is an organisation which had been rendering yeomen service in the eye care sector. Sankara Netralaya means the "Temple of the eye" and was established in 1978 under the wishes of Shri Jayendra Saraswathi, a religious leader in Kanchipuram. The founder is Dr.Sengamedu Srinivasa Badrinath, a renowned ophthalmologist in the USA who returned to his mother land for providing services to the people of his homeland. It was started as an NGO with a purpose of providing missionary services. The organisation has 13 branches spread across the states of TamilNadu, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal.

## DATA COLLECTION

Case study approach can employ primary or/as well as secondary data depending on the nature of the case at hand. In this case, the CSR activities of Sankara Nethralaya and how it provides a platform for other companies to exercise their CSR, had been explored. The majority of the

data is obtained from the company's website. Hence this a study based on secondary data. Mail correspondence was done with the authorities in the hospital and we would like to acknowledge the cooperation of Mr. S.AlagiriD department of fund raising, MS.B. Kavitha, consultant and Mr. T. Parthasarathy, Head of CSR department.

## **VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS OF SANKARA NETRALAYA AND BUSINESS MODEL**

### **Vision**

Be the center of excellence in delivering total eye care for all and spreading knowledge through Education and Training and carrying India centric Research for alleviating visual morbidity.

### **Mission**

The mission of Sankara Nethralaya is to provide Total Eye-care solutions of highest standards to all sections of community through a team of competent, committed and compassionate professionals in a patient-friendly environment.

The vision statement of the organisation is to deliver total eye care for all which brings out the organisation's belief of providing eye care services for everyone equally. The mission statement of the organisation denotes about the excellence that has to be maintained in the services that it provides. So, we see that the organisation aims to provide quality services for all. These two lines are a perfect description of Sankara Netralya.

The main branch of the hospital is located in Chennai. Sankara Netralaya inspired by the business model of Aravind eye hospital has quite a different business model. It provides free eye care for 40% of its patients and the organisation does not do it alone. It takes the helping hand of the other corporate companies in order to meet the resource requirements. This gives the Corporates a chance to meet their mandatory CSR requirements.

### **SERVICES PROVIDED BY SANKARA NETRALYA**

Sankara Netralaya has emerged as one of the big service provider in eyecare for the people who are not able to afford the eye care medications Also, the organisation ensures that the quality of the service provided is maintained regardless of the person paying or not. The wait time, medications and the patient care show no difference between the paying patients and the non-paying patients. The organisation also conducts eye camps in the rural areas of West Bengal and Tamil Nadu to provide eye care facilities to the people who may not be able to have an access to the eye care related services. Sankara Netralya also provides Teleophthomology services. Teleophthomology refers to the eye care services provided digitally generally to the rural areas from the urban areas. All of this are offered free to the people who cannot afford standard eye care facilities. Keeping up with the technology the organisation also collaborates with educational institutes like IIT,thus engaging in a constant research as to how to provide more at a lesser cost. The answer to this was

the MESU Mobile Eye Surgical Unit (MESU), a medico-engineering marvel, an operation theatre on wheels. This is the first of its kind in Asia, providing eye surgeries on the go. On an average 1200 patients arrive into the institute and 200 surgeries are performed all in a day.

For its services, Sankara Netralaya has received countless awards and recognitions notably the award from the state of Tamil Nadu from the hands of the Governor Baniwarlal Purohith. Thus, even though Sankara Netralaya was inspired by Aravind eye hospital in its business model, it has strived its way to cultivate a recognition of its own by the excellence in the quality and the service that it provides. Sankara Netralaya is the first eye care hospital in Asia ISO 9002. The organisation also introduced Total Quality Management (TQM) policies audited by BVQI which is a global leader in conformity assessment and certification services. The main hospital, the Jagadguru Kanchi Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi Nethra Nilayam (JKCN Complex) and the CU Shah Sankara Nethralaya have the a NABH accreditation, the highest recognition in the health care sector.

## **BUSINESS MODEL**

The business model of Sankara Netralaya is extremely interesting. Sankara Netralaya for all the services that it provides is still able to provide them without a hitch and has seem to have handled the problems of the scarcity of the resources at the course of its endeavour quite efficiently. Sankara Netralaya as said earlier provides free

patient care for 40% of its patients. The rest 60% of the patients have to pay a nominal charge. So that means that not much financial resources can be expected from the fees paid by the rest 60% of the population. To know how this is possible a look should be taken into the business model of the organisation.

## **COMPANIES CONTRIBUTING TO SANKARA NETRALAYA**

The corporates provided material resources as well as equipment resources to Sankara Netralaya thus making sure that the organisation was not faced with shortages and the corporates on the other hand were able to give accountability for the mandatory CSR spending. The organisation has tied up with companies like BHEL, HPCL, FDC, TVS, HDFC, Bajaj, IOC, ONGC and many other corporates and is able to provide services to many people stuck in poverty and rural areas who do not have access to health facilities to get free eye care services.

## **WHY SANKARA NETRALAYA FOR CSR?**

Thus, we see that the business organisations which are struggling to find avenues to do CSR can opt for Sankara Netralaya as health care also constitutes to CSR and Sankara Netralaya has tie ups with multiple companies and is a large non-profit organisation. So, the chances of Sankara Netralaya failing to meet the CSR needs of the company is minimal.

## CONCLUSION

Hence, we see that Sankara Netralya does indeed function as the 'temple of the eye' by ensuring both quality and quantity in its delivery. If more organisations come forward and partner up with Sankara Netralya the objectives of the organisations will be met and also it will be beneficial for the society as well.

## QUESTIONS

1. Do you find the vision and mission statements of the organisation aligned with its operations? Justify
2. Why should the companies do their CSR with Sankara Netralya?
3. Why do companies face problems in CSR implementation?

## REFERENCES

- India CSR (2019). Retrieved from <https://indiacsr.in/corporate-social-responsibility-csr-in-india/>
- India CSR (2018). Retrieved from <https://indiacsr.in/still-struggling-csr-5-years-mandate/>
- Directorate General of health services. (n.d.) Retrieved from <https://dghs.gov.in/>
- Businessstandard(2018)Retrievedfrom [https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/out-of-pocket-health-expenses-plunge-55-mn-indians-into-poverty-in-2017-118071900115\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/out-of-pocket-health-expenses-plunge-55-mn-indians-into-poverty-in-2017-118071900115_1.html)
- Asian development bank. (n.d.) Retrieved from <https://www.adb.org/countries/india/poverty#targetText=In%20India%2C%2021.9%25%20of%20the,die%20before%20their%205th%20birthday.>
- Sankara Netralya. (n.d.) Retrieved from <https://www.sankaranethralaya.org/about-policy.html>
- Sankara Netralya. (n.d.) Retrieved from [https://www.sankaranethralaya.org/corporate\\_social\\_responsibility.html#targetText=Sankara%20Nethralaya%20captures%20the%20true,would%20benefit%20society%20at%20large.](https://www.sankaranethralaya.org/corporate_social_responsibility.html#targetText=Sankara%20Nethralaya%20captures%20the%20true,would%20benefit%20society%20at%20large.)

---

**GAYATHRI.S**, Associate Professor, School of Management Studies, Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies.



**MIRA JANANI.V**, Research Scholar, School of Management Studies, Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies.

---

