

New Approaches to Technology Driven Corporate Social Responsibility: Data Philanthropy

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Data Philanthropy is defined as sharing proprietary organizational data assets with external parties for the primary purpose of solving complex social problems. Data assets may include digital records, skilled human resources, and technology artifacts (George et al., 2019; Kirkpatrick, 2013; Susha et al., 2019). Also known as data collaboration, data philanthropy is slowly becoming more mainstream as global firms join forces with charities, non-governmental agencies, and complementary partner firms. The outcomes of these activities include 1) improving economic conditions in lesser developed countries (Hurst, 2018), 2) solving complex global problems such as climate change (United Nations Global Pulse, 2018); and improving operations for aid agencies (UPS, 2014). One of the more interesting aspects of data philanthropy participation is its appeal to younger generations of customers and employees who demand greater social responsibility from firms. Handing out cash to charities or providing in-kind gifts does not provide the social accountability and results that millennials want to see in firms where they work or whom they buy from (Deloitte, 2019). This is especially important for technology firms where recruiting new talent and retaining experienced employees is often frustrating and competitive (Taylor & Joshi, 2019). I propose a research stream that explores how data philanthropy activity impacts technology employee recruiting and retention, and how data philanthropy influences new customer attraction and existing customer retention.

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