

FIGHT AGAINST BREAST CANCER FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT

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Abstract: This paper is a fine approach of an actual problem in Romania, analyzed from the point of view of the companies which are socially involved and support this cause. The increasing number of the breast cancer cases represent an alarm signal for Romanian women, this being the reason for which the most important leaders who are well-known for their activity in the area of feminine beauty or for a healthy lifestyle, contribute by solidarity and involvement in the breast cancer problem. Our topic has as objectives the identification of the information level among Romanian women regarding preventive measures and screening of breast cancer, on one hand, and determining the impact of the corporations in supporting the fight against breast cancer, on the other hand. The research methodology consisted in conducting some interviews with Romanian doctors, in order to identify the main obstacles in the way of early detection of cancer, but also in finding solutions for raising the information level among Romanian women. We also analyzed the most important campaigns of the companies which are socially involved in this area and we continued our research with a questionnaire applied to a number of 215 respondents. The results of the quantitative and qualitative research contribute to the awareness on the importance of the companies which practice socially responsible management, in the fight against breast cancer.

JEL classification: M14, M59

Key words: responsible social management, corporate social responsibility, breast cancer, managerial involvement, national screening program

1. INTRODUCTION

This work presents a topical issue, both globally and in our country, because early prevention and detection measures for this disease are known to be quite superficial without makes improvements in this respect. We believe that true leaders face the most aggressive obstacles, both in the economic environment and in the social environment, which is why the motto that guides us in developing this theme is: "*Cancer is not a death sentence, but rather it's a life sentence; it pushes one to live!*"- Marcia Smith.

The motivation for choosing this theme derives from the desire to document this delicate topic, which is not given due importance in Romania, but also from the important role that more and more companies have in the fight against breast cancer.

The objectives of the research are as follows:

- Establishing the level of information for women in Romania regarding the measures for the prevention and detection of breast cancer;
- Underline the importance of effective women's information on breast cancer;
- Limiting the concepts of early breast cancer prevention and screening;
- Determining the impact of corporations involved in supporting the fight against breast cancer;
- Establishing the main reasons why companies practice socially responsible management;
- Propose solutions to increase social involvement in the fight against breast cancer, both of companies and of doctors, state institutions and women.

In order to achieve the objectives of this paper, **interviews, analysis of social responsibility campaigns and questionnaire were used as research tools**. The interview was a preliminary stage in which we wanted to find the doctors' opinion about the importance of action in the fight against cancer. We continued with the analysis of the main companies that practice socially responsible management in this area and we managed to get the point of view of one of them. Following qualitative research, we initiated a quantitative research, through an opinion poll, aimed at identifying the level of information of the female population on breast cancer.

The theme is interdisciplinary, combining knowledge from different fields, such as management, medicine, sociology, law, marketing. In addition to management issues (social responsibility management, leadership), our study also presents legislative issues in the field.

Relevance and scientific impact of the topic

This paper addresses researchers in socially responsible management, screening program specialists, members of women's breast cancer organizations, national and international healthcare professionals, all companies wishing to practice in the future responsible social management and, last but not least, readers who are keen to deepen the field of socially responsible management, as well as to be informed about the legislative, social and medical aspects of the fight against breast cancer. By addressing this issue, we try to alert the need for the effective involvement of as many corporations as social responsibility campaigns, especially in support of women who are fighting breast cancer, as in Romania the number of these cases is worrying and requires more attention from both governmental and private bodies. At the same time, we express the hope that socially responsible management will grow in Romania and other areas of activity, becoming a growing concept, both in theoretical research and in the practical use of companies.

2. THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Social responsibility now plays an important role in managing a company. The concept of "Corporate Social Responsibility" (CSR) has left its footprint more in economically developed countries, the first data being known in the US. Howard Bowen is considered the parent of *Corporate Social Responsibility*, focusing on writing

about the social responsibility of businesspeople: "businesspeople have an obligation to follow those policies, take those decisions, or follow those lines of action that are desired on the goals and values of our society."(Bowen H.R., 1953)

Archie Carrol comes with another definition of the CSR concept. It emphasizes that the main purpose of a company is to gain profit from the sale of products and / or the provision of services, and social responsibility has a character not only discretionary - philanthropic, but also includes economic, ethical and legal issues. Tuzzolino și Armandi define the RSC starting from Maslow's pyramid. They are of the opinion that any company has needs, just like individuals in a company.

The European Commission offers a simple definition of this concept: "Corporate responsibility for the impact they have on society." World Business Council for Sustainable Development defines CSR as "the continued commitment of companies to behave ethically and to contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of their employees, their families, the local community and society as a whole"(Holme, L., Watts, R., 2010).

Crowther and Aras consider that CSR defines the relationship between a company and the local community in which it operates. Some authors go so far as to see the company as being a person, bringing together the ideals of those who contributed to its establishment, hence the greater social involvement (Ripken S.K., 2009).

In recent years, the CSR concept has continued to expand, including issues related to human rights, poverty, education, the environment and health. This behavior is also adopted by Romanian companies. The high degree of applicability of the CSR is, in our opinion, determined by certain benefits:

- *Loyal and motivated employees.* The company will become more appealing to potential employees and will have the chance to strengthen their organizational culture in the field of social responsibility, using the time, skills and abilities of their own employees.

- *Improving reputation, relationships with business partners.* Against reputational risk, the best managerial measure is social activities. Often the RSC is mistaken for charity activities, which are not enough to ensure the reputation of a firm, but it is important to avoid the negative impact. It is recommended that society act in a balanced manner, taking a synergistic effect on reputation.

- *Increasing the number of customers.* The reputation of a company directly influences the desire of consumers to buy the products of the company. If they are satisfied with the products, they will attract others.

- *Increasing competitiveness.* Regardless of their size, when companies engage in social life, this allows them to differentiate themselves from competition.

In Romania, the RSC concept became known immediately after the revolution, when many non-governmental organizations appeared. Although corporate social responsibility has grown since 2000, as a result of the growing number of multinationals and regulations in the European Union, CSR is still in its infancy, and many Romanian companies associate the CSR only with the term philanthropy. The most commonly adopted RSC tools include social investment, environmental investment and health.

3. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

This consisted of five interviews (four interviews with doctors in the field and an interview with Nestlé), which analyzed both the opinions of the companies and the medical specialists regarding the information of the female population with on breast cancer, but also on involvement in the issue of breast cancer in terms of social responsibility. The structure of the doctor's interview consisted of five questions on the most important aspects of early breast cancer prevention and detection.

As the incidence of breast cancer is rising all over the world, but prevention, information and early detection measures are being taken, the situation in Romania is still uncertain. In the documentation process, we found that at present there is no screening program for breast cancer but only for cervical cancer. There have been national screening and information programs in the past without visible results. At this time, the only support that women have with this disease are the campaigns of companies that have affirmed themselves through socially responsible management.

To the question "As a doctor, what advice do you have to prevent breast cancer?", The doctors responded as follows: "*Annual medical check-ups, especially after 40 years or whenever we notice changes or discomfort, autopalpation at least once a month*" (resident physician, SCJU Craiova No. 1, Plastic Surgery Clinic); "*It is very important to have a healthier lifestyle. Nutrition should be as diverse as fruit, vegetables, protein, two liters of liquids, adding at least 30 minutes of sports at least three times a week*" (Florin Sanninoiu, Hospitalier Carpentras France Maternite, Resident Physician) ; "*Doctor 6 to 6 months, or when a woman has certain symptoms, such as the presence of nodules in the breasts, nipple leakage, retraction of the skin or nipple, the appearance of an auxiliary adenopathy. Avoid breast trauma, excessive sun exposure, long-term use of hormonal contraceptives, a diet rich in sweets and fats*" (Dr. Mirela Săninioiu, resident doctor, Emergency Medicine Smurd Craiova); "*Monthly postmenstrual breast palpation over the age of 18 years, annual breast ultrasound under 40 years, mammography once every two years over 40 years, smoking cessation, prudence in oral contraceptives, doctor's presentation at the smallest change appeared in the breasts*" (Dr. Mosorescu Dalida).

From the analysis of these answers, we can say that the main measures to prevent breast cancer are: a balanced diet and a healthy lifestyle, conducting a medical checkup, at least every six months - 12 months (the period varies according to age) or when the smallest change occurred in the breasts.

In the second question, "Do you think it is important to run information campaigns on the importance of an ultrasound / mammogram?", they are of the opinion that informing the population is equally important in the process of preventing breast cancer: "*to carry out as many campaigns as possible against the occurrence of breast cancer, the population to be as well informed about the signs and symptoms of this type of cancer, to periodic inspections of the physician for the purpose of carrying out preventive mammograms*" (Dr Mirela Săninioiu). At the same time, the implementation of screening programs in Romania would bring satisfactory results in reducing the number of breast cancer cases: "*screening is very important in the prevention of illness because it can be detected early and the therapeutic action range can be much widened, with much better results*" (Florin Saniniu, MD); "*screening is one of the most important stages in the diagnosis and early treatment of breast cancer*" (Dr. Mirela Săninioiu).

In Romania, there is no screening program to help prevent and detect early, dentists challenging the efficiency and past performance. Being asked, "Do you think

that the program carried out by the Ministry of Health brings visible results?", Their answers support the failure in the implementation of such programs: "*No, it is a total fiasco, not applied according to international standards*" (Dr Mosorescu Dalida).

Taking into account that the involvement of state institutions is deficient, we wanted to find out what doctors think about the involvement of other social bodies or corporations in supporting the fight against breast cancer: "*it is important to involve in health education in schools, high schools, faculties. For example, big companies, and beyond, can launch campaigns to inform the population*"(Dr Mosorescu Dalida).

Considering that there is ***a need for an overview of the issue, we wanted to find out what is the company's view of the fight against breast cancer from the perspective of socially responsible management.*** The companies we were targeting were Nestlé Romania, Avon, Catena, Roche Romania, these being remarked in terms of their involvement in this field. Of the four companies, only ***Nestlé Romania*** responded to our request. It carries out its work by adopting a socially responsible health and wellness strategy, encouraging a healthy lifestyle through movement and balanced nutrition. Under the umbrella of the CSV (Creating Shared Value) pillar, fighting breast cancer and preventing this disease is the main social responsibility project that has been involved for three years, both through the Nestlé Fitness breakfast cereal brand campaigns and by participating to events that support women who need breast prostheses.

Following the interview, I found out the success of RSC campaigns: "*Given that we target these campaigns directly to our target audience, that is, the female level, the level of awareness is quite high. For example, last year, together with the Casiopeea Association, we managed to raise the budget needed to buy about 400 breast prostheses and this year we have successfully continued this approach. In addition, in October 2016, we also organized Pink Ride, a special event dedicated to the fight against breast cancer, in partnership with Skirt Bike, in which we involved both well-known opinion leaders among the women we are addressing (Andreea Raicu, Sorina Fredholm, as well as bloggers from the lifestyle and beauty field, etc.) as well as specialists who explained to those present that means a full breast examination.*"

Thus, we can reinforce the idea that CSR campaigns run by businesses are closely related to motivating employees. Nestlé Romania engages its employees in CSR campaigns and stimulates them through various mechanisms, the results of which are positive: "*Our Breast Cancer Awareness Campaigns are well-known among the company's employees and have become a tradition. Also, all the events we organize enjoy every time the participation of our colleagues. The mechanisms we use to stimulate employee engagement are prize competitions that we run in events.*"

In order to gain the respect of the company in which it operates, for a company it is not enough to ensure only commercial success. Thus, for Nestlé, mass media is an important pillar of campaigning that makes it known to engage in the fight against breast cancer: "*It is very important for a social responsibility campaign to be known by the press, because , so our message gets much easier among people in the target audience. Early detection of breast cancer needs to be made aware of as many people as possible and therefore, through our campaigns, we maintain a close relationship with the press (press releases, PR blitz, invitations to special events, etc.).*"

At the end of the interview, we wanted to know the relationship the company has with the authorities if they are supported by family doctors, oncologists, surgeons,

hospitals, polyclinics, public or private medical centers, as we believe that not only the company has to get involved society and society must provide a positive response and support its involvement: *"Our partnership with the Casiopea Association also involves a relationship with the authorities, but we do not have a direct communication with them. At the Pink Ride event, the Queen Maria Foundation was joined by the presence of specialist doctors who talked about the importance of early detection of breast cancer, but also about how to do a proper self-examination."*

4. QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

The study was conducted on **215 female females in Romania**. The questionnaire was created with Google Forms and distributed online, respondents retaining their anonymity. The target group had a positive attitude towards completing the questionnaire, feedback being positive since the launch of the questionnaire, showing that there is a desire to find out more about the subject.

The objectives of the research are: to determine the level of information of the female population on the factors that determine the occurrence of breast cancer, to identify the companies responsible for supporting women with breast cancer, to establish the level of information related to the legislation and the involvement of the medical staff in the communication the existence of early detection programs, the proposal of solutions to increase the level of information to prevent, detect and treat.

Research results show that 20-30 year olds are more open to respond responsibly on a topic that is quite sensitive to a woman, representing 61% of all respondents, followed by those under the age of 20 (14%). , between 30-40 years (14%), 40-50 years (7%) and over 50 years (4%). To measure the level of knowledge regarding the main causes of breast cancer, we have asked the multiple answer question "What do you think are the factors that cause breast cancer?" We note from Figure 1 that most respondents mentioned genetic factors as the main cause of this disease (79%), followed by stress (64%), unhealthy eating (47%), vices (33%) and lack of physical activity (14%).

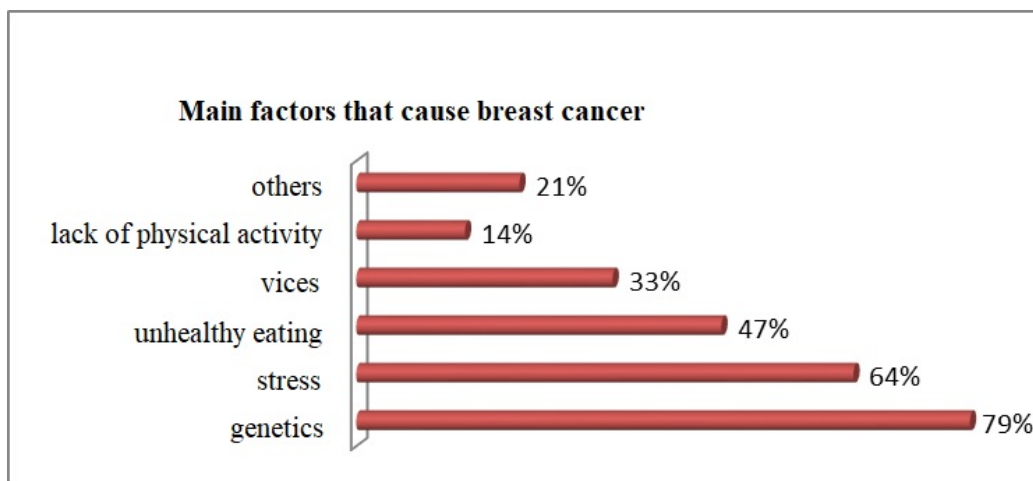


Figure. 1 Factors in Breast Cancer

We have left the respondents the possibility of indicating other factors that determine the occurrence of breast cancer, and among them we find: pollution, cosmetics, exposure to radiation (21%). From this analysis, it turns out that the feminine population attaches great importance to family history, in a way ignoring the other causes that can be controlled.

Continuing research, I asked a question about the frequency with which a breast investigation is performed (with the statement that ultrasound is recommended for women of all ages, while mammography of women over 40).

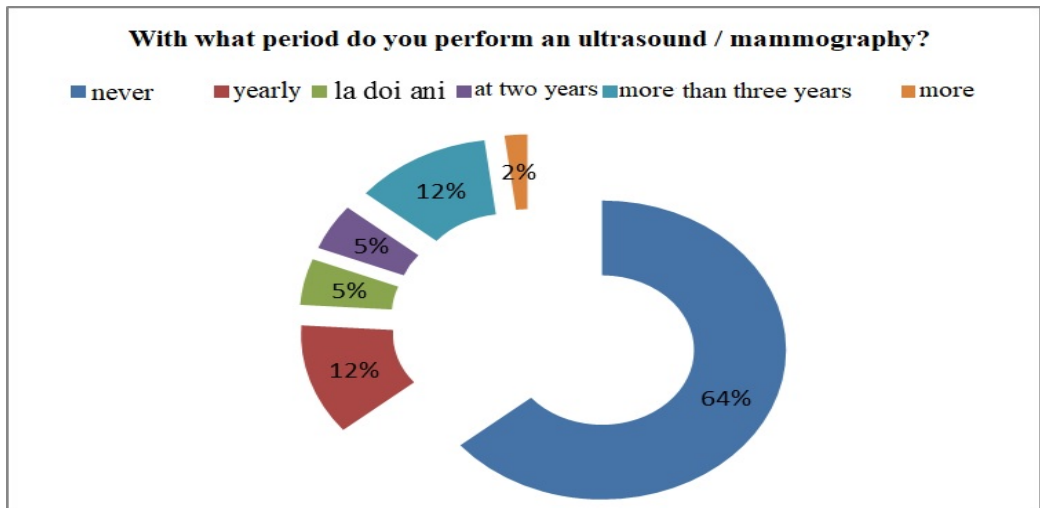


Figure. 2 Periodicity of ultrasound / mammography

The worrying number of women who have never carried out a mammogram investigation is an alarm signal (64%), which should draw the attention of authorities in the field, as well as companies involved in breast cancer.

Respondents position the lack of time as the main factor that does not allow them to consult (47%), followed by the fear of a possible worrying outcome (28%). Thus, women ignore the first signs of their body until they reach into untreatable phases, with very serious consequences. The high price is highlighted as another important reason why they do not carry out controls for the early detection of breast cancer (19%).



Figure 3 Reasons for not doing ultrasound / mammography

Considering the figures in Figures 2 and 3, we can say that national measures are needed to raise awareness of breast cancer and the risks of failing to carry out annual controls.

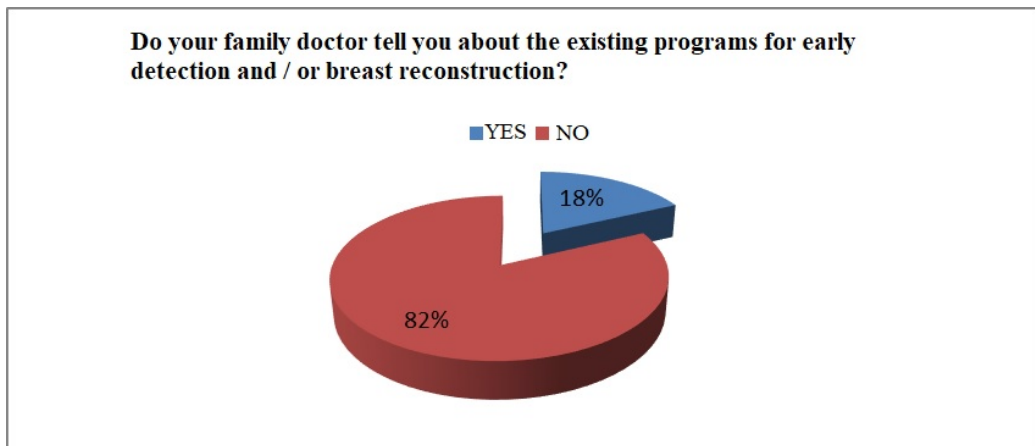


Figure 4 Information from the family doctor about breast cancer

We can see from Figure 4 that women are not adequately informed about breast cancer, either on existing early detection programs or on breast reconstruction, requiring concrete policies at national level in this regard. Thus, 82% of respondents said they were not informed by the family doctor and only 18% gave an affirmative answer.

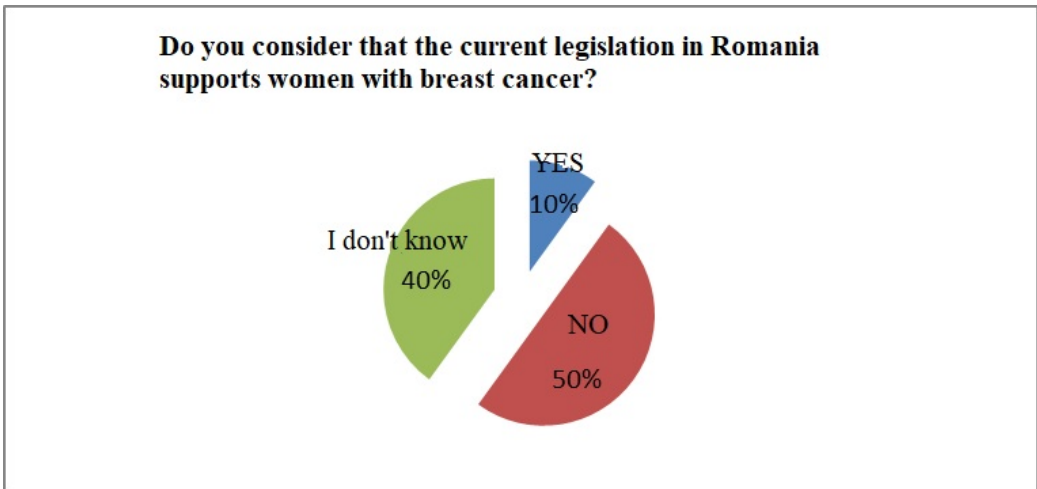


Figure 5 National legislation on breast cancer

In the US, for example, the patient finds breast reconstruction at diagnosis. In Romania, there are funds for this reconstruction, but for lack of information, women do not know that surgery is free and can change their lives. Analyzing the answers, we find that the target group is of the opinion that current legislation does not support women struggling with this disease (50%) or are unaware of legal issues (40%). Very few people consider that the Romanian legislation supports the cause of women suffering from breast cancer (10%). The free breast reconstruction program has been in operation since 2014 in Romania, but although in 2015 there were funds for 800 women, only 200 benefited from these medical services. Lack of information is the main reason for this.

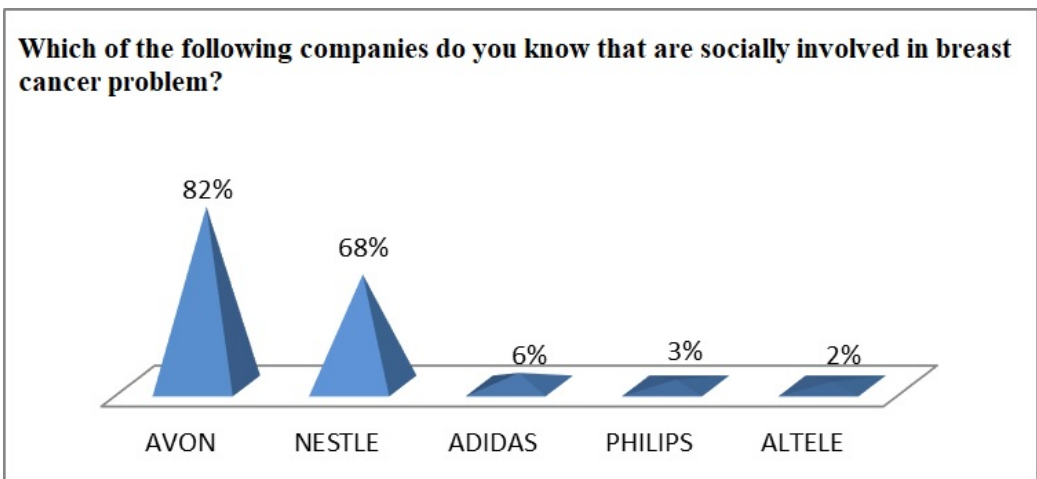


Figure 6 Companies that women know are involved in the fight against breast cancer

At the end of the questionnaire, we wanted to find out which are the main compatriots that are recognized among the female population for active involvement in supporting the fight against cancer. Avon ranked first (82%), a relatively short distance being Nestlé Fitness (68%). We believe that the high percentage achieved by Avon is determined by the launch of the program "A Mammography, a Life Saved", the purpose

of this program being to test women in order to discover the early stages of breast cancer. The program was addressed to women over 40, whose income was under 1000 lei. Thus, Avon has allocated funds for 2500 mammographies, the costs being covered by the sale of some products (the pink beard products marketed in the Avon brochure) specifically designed to support the cause.

The Nestlé Fitness brand launched the Campaign #HandsOn, encouraging women to check their breasts once a month for the purpose of preventing breast cancer. HandsOn Campaign is based on a video that captures how many times women check their mobile phone over a day, but forgets what is essential for a healthy life: breast examination. Thus, Nestlé encourages women to post on social networks a picture of them, positioning their hands alongside their breasts, accompanied by a hashtag #HandsOn.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Following qualitative and quantitative research, we came to the following conclusions:

- The main factors that cause breast cancer are genetic factors, unhealthy eating, vices and lack of physical activity;
- Lack of time is the main reason why a woman never carried out a breast examination;
- Rarely, the family doctor notifies patients about existing early detection and / or breast reconstruction programs;
- In Romania, there are funds for breast reconstruction, but for lack of information, women do not know that surgery is free of charge.
- Adoption of the CSR concept by companies contributes to raising women's awareness of breast cancer, as well as financially and morally supporting those affected by this disease.

Therefore, the adoption of a responsible management by companies is necessary in order to meet the problems of society. In the field of health, we can discuss two converging actions to combat oncological diseases: prevention (informing the population about the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle) and early detection (effective screening). ***Companies that adopt socially responsible management can be a prime example for authorities.*** As far as the activity of CSR companies in the field of women's health is concerned, they should be focused on prevention and information programs. We are witnessing an abnormality on the part of the authorities who invest in healing programs (for example, for breast reconstruction there is an allocated budget), but not prevention (screening programs are not implemented at this time).

In conclusion, we believe that the activity of companies through involvement in CSR is very important in supporting the fight against breast cancer, but it can not be achieved if it does not benefit from support from authorities and other institutions (mass media , doctors, private clinics, NGOs, etc.).

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