

# DRUŠTVENA ODGOVORNOST U SAVREMENIM TRGOVINSKIM PREDUZEĆIMA SA OSVRTOM NA TRGOVINSKI LANAC WALMART

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## *Apstrakt*

*U uslovima dinamičnih promena preduzeća se na različite načine trude da sačuvaju svoju poziciju i time obezbede opstanak na tržištu. Jedna od mogućnosti koja im stoji na raspolaganju, je pravilna primena koncepta društvene odgovornosti. U savremenim uslovima privređivanja trgovina ima veoma značajnu ulogu u funkcionisanju svake privrede jer, između ostalog, može adekvatno da premosti nesklad između veće ponude robe i nedostatka platežne tražnje. Međutim, ne treba zanemariti činjenicu da se danas i od trgovinskih preduzeća očekuje da prate i da se prilagođavaju društveno odgovornim zahtevima. Cilj ovog rada je da ukaže na značaj društvene odgovornosti kao i na pojedine aspekte društveno odgovornog poslovanja u trgovinskim preduzećima, sa osvrtom na najveći maloprodajni trgovinski lanac u svetu. Walmart kao najveća američka kompanija koja se bavi maloprodajom robe na domaćem i internacionalnom tržištu ima vrlo razvijen osećaj za društvo i životnu sredinu, što znači da je menadžment ove kompanije svestan činjenice da je ekonomski razvoj moguće postići samo ako ide paralelno sa razvojem društvene zajednice.*

**Ključne reči:** *Društvena odgovornost, promene, trgovinska preduzeća, potrošači, životna sredina*

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## Uvod

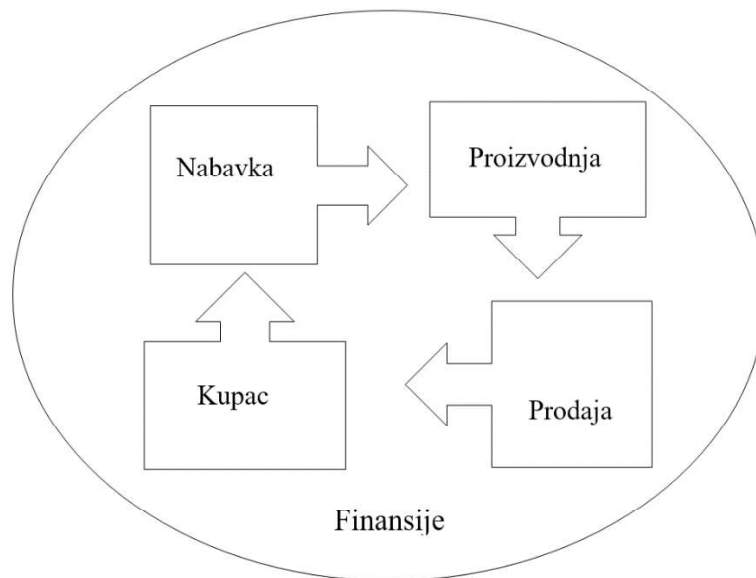
Pored proizvodnih, u vremenu velikih neizvesnosti, i trgovinska preduzeća su podložna brojnim promenama. U prošlosti je, recimo, proces odlučivanja o kupovini određene robe bio jednostavniji, dok danas na ovaj proces utiču brojni faktori, među kojima posebno mesto pripada i društveno odgovornom poslovanju trgovinskih preduzeća. Savremeni potrošač nije u velikoj meri pod uticajem promotivno-propagandnih aktivnosti društveno neodgovornih trgovinskih preduzeća. Iz tog razloga menadžeri moraju da uzmu u obzir činjenicu da postoje potrošači koji su spremniji da plate više za proizvod nekog trgovinskog preduzeća koje se u potpunosti ponaša u skladu sa pravilima društveno odgovornog poslovanja. Ovakvo ponašanje potrošača zahteva poštovanje koncepta društvene odgovornosti ne samo od strane menadžmenta i ostalih zaposlenih u trgovinskom preduzeću već i od strane njihovih poslovnih partnera, a naročito od strane dobavljača. Na taj način će potrošači biti zadovoljniji, što se može pozitivno odraziti na poslovne performanse trgovinskih preduzeća. U svetu postoje različiti pokreti za borbu protiv degradacije životne sredine, organizovani od strane određenih društvenih skupina, kao i pokreti koji se zalažu za poštovanje ljudskih prava zaposlenih. Sve ove promene zahtevaju od trgovinskih preduzeća da prilikom funkcionisanja uvažavaju značaj društveno odgovornog poslovanja. Ovo naročito važi za velika i uspešna trgovinska preduzeća koja posluju i van granica svoje zemlje. Jedan od takvih primera je i najveći maloprodajni trgovinski lanac *Walmart*. Cilj ovog rada je da ukaže na značaj društvene odgovornosti kao i na pojedine aspekte društveno odgovornog poslovanja u trgovinskim preduzećima, sa osvrtom na najveći maloprodajni trgovinski lanac u svetu. U tom smislu ćemo, najpre, ukazati na potrebu za društveno odgovornim promenama u trgovini. Zatim ćemo analizirati neke od aspekata društveno odgovornog poslovanja trgovinskih preduzeća. Posebna pažnja u radu biće posvećena prikazu društveno odgovornog poslovanja *Walmarta*. Rezultati analize istraživanja nam ukazuju da menadžment ove kompanije pridaje veliki značaj društveno odgovornom poslovanju. Svojim društveno odgovornim ponašanjem, kroz različite projekte usmerene na zaštitu životne sredine i društvene zajednice, poštovanje svojih potrošača i uvažavanje zaposlenih, daje primer i ostalim trgovinskim preduzećima kako bi trebalo da se ponašaju.

### **Potreba za društveno odgovornim promenama u trgovini**

Još od svog nastanka trgovina je prošla kroz različite izmene. U početku su dominirali primarni proizvodi, odnosno sirovine, koje su zemlje uvezile radi potrošnje ili dalje prerade, a sa jačanjem industrijske, tj. serijske proizvodnje i smanjivanja jediničnih troškova, a samim tim i pojeftinjenja finalnih proizvoda, industrijski proizvodi su preuzeli primat, dok je u međuvremenu poraslo učešće

usluga i intelektualne svojine, ali još uvek nedovoljno da ugrozi primat međunarodne trgovine industrijskim proizvodima (Jelisavac-Trošić, 2016). Države trguju različitim robama, uslugama, idejama, što doprinosi većoj povezanosti, jedinstvenosti i smanjenju siromaštva na globalnom nivou. Shodno tome, trgovina danas postaje veoma atraktivna privredna delatnost koja briše i prevazilazi prepreke koje postoje na nivou pojedinih država i time spaja različite privrede. *Goljanin* (2009) smatra da okosnicu trgovine čine četiri „sveta“ koja su međusobno povezana finansijama (slika 1.).

**Slika 1.** Svet trgovine



Izvor: Goljanin, 2009.

U svemu tome, danas je jako bitno uzeti u obzir i karakteristike savremenog okruženja jer se, poput svake druge delatnosti, i funkcionisanje trgovine odvija pod snažnim uticajem istog. Savremeno okruženje karakterišu česte i intenzivne promene koje u značajnijoj meri otežavaju opstanak i rad svakog preduzeća. Promene su takvog karaktera i obima da se njihov uticaj ne može izbeći ni u sferi trgovine. Promenili su se proizvođači, kupci, potrošači, cene i odnos prema cenama, okruženje u kome se proizvodi, prodaje, kupuje i troši (Župljanin, 2013). Sve ove oscilacije od trgovinskih preduzeća traže da se konstantno razvijaju i prate trendovi i šanse koje postoje na tržištu. Imajuću u vidu brojnost i karakter promena, trgovinska preduzeća moraju da pronađu model poslovanja koji će uvažiti kompleksnost savremenog okruženja, što nameće potrebu za promenom njihovog tradicionalnog načina funkcionisanja. Usled svih tih promena nastala je i potreba za uvažavanjem određenih pravila koje nameće koncept društveno odgovornog poslovanja. Društvena odgovornost preduzeća jedan je od koncepata savremenog

poslovanja koji još nije doživeo svoj maksimum, ali značajno utiče na preduzeća i na njihove partnere, potrošače, državu, konkurenciju (Boljević, Radovanović, Strugar, 2015). Društveno odgovorno poslovanje proističe iz potrebe da se umanje negativne posledice po društvo i životnu sredinu, nastale usled nemoralnog ponašanja različitih preduzeća. Brojna pitanja, od potrebe za zaštitom životne sredine, brige o potrebama i zadovoljstvu zaposlenih, brige o društvenoj zajednici i tome slično, predstavljaju velike izazove sa kojima se danas susreću trgovinska preduzeća. Uspešni menadžeri ovim izazovima prilaze na strateški način. Društvena odgovornost podstiče promene u načinu razmišljanja i delovanja savremenih menadžera, stvarajući potrebu za razvojem održivijeg modela poslovanja preduzeća. Primenom DOP, preduzeća obezbeđuju održivo poslovanje, jer: jačaju poslovni imidž, obezbeđuju kvalitetnu radnu snagu, efikasno koriste resurse čime snižavaju troškove i podižu produktivnost, adekvatno upravljaju rizicima, ostvaruju rast, uvode inovacije i postaju konkurentnija na tržištu (Micić, Vujović, Randelović, 2016). Veća je verovatnoća da će dobro vođena preduzeća biti društveno odgovorna (Ferrell, Liang, Renneboog, 2016), jer uspešni menadžeri svojim odgovornim ponašanjem daju primer ostalim zaposlenima kako treba da se ponašaju.

Potreba za društveno odgovornim promenama u trgovini zasniva se na težnji da se realizuje cilj društvene odgovornosti. Ultimativni cilj društvene odgovornosti polazi od stava da preduzeća prilikom obavljanja svojih aktivnosti maksimiziraju pozitivne a minimiziraju negativne uticaje na društvo i okruženje, ne narušavajući pritom svoju profitabilnost. Pošto savremeno tržište prvenstveno garantuje opstanak društveno odgovornim preduzećima, trgovinska preduzeća moraju adekvatno da se posvete ovom cilju. Društveno odgovorno poslovanje se odnosi na celokupnu sferu uticaja i raspon delovanja jedne kompanije kao i na odnose koje ona pri tome uspostavlja: kako kupuje i prodaje, na koji način zapošljava, osposobljava i utiče na razvoj ljudskih resursa, koliko ulaže u lokalnu zajednicu i poštovanje ljudskih i radnih prava, kao i na koji način doprinosi očuvanju životne sredine (Jovanović, Ilić, Pavlović-Dimitrijević, 2017). Dakle, pored ključnih stejkholdera, vlasnika kapitala i potrošača, trgovinska preduzeća u dinamičnim uslovima privređivanja moraju da zadovolje i interese različitih interesnih grupa ali i da, pritom, vode računa o zaštiti životne sredine. Treba imati u vidu da se društveno odgovorno poslovanje sporovodi sa ciljem stvaranja socijalnih i ekoloških koristi (Ronald, Suwandi, Daromes, 2019). Ovo je za trgovinska preduzeća posebno značajno zato što predstavljaju posrednike između proizvođača i potrošača, te shodno tome imaju značajniju ulogu u promovisanju koncepta društvene odgovornosti. Nemoralno ponašanje preduzeća može da stvori značajno veće socijalne probleme u poređenju sa individualnom neodgovornošću. Netačan tekst na etiketama (naročito kada je reč o privatnoj robnoj marki), nelegalno prisvajanje poslovnih tajni, lažno oglašavanje, nezapošljavanje osoba sa invaliditetom, nedovoljna briga o zadovoljstvu

zaposlenih kroz neadekvatno plaćanje ili nametanje prekovremenog rada su samo neki od primera neodgovornog ponašanja trgovinskih preduzeća. Ovakvo ponašanje može da predstavlja osnovu nastajanja i širenja širokog spektra socijalnih problema ne samo za postojeće već i za buduće generacije. Neka od ključnih pitanja društveno odgovornog poslovanja, koja su vezana za moralna načela i etičko ponašanje trgovinskih preduzeća, tiču se sigurnosti i kvaliteta robe, iskrenosti u reklamiranju, boljeg informisanja i edukacije kroz podizanje nivoa svesti o značaju društvene odgovornosti, poštovanju prava zaposlenih, ravnopravnosti polova, zaštiti životne sredine, uvođenja ekoloških oznaka, i tome slično. Trgovinska preduzeća mogu na različite načine da podstiču društvenu odgovornost. Mogu se, recimo, aktivno uključivati u rešavanju aktuelnih društvenih, ekoloških i ekonomskih problema, poštovati ljudska prava, organizovati različite humanitarne akcije sa ciljem borbe protiv siromaštva i bolesti, ulagati u obazovanje i poboljšanje uslova za život ljudi, itd. Uvažavajući takvu vrstu ponašanja trgovinska preduzeća mogu u velikoj meri doprineti razvoju socijalne i ekološke sredine.

Veoma je važno da se trgovinska preduzeća trude da koncept društvene odgovornosti primenjuju na adekvatan način, uvažavajući sve oblasti društvene odgovornosti (Slika 2.). Nemoguće je, recimo, smatrati odgovornim poslovanje pri kome neko trgovinsko preduzeće daje određena sredstva u dobrotvorne svrhe i time doprinosi razvoju društva, a sa druge strane nezakonito daje otkaze, ne poštuje ugovore o radu, uvodi neplaćen prekovremeni rad često duži od zakonom dozvoljenog, ne prijavljuje radnike ili zapostavlja prava i potrebe poslovnih partnera. Briga o zaposlenima je od izuzenog značaja, jer su ljudski resursi danas najznačajnija komponenta svake organizacije (Micić, Arsić, 2017). Da bi postiglo uspeh svako preduzeće mora biti odgovorno za socijalno blagostanje zaposlenih, šire društvene zajednice i životne sredine (Zorzini, Hendry, Huq, Stevenson, 2015). Poslovanje koje je u skladu samo sa pojedinim aspektima društvene odgovornosti, ne može se smatrati izvrsnim poslovanjem. Shodno tome, ukoliko neko trgovinsko preduzeće želi da unapredi svoje poslovanje i time poboljša konkurentsku poziciju na tržištu, mora da uvaži određene zahteve društvene odgovornosti.

**Slika 2.** Oblasti društvene odgovornosti



Izvor: Krivokapić, Vujović, Jovanović, 2014.

Povećanje tržišnog učešća, jačanje reputacije preduzeća, privlačenje novih i stvaranje baze lojalnih potrošača, smanjivanje troškova poslovanja, povećanje prihoda od prodaje robe, jačanje pozicije privatne robne marke, veća satisfakcija zaposlenih koja stvara pozitivnu radnu klimu, su samo neki od razloga za primenu i razvoj koncepta društvene odgovornosti u trgovinskim preduzećima.

### **Aspekti društveno odgovornog poslovanja trgovinskih preduzeća**

Trgovinska preduzeća su sastavni deo društva i kao takva pored sopstvenih ciljeva zasnovanih na težnji za maksimalnim profitom, moraju voditi računa i o interesima društvene zajednice ali i o svom uticaju na životnu sredinu. Zato je potrebno da svoje poslovanje organizuju u skladu sa pravilima koja nalaže koncept društvene odgovornosti, a koja su zasnovana na potrebi da se svi poslovi u preduzeću izvršavaju uz poštovanje zakonskih, ekonomskih i moralnih principa. Organizacija zasnovana na odgovornosti predstavlja jedan od najznačajnijih principa savremenog poslovanja (Bogetić, Đorđević, Čočkalović, Vorkapić, 2018). Ukoliko trgovinska preduzeća pored ekonomskih ne uvažavaju i socijalne i ekološke ciljeve, doći će do pojave velikog broja društvenih problema koji se, nakon izvesnog vremena, povratno mogu negativno odraziti na poslovne performanse ovih preduzeća. To je jedan od razloga zašto koncept društvene odgovornosti postaje u značajnijoj meri prihvaćen od strane trgovinskih preduzeća na globalnom nivou. Uspješna trgovinska preduzeća širom sveta pažljivo su posvećena različitim segmentima društvene odgovornosti. Postoji stav da se koncept održivog razvoja i društvene odgovornosti u trgovini može sagledati kroz sledeće atribute: „zeleni“ robni asortiman, „zeleni“ prodajni objekti, „zeleni“ transport, „zeleni“ procesi, bolji uslovi rada za zaposlene, kontinuirano poboljšanje znanja zaposlenih, smanjenje troškova okruženja (voda, vazduh, energija), razvoj brenda organskih proizvoda (Sokolov Mladenović i Čuzović, 2014), i tome slično. Polazeći od osnovnih oblasti društvene odgovornosti, u *Tabeli 1* prikazani su samo neki od aspekata na kojima se može zasnivati društveno odgovorno poslovanje trgovinskih preduzeća.

U uslovima sve veće degradacije ekološke sredine, zaštita životne sredine treba da predstavlja sastavni deo i osnovni prioritet strategije svakog trgovinskog preduzeća. Postoje dokazi da trgovina može da doprinese povećanju propadanja životne sredine putem zagađivanja ugljen-dioksidom (Vučić, 2016). Potrebno je pronaći različita rešenja kako bi se zagađenje svelo na minimum i sačuvala životna sredina. To je moguće postići poštovanjem određenih ekoloških principa društvene odgovornosti i primenom mera i aktivnosti kroz uspostavljanje sistema upravljanja ekološkim aspektima društvene odgovornosti. Da bi se izbegla negativna delovanja koja dovode do uništavanja prirodnih ekoloških sistema potrebno je da zaštita životne sredine bude planska, sveobuhvatna i sistemska. Na taj način se mogu postići adekvatni efekti u očuvanju i zaštiti ekološke sredine. Neophodno je, takođe,

i u kontinuitetu analizirati rezultate sprovedenih ekoloških aktivnosti, jer bi na taj način menadžeri trgovinskih preduzeća imali uvid u to koliko se preduzeće ponaša odgovorno na ovom polju. Mnoga preduzeća se danas trude da doprinesu zaštiti životne sredine adekvatnim obavljanjem svojih aktivnosti, i time iskazuju spremnost da se ponašaju u skladu sa potrebama zdrave životne sredine. Ona tako postupaju u skladu sa sve strožijim zakonodavstvom, razvojem ekonomskih i drugih mera koje zahtevaju zaštitu životne sredine i sve izraženijom brigom zainteresovanih strana za pitanja zaštite životne sredine i održivog razvoja (Biočanin, Hamidović, 2017). Odgovorno poslovanje trgovinskih preduzeća prema životnoj sredini može da se ogleda kroz primenu načela efikasnog trošenja i uštede energije, promovisanja potrebe za zaštitom životne sredine, razvoj ekoloških inovacija, održivije upravljanje otpadom, i tome slično.

**Tabela 1.** Neki od aspekata na kojima se zasniva društveno odgovorno poslovanje trgovinskih preduzeća

| Oblasti društvene odgovornosti | Aspekti društvene odgovornosti trgovinskih preduzeća   |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Životna sredina                | Obnovljiva energija,<br>Zelene zgrade,<br>Reciklaža i redukcija otpada,<br>Zelena transportna sredstva,<br>Smanjenje potrošnje papira potrebnih za flajere i kataloge reklamiranjem na ekološki način,<br>Razvrstavanje smeća po vrstama otpada,<br>Uvažavanje ostalih ekoloških principa u poslovanju |
| Fer poslovna praksa            | Uvažavanje principa fer trgovine i fer potrošnje   |
| Zahtevi korisnika              | Kvalitet robe<br>Ispravan tekst na etiketama<br>Organski proizvodi<br>Ljubaznost i stručnost prodajnog osoblja<br>Poštovanje kupca<br>Urednost i čistoća prodajnog objekta   |
| Društveni razvoj               | Podrška lokalnoj zajednici<br>Sigurnost i zaštita društva<br>Filantropske aktivnosti<br>Promovisanje značaja društvene odgovornosti  |
| Menadžment organizacije        | Poznavanje moralnih standarda i principa<br>Promovisanje odgovornog ponašanja kroz lični primer<br>Potenciranje i razvoj partnerstva sa društveno odgovornim dobavljačima  |
| Ljudska prava                  | Pravo na privatnost, slobodu govora, izražavanja<br>Zapošljavanje osoba sa invaliditetom<br>Ravnopravnost polova<br>Poštovanje ugovora o radu<br>Plaćeni prekovremeni rad  |
| Praksa rada                    | Podsticanje i razvoj pozitivne klime u preduzeću<br>Promovisanje značaja društveno odgovornog poslovanja kroz različite propagandne aktivnosti   |

Izvor: Autori

Etičke oznake proizvoda i marketinške poruke su sve češća pojava u maloprodaji (Hainmueller, Hiscox, Sequeira, 2015), a jedna od takvih je i oznaka pravične, odnosno fer trgovine. Da bi primena koncepta društvene odgovornosti bila kvalitetna, trgovinska preduzeća moraju da vode računa i o poštovanju standarda fer trgovine i potrošnje koji imaju za cilj da smanje siromaštvo, poboljšaju položaj proizvođača i podrže društvenu odgovornost. Takođe, trgovinska preduzeća moraju da razvijaju i strateška partnerstva sa društvenom zajednicom kroz različite filantropske aktivnosti i da na taj način doprinose njenom razvoju i sigurnosti. Strateškim pristupom temama koje su značajne za društvo moguće je postići dobre rezultate u ovoj oblasti društvene odgovornosti. Odgovorno upravljanje viškovima hrane, doniranje namirnica, pokretanje različitih humanitarnih akcija, povećanje svesti o važnosti zdravije ishrane, predstavljaju određene aspekte na kojima se može zasnivati društveno odgovorno poslovanje trgovinskih preduzeća u oblasti društvenog razvoja.

Društveno odgovorno poslovanje trgovinskim preduzećima nameće i potrebu za uvažavanjem različitih zahteva potrošača. Savremeni potrošači drugačije reaguju na brojne aktivnosti koje preduzeća obavljaju, a koje se prevashodno tiču društvene zajednice i životne sredine. U poslednje vreme, društvena odgovornost predstavlja jedan od faktora koji utiče na odluku potrošača o kupovini određenog proizvoda. Pošto se ponašanje potrošača promenilo, pojedini autori (Anderson, 2018), za savremenog potrošača koriste termin „etički potrošač“. Različiti su aspekti društvene odgovornosti koje trgovinska preduzeća u ovom slučaju mogu uvažiti. Neka trgovinska preduzeća se trude da edukuju svoje potrošače o značaju izbora zdravijih namirnica, te posebno izdvajaju i promovišu organske proizvode ili, ukoliko poseduju privatnu robnu marku, trude se da na prednjoj strani pakovanja prehrambenog proizvoda istaknu dodatna nutritivna obeležja. Zatim, veliki broj trgovinskih preduzeća veliku pažnju pridaje urednosti, izgledu i čistoći prodajnog objekta. Savremeni potrošač očekuje punu pažnju od strane prodajnog osoblja, te zato akcenat treba staviti i na ljubaznost i stručnost ovih radnika. Kupci se danas sve više odlučuju za kupovinu u velikim prodajnim formatima, gde mogu da kupe sve što im je potrebno, gde je roba vidno izložena, gde se svakodnevno odvijaju događaji poput različitih promocija, prezentacija, degustacija, akcijskih prodaja i tome slično, gde je jednostavan pristup prodajnom mestu, lako i sigurno parkiranje, gde je, jednom rečju, moguće obezbediti dobru kompletnu kupoprodajnu uslugu (Župljanin, 2013). Na taj način trgovinsko preduzeće iskazuje poštovanje prema svojim potrošačima. Takođe, ne treba zanemariti ni kvalitet robe i rok trajanja, koji moraju biti svakodnevna preokupacija trgovinskih preduzeća. Stvaranje lojalnih kupaca u vreme kada je tržište postalo globalno i kada je kupcima skoro svaki proizvod udaljen nekoliko klikova, zaista predstavlja izazov (Gostović, 2021).



Ukoliko se trgovinsko preduzeće potruđi da u velikoj meri ispuni očekivanja potrošača, zauzvrat može da očekuje i zadobijanje njihovog poverenja.

Pored potrošača, trgovinska preduzeća moraju uzeti u obzir potrebe i prava svojih zaposlenih, koja moraju biti u fokusu strateškog opredeljenja menadžmenta trgovinskih preduzeća. U novoj ekonomiji u kojoj se na zaposlene gleda kao na primarni razvojni resurs, motivacija se izdvaja kao pouzdan mehanizam za rešavanje organizacionih problema i sredstvo koje u značajnoj meri može doprineti poboljšanju radnog morala, samopouzdanja i zadovoljstva zaposlenih (Staletović, Milačić, Kojić, 2020). Kada su motivisani za rad zaposleni ostvaruju bolji učinak i doprinose ostvarenju pozitivnog poslovnog rezultata, ali i razvoju pozitivne radne klime. Trgovinsko preduzeće može da se okarakteriše kao odgovoran poslodavac ukoliko primenjuje odgovornu praksu zapošljavanja, stvara dobre uslove za rad, obezbeđuje sigurnost i zaštitu zdravlja na radu, poštuje osnovna ljudska prava, ugovor o radu, plaća prekovremeni rad, vodi računa o rodnoj ravnopravnosti, zapošljava osobe sa invaliditetom, i tome slično. Značajnu ulogu u svemu ovome imaju menadžeri trgovinskih preduzeća jer moraju da se trude da sa svojim zaposlenima uspostavljaju korektan odnos koji će im omogućiti efikasniju realizaciju ključnih ciljeva. Pored toga, menadžeri moraju naročito da vode računa i o uspostavljanju poslovnih partnerstava sa dobavljačima koji u svom radu poštuju principe društvene odgovornosti.

S obzirom da primena etičkih principa postaje suštinska poslovna filozofija i osnova sticanja konkurentske prednosti, snažna društvena odgovornost treba da predstavlja jedan od najvažnijih elemenata strategije poslovanja trgovinskih preduzeća.

### **Osvrt na društveno odgovorne aktivnosti Walmart-a**

*Walmart* kao jedna od najuspešnijih trgovinskih kompanija u svetu, prošla je veliki razvojni put od jedne jednostavne ideje i male prodavnice do trgovačkog giganta, najpre na tržištu SAD, a potom i na međunarodnom tržištu. Rukovodioci *Walmart-a* su još u početku usvojili strategiju koja potrošačima tokom cele godine, a ne samo prilikom rasprodaje, nudi niske cene, te je odmah nakon osnivanja postao poznat po trajno niskim cenama. Bez obzira što se strategija poslovanja zasniva na određivanju manjih marži, ovaj trgovinski lanac ostvaruje veliki profit kroz ogromnu količinu prodane robe. Prema izveštajima pod nazivom *Globalna snaga maloprodaje*, koje je sačinila konsultantska kuća *Deloitte*, ova kompanija se po prihodima od prodaje već nekoliko godina unazad nalazi na samom vrhu u odnosu na druga trgovinska preduzeća (Tabela 2). *Walmart* je lider u održivosti, korporativnoj filantropiji i mogućnostima zapošljavanja ([corporate.walmart.com](http://corporate.walmart.com)).

**Tabela 2.** Pozicija Walmart-a prema prihodu od prodaje u izveštaju *Globalna snaga maloprodaje*

| Pozicija u 2018.god.  | Naziv trgovinskog preduzeća   | Prihodi od prodaje (u milijardama dolara) u 2018. godini |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| 1                     | Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.         | 514,405  |
| 2                     | Costco Wholesale Corporation  | 141,576  |
| 3                     | Amazon.com, Inc.              | 140,211  |
| 4                     | Schwarz Group                 | 121,581  |
| 5                     | The Kroger Co                 | 117,527  |
| Pozicija u 2017. god. | Naziv trgovinskog preduzeća   | Prihod od prodaje (u milijardama dolara) u 2017. godini  |
| 1                     | Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.         | 500,343  |
| 2                     | Costco Wholesale Corporation  | 129,025  |
| 3                     | The Kroger Co                 | 118,982  |
| 4                     | Amazon.com, Inc               | 118,573  |
| 5                     | Schwarz Group                 | 111,766  |
| Pozicija u 2016.god.  | Naziv trgovinskog preduzeća   | Prihod od prodaje (u milijardama dolara) u 2016. godini  |
| 1                     | Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.         | 485,873  |
| 2                     | Costco Wholesale Corporation  | 118,719  |
| 3                     | The Kroger Co                 | 115,337  |
| 4                     | Schwarz Group                 | 99,256   |
| 5                     | Walgreens Boots Alliance, Inc | 97,058   |

*Izvor:* Global Powers of Retailing 2020, Global Powers of Retailing 2019, Global Powers of Retailing 2018, [www2.deloitte.com](http://www2.deloitte.com)

Ovaj trgovinski lanac na prvom mestu stavlja potrebe i želje svojih potrošača i trudi se da kvalitetnim ali jeftinim proizvodima nadmaši njihova očekivanja. Njegovu ciljnu grupu predstavljaju potrošači koji spadaju u socijalnu kategoriju sa nižim primanjima. Zato se može reći da je u velikoj meri posvećen stvaranju vrednosti za potrošače. U *Walmart-ovim* maloprodajnim objektima može se pronaći širok asortiman različite robe i usluga. Kupcima stoje na raspolaganju tri formata kupovine: putem interneta, prodavnice ili mobilne aplikacije. Evidencije ove kompanije pokazuju da svake nedelje skoro 230 miliona kupaca poseti približno 10.800 prodajnih objekata kao i web sajt ovog poslovnog subjekta ([corporate.walmart.com](http://corporate.walmart.com)). *Walmart-ovi* prodajni objekti se ističu po čistoći, dobrom osvetljenju, urednim policama i kvalitetu robe. Filantropske aktivnosti *Walmart-a* usredsređene su na dve oblasti, i to: a) poboljšanje pristupa i dostupnosti zdravije ishrane, b) podsticanje pojedinaca na odabir i pripremu zdravije hrane ([corporate.walmart.com](http://corporate.walmart.com)). U skladu sa tim, jedan je od najvećih prodavaca organskog mleka u svetu. Veliki značaj pridaje organizovanju različitih vidova edukacije potrošača o prednostima zdrave ishrane. Pored toga, ovo preduzeće brine i o društvenoj zajednici širom sveta. Poznati su brojni projekti donacije hrane i pružanja pomoći nakon prirodnih katastrofa u lokalnim zajednicama u kojima žive saradnici i potrošači *Walmart-a*.

*Walmart* je posvećen i drugim aspektima društvene odgovornosti. Kada je reč o ekološkoj sredini, ovaj trgovinski lanac je u značajnoj meri fokusiran na smanjenje emisije štetnih gasova koji izazivaju efekat staklene bašte. U skladu sa tim, stalno promovise važnost potrebe za obnavljanjem prirodnih resursa, podržava brojne akcije vezane za zaštitu životne sredine i podstiče svoje dobavljače da vode računa o ovim pitanjima. Ovo trgovinsko preduzeće je na takvoj poziciji da može da pokreće pozitivne promene u čitavom lancu snabdevanja i podržava program poštene trgovine. Menadžment *Walmart-a* polazi od činjenice da je efikasno upravljanje od suštinske važnosti za dugoročno stvaranje vrednosti i u velikoj meri se trudi da ličnim primerom promovise odgovorno ponašanje.

U potpunosti je posvećen i svojim radnicima. U *Walmart-u* je zaposleno 2.2 miliona radnika širom sveta. Samo u aprilu 2020. godine (u periodu postojanja korona virusa) ovo trgovinsko preduzeće je zaposlilo oko 150.000 novih ljudi. U velikoj meri se vodi računa o poštovanju ljudskih prava, što pokazuje i prva *Izjava o ljudskim pravima* objavljena u 2018. godini (corporate.walmart.com). Ovo preduzeće se rukovodi strategijom razvoja radne snage koja je u velikoj meri usredsređena na stvaranje pristupa zapošljavanju, obezbeđivanju stabilnosti posla i stvaranju mogućnosti za kontinuirano profesionalno usavršavanje (corporate.walmart.com). Ključni aspekti u ovoj oblasti, na kojima *Walmart* naročito stavlja akcenat, se odnose na: radno vreme, bezbednost i sigurnost na radu, pravo da se izrazi mišljenje, ravnopravnost polova, poštovanje različitosti. Na osnovu svega navedenog može se zaključiti da je ovaj maloprodajni trgovinski lanac u velikoj meri posvećen brojnim aktivnostima na kojima bi trebalo da se zasniva društvena odgovornost trgovinskog preduzeća.

### **Zaključak**

Specifičnost razvoja savremenih trgovinskih preduzeća zasniva se na težnji da se u kontinuitetu prilagođavaju promenama u okruženju i da maksimalno iskoriste mogućnosti koje im one pružaju. Neke od tih promena su nametnule potrebu da i ova preduzeća svoje postojanje opravdaju ne samo u ekonomskom već i u socijalnom i ekološkom smislu. Iz tog razloga je veliki broj trgovinskih preduzeća širom sveta već uključen u rešavanje različitih društvenih i ekoloških problema (uvažavanje principa fer trgovine, ispunjavanje različitih zahteva potrošača, negovanje ljudskih prava, borba protiv siromaštva i bolesti, edukacija o važnosti zaštite životne sredine, itd). Organizovani naponi društvene zajednice stvorili su pritisak prevashodno na velika trgovinska preduzeća da umanje štetne uticaje svog poslovanja na društvo i životnu sredinu, jer se se smatra da ove organizacije mogu najviše doprineti promovisanju društvene odgovornosti, naročito kada posluju na širem poslovnom području. Kao najveći maloprodajni trgovinski lanac, koji posluje u međunarodnim okvirima, *Walmart* je u velikoj meri posvećen mnogim aspektima

društveno odgovornog poslovanja. U značajnoj meri vodi računa o zadovoljstvu svojih potrošača, odabiru društveno odgovornih dobavljača, poštovanju i uvažavanju svojih zaposlenih ali i o pitanjima zaštite životne sredine.

S obzirom da je poznato da nepoštovanje društveno odgovornih principa može negativno da se odrazi na reputaciju preduzeća, veoma je važno da se menadžeri trgovinskih preduzeća upoznaju sa ovim principima, ali i da rade na jačanju svesti svojih stejkholdera o značaju društveno odgovornog ponašanja. Može se zaključiti da društveno odgovorno poslovanje u sve većoj meri postaje suštinska komponenta poslovnih aktivnosti trgovinskih preduzeća i jedan od osnovnih uslova za uspeh savremene trgovine.

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## SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN MODERN TRADE COMPANIES WITH REFERENCE TO THE WALMART TRADE CHAIN

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Review paper

### *Abstract*

*In conditions of dynamic changes, companies try to preserve their position in various ways and thus ensure their survival on the market. One of the possibilities available to them is quality application of the concept of social responsibility. It can be said that in modern business conditions, trade has a very important role in functioning of any economy because, among other things, it can adequately bridge the discrepancy between greater supply of goods and lack of payment demand. However, regardless of that, one should not ignore the fact that today trade companies are also expected to monitor and adapt to socially responsible requirements. The aim of this paper is to point out the importance of social responsibility as well as certain aspects of socially responsible business in trade companies with reference to the largest retail chain in the world. Walmart, as the largest American company engaged in retail sale of goods in the domestic and international markets, has a very developed sense of society and the environment. Management of this company is aware of the fact that economic development can be achieved only if it goes hand in hand with development of the social community.*

**Key words:** *Social responsibility, change, trade companies, consumers, environment*

**JEL:** M14, Q56

### **Introduction**

In addition to manufacturing, in times of great uncertainty, trade companies are also subject to numerous changes. In the past, for example, the process of deciding on the purchase of certain goods was simpler, while today this process is influenced by

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numerous factors, among which a special place belongs to the socially responsible business of trade companies. The modern consumer is not largely influenced by promotional activities of socially irresponsible trade companies. For this reason, managers must take into account the fact that there are consumers who are more willing to pay more for the product of a trading company that behaves fully in accordance with the rules of socially responsible business. This behavior of consumers requires respect for the concept of social responsibility not only by management and other employees of a trading company but also by their business partners, and especially suppliers. In that way, consumers will be more satisfied, which can have a positive effect on business performance of trade companies.

There are various movements in the world to combat environmental degradation, organized by certain social groups, as well as movements that advocate respect for human rights of employees. All these changes require trade companies to respect the importance of socially responsible business when operating. This is especially true for large and successful trading companies that operate outside the borders of their country. One such example is Walmart, the largest retail chain.

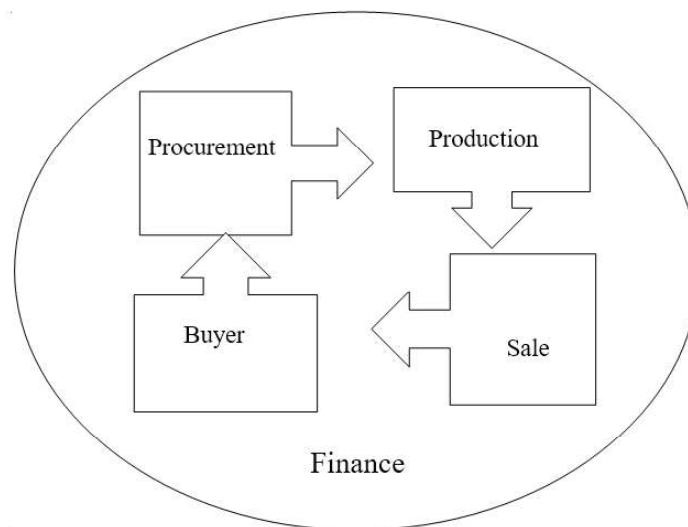
The aim of this paper is to point out the importance of social responsibility as well as certain aspects of socially responsible business in trade companies, with reference to the largest retail chain in the world. In that sense, we will, first of all, point out the need for socially responsible changes in trade. We will then analyze some of the aspects of corporate social responsibility. Special attention in the paper will be paid to the presentation of Walmart's socially responsible business. The results of the research analysis show that the management of this company attaches great importance to socially responsible business. Through its socially responsible behavior, various projects aimed at protecting the environment and the community, respecting its consumers and respecting employees, it sets an example to other commercial companies as to how they should behave.

### **The need for socially responsible changes in trade**

Since its inception, trade has undergone various changes. In the beginning, it was dominated by primary products, i.e. raw materials, which countries imported for consumption or further processing, and with strengthening of industrial, i.e. serial production and reduction of unit costs, and thus cheaper final products, industrial products have taken precedence, while in the meantime share of services and intellectual property has increased, but still insufficient to threaten the primacy of international trade in industrial products (Jelisavac-Trošić, 2016) . States trade in a variety of goods, services, ideas, which contributes to greater cohesion, uniqueness and poverty reduction globally. Consequently, trade today is becoming a very attractive economic activity that erases and overcomes the barriers that exist at the

level of individual countries and thus connects different economies. Goljanin (2009) believes that the backbone of trade consists of four „worlds“ that are interconnected by finance (Figure 1).

**Figure 1.** The world of trade



Source: Goljanin, 2009.

In all this, today it is very important to take into account the characteristics of the modern environment because, like any other activity, the functioning of trade takes place under the strong influence of the same. The modern environment is characterized by frequent and intense changes that make the survival and work of every company more difficult. The changes are of such a character and scope that their impact cannot be avoided even in the sphere of trade. Producers, buyers, consumers, prices and the attitude towards prices, the environment in which it is produced, sold, bought and consumed have changed (Župljanin, 2013). All these oscillations require trade companies to constantly develop and follow the trends and opportunities that exist in the market. Having in mind the number and character of changes, trade companies must find a business model that will take into account the complexity of the modern environment, which imposes the need to change their traditional way of functioning. As a result of all these changes, there is a need to respect certain rules imposed by the concept of socially responsible business. Corporate social responsibility is one of the concepts of modern business that has not yet reached its maximum, but significantly affects companies and their partners, consumers, the state and competition (Boljević, Radovanović, Strugar, 2015). Corporate social responsibility stems from the need to reduce the negative consequences for society and the environment, caused by the immoral behavior of



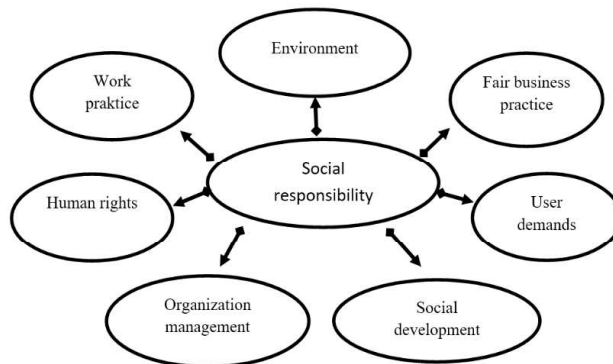
various companies. Numerous issues, from the need to protect the environment, care for the needs and satisfaction of employees, care for the community and the like, are the great challenges that trade companies face today. Successful managers approach these challenges in a strategic way. Social responsibility encourages changes in the way of thinking and acting of modern managers, creating the need to develop a more sustainable business model of the company. By applying DOP, companies ensure sustainable business, because: they strengthen the business image, provide quality workforce, efficiently use resources which reduce costs and increase productivity, adequately manage risks, achieve growth, introduce innovations and become more competitive in the market (Micic, Vujovic, Randjelovic, 2016). Well-run companies are more likely to be socially responsible (Ferrell, Liang, Renneboog, 2016), because successful managers set an example to other employees in their responsible behavior on how to behave.

The need for socially responsible changes in trade is based on the pursuit of the goal of social responsibility. The ultimate goal of social responsibility is based on the view that companies in performing their activities maximize the positive and minimize the negative impact on society and the environment, without compromising their profitability. Since the modern market primarily guarantees the survival of socially responsible companies, trade companies must adequately commit to this goal. Corporate social responsibility refers to the entire sphere of influence and range of activities of a company as well as the relationships it establishes: how it buys and sells, how it employs, trains and influences human resources development, how much it invests in the local community and respects human and labor rights, as well as in what way it contributes to the preservation of the environment (Jovanović, Ilić, Pavlović-Dimitrijević, 2017). Therefore, in addition to key stakeholders, capital owners and consumers, trading companies in dynamic business conditions must satisfy the interests of various interest groups, but also take care of environmental protection. It should be borne in mind that socially responsible business is conducted with the aim of creating social and environmental benefits (Ronald, Suwandi, Daromes, 2019). This is especially important for trade companies because they represent intermediaries between producers and consumers, and therefore have a more significant role in promoting the concept of social responsibility. Immoral behavior of a company can create significantly greater social problems compared to individual irresponsibility. Incorrect text on labels (especially when it comes to private labels), illegal appropriation of trade secrets, false advertising, non-employment of people with disabilities, insufficient care for employee satisfaction through inadequate payment or imposition of overtime work are just some examples of irresponsible behavior of trade companies. Such behavior can be the basis for the emergence and spread of a wide range of social problems not only for existing but also for future generations.

Some key issues of socially responsible business, which are related to moral principles and ethical behavior of trade companies, concern the safety and quality of goods, honesty in advertising, better information and education by raising awareness of the importance of social responsibility, respect for employee rights, gender equality, environmental protection, introduction of eco-labels, and the like. Trade companies can promote social responsibility in different ways. They can, for example, be actively involved in solving current social, environmental and economic problems, respect human rights, organize various humanitarian actions aimed at combating poverty and disease, invest in educating and improving living conditions, etc. By respecting this type of behavior, trade companies can greatly contribute to the development of the social and environmental environment.

It is very important that trade companies strive to apply the concept of social responsibility in an adequate way, respecting all areas of social responsibility (Figure 2). It is impossible, for example, to consider a business responsible, where a trading company gives certain funds to charity and thus contributes to the development of society, and on the other hand illegally fires, does not respect employment contracts, introduces unpaid overtime often longer than allowed by law, doesn't registers workers or neglects the rights and needs of business partners. Caring for employees is of exceptional importance, because human resources are today the most important component of any organization (Micić, Arsić, 2017). To succeed, every company must be responsible for the social well-being of employees, the wider community and the environment (Zorzini, Hendry, Huq, Stevenson, 2015). A business that is in line only with certain aspects of social responsibility cannot be considered an excellent business. Accordingly, if a trading company wants to improve its business and thus improve its competitive position in the market, it must respect certain requirements of social responsibility.

**Figure 2.** Areas of social responsibility



Source: Krivokapić, Vujović, Jovanović, 2014.

Increasing market share, strengthening the company's reputation, attracting new and creating a loyal customer base, reducing business costs, increasing sales revenue, strengthening the position of the private brand, greater employee satisfaction that creates a positive work climate, are just some of the reasons for implementing and developing the concept of social responsibility in commercial enterprises.

### **Aspects of socially responsible business of trade companies**

Trade companies are an integral part of society and as such, in addition to their own goals based on the pursuit of maximum profit, they must take into account the interests of the community and their impact on the environment. Therefore, they need to organize their business in accordance with the rules imposed by the concept of social responsibility, which are based on the need for all business in the company to be performed in compliance with legal, economic and moral principles. One of the most important principles of modern business is an organization based on responsibility (Bogetić, Đorđević, Čočkalović, Vorkapić, 2018). If trade companies, do not respect social and environmental goals, in addition to economic goals, there will be a large number of social problems that can have a negative impact on the business performance of these companies after some time. This is one of the reasons why the concept of social responsibility is becoming increasingly accepted by trade companies on a global level. Successful trading companies around the world are carefully committed to different segments of social responsibility.

There is an opinion that the concept of sustainable development and social responsibility in trade can be seen through the following attributes: „green“ product range, „green“ sales facilities, „green“ transport, „green“ processes, better working conditions for employees, continuous improvement of employee knowledge, reduction of environmental costs (water, air, energy), development of a brand of organic products (Sokolov, Mladenović, Čuzović, 2014), and the like. Starting from the basic areas of social responsibility, Table 1 shows only some of the aspects on which socially responsible business of trade companies can be based.

In conditions of increasing degradation of the ecological environment, environmental protection should be an integral part of the strategy of every trade company. There is evidence that trade can contribute to increasing environmental degradation through carbon dioxide pollution (Vučić, 2016). It is necessary to find different solutions in order to minimize pollution and preserve the environment. This can be achieved by respecting certain environmental principles of social responsibility and applying measures and activities through the establishment of a management system for environmental aspects of social responsibility. In order to avoid negative actions that lead to the destruction of natural ecological systems, it is necessary that the protection of the environment be planned, comprehensive and systemic. In this way, adequate effects in preserving and protecting the ecological

environment can be achieved. It is also necessary to continuously analyze the results of the implemented environmental activities, because in that way the managers of trade companies would have an insight into how responsibly the company behaves in this field. Many companies today strive to contribute to the protection of the environment by adequately performing their activities, and thus show a willingness to act in accordance with the needs of a healthy environment. They are thus acting in accordance with increasingly stringent legislation, the development of economic and other measures that require environmental protection and the growing concern of stakeholders for environmental protection and sustainable development (Biočanin, Hamidović, 2017). Environmental responsibility of trade companies can be reflected through the application of the principles of efficient consumption and energy saving, promoting the need for environmental protection, development of environmental innovations, more sustainable waste management, and the like.

**Table 1.** Some aspects on which trade companies base socially responsible business

| Areas of social responsibility | Aspects of social responsibility of trade companies   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Environment                    | Renewable energy,<br>Green buildings,<br>Recycling and waste reduction,<br>Green means of transport,<br>Reducing the consumption of paper needed for flyers and catalogs by advertising in an environmentally friendly way,<br>Sorting garbage by type of waste,<br>Respecting other environmental principles in business |
| Fair business practice         | Respecting the principles of fair trade and fair consumption  |
| User demands                   | Quality of goods<br>Correct text on labels<br>Organic products<br>Courtesy and expertise of sales staff<br>Respecting customers<br>Neatness and cleanliness of the sales facility   |
| Social development             | Support to the local community<br>Security and protection of society<br>Philanthropic activities<br>Promoting the importance of social responsibility   |
| Organization's management      | Knowledge of moral standards and principles<br>Promoting responsible behavior through personal example<br>Emphasizing and developing partnerships with socially responsible suppliers   |
| Human rights                   | Right to privacy, freedom of speech, expression<br>Employment of persons with disabilities<br>Gender equality<br>Compliance with employment contracts<br>Paid overtime  |
| Working practice               | Encouraging and developing a positive climate in the company<br>Promoting the importance of socially responsible business through various propaganda activities   |

Source: Work of authors

Ethical product labels and marketing messages are increasingly common in retail (Hainmueller, Hiscox, Sequeira, 2015), and one of these is the label of fair trade. In order for the application of the concept of social responsibility to be of high quality, trade companies must also take into account the observance of fair trade and consumption standards, which aim to reduce poverty, improve the position of producers and support social responsibility. Also, trade companies must develop strategic partnerships with the community through various philanthropic activities and thus contribute to its development and security. With a strategic approach to topics that are important for society, it is possible to achieve good results in this area of social responsibility. Responsible management of food surpluses, food donations, initiating various humanitarian actions, raising awareness of the importance of a healthier diet, are certain aspects on which socially responsible business of trade companies in the field of social development can be based.

Corporate social responsibility in trade companies also imposes the need to respect different requirements of consumers. Modern consumers react differently to numerous activities that companies perform, which primarily concern the social community and the environment. Lately, social responsibility has been one of the factors influencing consumer decisions to buy a particular product. As consumer behavior has changed, some authors (Anderson, 2018) use the term „ethical consumer“ for the modern consumer. There are different aspects of social responsibility that trade companies can take into account in this case. Some retailers try to educate their consumers about the importance of choosing healthier foods, and especially highlight and promote organic products or, if they have a private label, try to highlight additional nutritional features on the front of food packaging. Then, a large number of trade companies pay great attention to tidiness, appearance and cleanliness of the sales facility. The modern consumer expects full attention from the sales staff, and therefore the emphasis should be placed on the kindness and expertise of these workers. Today, customers are increasingly choosing to buy in large sales formats, where they can buy everything they need, where the goods are clearly displayed, where events occur every day such as: various promotions, presentations, tastings, promotional sales and the like, where there is easy access to the point of sale, easy and safe parking, where, in one word, it is possible to provide a good complete sales service (Zupljanin, 2013). In this way, a trading company shows respect for its consumers. Also, the quality of goods and shelf life should not be neglected, which must be a daily preoccupation of trade companies. Creating loyal customers at a time when the market has become global and when almost every product is a few clicks away from customers, is really a challenge

(Gostović, 2021). If a trading company makes an effort to largely meet consumer expectations, it can in turn expect to gain their trust.

In addition to consumers, trade companies must take into account the needs and rights of their employees, which must be the focus of the strategic commitment of trade companies' management. In the new economy in which employees are seen as the primary development resource, motivation stands out as a reliable mechanism for solving organizational problems and a tool that can significantly contribute to improving work ethic, self-confidence and employee satisfaction (Staletović, Milačić, Kojić, 2020). When they are motivated to work, employees achieve better performance and contribute to achieving a positive business result, which also develops a positive work climate. A trading company can be characterized as a responsible employer if it applies responsible employment practices, creates good working conditions, ensures safety and health at work, respects basic human rights, employment contract, pays overtime work, takes care of gender equality, employs people with disabilities, and the like. Managers of trade companies have a significant role in all this because they must try to establish a correct relationship with their employees that will enable them to achieve their key goals more efficiently. In addition, managers must pay special attention to establishment of business partnerships with suppliers who respect the principles of social responsibility in their work. Given that the application of ethical principles is becoming an essential business philosophy and the basis for gaining a competitive advantage, strong social responsibility should be one of the most important elements of the business strategy of commercial companies.

### **A review of Walmart's socially responsible activities**

As one of the most successful trading companies in the world, *Walmart* has gone through a great development path from a simple idea and a small store to a trading giant, first in the US market and then in the international market. Walmart executives initially adopted a strategy that offered consumers low prices throughout the year, not just on sale, and became known for their persistently low prices immediately after its inception. Regardless of the fact that the business strategy is based on determining lower margins, this retail chain makes big profits through a huge amount of goods sold. According to reports named *Global Retail Power*, compiled by a consulting company *Deloitte*, the company has been at the top of other retail companies in terms of sales revenue for several years now (Table 2). *Walmart* is a leader in sustainability, corporate philanthropy and employment opportunities (corporate.walmart.com).

**Table 2.** Walmart's position in terms of sales revenue in the *Global Retail Power* report

| <b>Position in 2018</b> | <b>Name of the trading company</b> | <b>Sales revenue (in billions of dollars) in 2018</b> |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| 1                       | Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.              | 514.405   |
| 2                       | Costco Wholesale Corporation       | 141.576   |
| 3                       | Amazon.com, Inc.                   | 140.211   |
| 4                       | Schwarz Group                      | 121.581   |
| 5                       | The Kroger Co                      | 117.527   |
| <b>Position in 2017</b> | <b>Name of the trading company</b> | <b>Sales revenue (in billions of dollars) in 2017</b> |
| 1                       | Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.              | 500.343   |
| 2                       | Costco Wholesale Corporation       | 129.025   |
| 3                       | The Kroger Co                      | 118.982   |
| 4                       | Amazon.com, Inc                    | 118.573   |
| 5                       | Schwarz Group                      | 111.766   |
| <b>Position in 2016</b> | <b>Name of the trading company</b> | <b>Sales revenue (in billions of dollars) in 2016</b> |
| 1                       | Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.              | 485.873   |
| 2                       | Costco Wholesale Corporation       | 118.719   |
| 3                       | The Kroger Co                      | 115.337   |
| 4                       | Schwarz Group                      | 99.256  |
| 5                       | Walgreens Boots Alliance, Inc      | 97.058  |

Source: Global Powers of Retailing 2020, Global Powers of Retailing 2019, Global Powers of Retailing 2018, [www2.deloitte.com](http://www2.deloitte.com)

This retail chain puts the needs and desires of its consumers first and strives to exceed their expectations with quality but cheap products. Its target group are consumers who fall into the social category with lower incomes. That is why it can be said that it is largely committed to creating value for consumers. A wide range of different goods and services can be found in Walmart's retail outlets. There are three shopping formats available to customers: online, in-store or mobile. Records of this company show that every week almost 230 million customers visit approximately 10,800 stores as well as the website of this business entity ([corporate.walmart.com](http://corporate.walmart.com)). Walmart's outlets stand out for their cleanliness, good lighting, neat shelves and quality goods. Walmart's philanthropic activities focus on two areas, namely: a) improving access to and availability of healthier food, b) encouraging individuals to choose and prepare healthier food ([corporate.walmart.com](http://corporate.walmart.com)). Accordingly, it is one of the largest sellers of organic milk in the world. Walmart attaches great importance to organizing various types of consumer education on the benefits of healthy eating. In addition, this company

cares about the community around the world. Numerous food donation and disaster relief projects are known in local communities inhabited by Walmart associates and consumers.

Walmart is also committed to other aspects of social responsibility. When it comes to the environment, this retail chain is significantly focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Accordingly, it constantly promotes the importance of the need to renew natural resources, supports a number of actions related to environmental protection and encourages its suppliers to take care of these issues. This trading company is in such a position that it can initiate positive changes in the entire supply chain and support the fair trade program. Walmart's management is based on the fact that effective management is essential for long-term value creation and strives to promote responsible behavior by personal example. Walmart is completely dedicated to its workers as well. Walmart employs 2.2 million workers worldwide. In April 2020 alone (during the period of the corona virus), this trading company employed about 150,000 new people. Respect for human rights is largely taken into account, as shown by the first Human Rights Statement published in 2018 ([corporate.walmart.com](http://corporate.walmart.com)). This company is guided by a workforce development strategy that is largely focused on creating access to employment, ensuring job stability and creating opportunities for continuous professional development ([corporate.walmart.com](http://corporate.walmart.com)). The key aspects in this area, which Walmart emphasizes in particular, are: working hours, safety and security at work, the right to express one's opinion, gender equality, respect for diversity. Based on all the above, it can be concluded that this retail chain is largely dedicated to a number of activities on which the social responsibility of the trade company should be based.

### **Conclusion**

Specificity of the development of modern trade companies is based on the tendency to continuously adapt to changes in the environment and to make the most of the opportunities they provide. Some of these changes have imposed the need for these companies to justify their existence not only in economic but also in social and environmental terms. For this reason, a large number of trade companies around the world are already involved in solving various social and environmental problems (respecting the principles of fair trade, meeting different consumer demands, nurturing human rights, fighting poverty and disease, educating about the importance of environmental protection, etc.). Organized efforts of the social community have created pressure primarily on large trading companies to reduce the harmful effects of their business on society and the environment, because it is believed that these organizations can contribute the most to promote social responsibility, especially when operating in the wider business area. As the largest retailer, operating internationally, Walmart is largely committed to many aspects of



corporate social responsibility. To a significant extent, it takes into account the satisfaction of its consumers, the selection of socially responsible suppliers, respect and esteem of its employees, but also on environmental issues.

Given that it is known that non-compliance with socially responsible principles can negatively affect a company's reputation, it is very important that managers of commercial companies become familiar with these principles, but also work on raising awareness of their stakeholders about the importance of socially responsible behavior. It can be concluded that socially responsible business is increasingly becoming an essential component of business activities of trade companies and one of the basic conditions for the success of modern trade.

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