

Comparative Study of CSR Initiatives' Impact on Social Impact and Sustainable Growth Across Sectors

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs affect social welfare and long-term company success in a variety of industries, such as financial services, technology, and manufacturing. The study looks at the frequency and scope of CSR initiatives in fields such community development, environmental sustainability, health and education programs, and ethical sourcing by examining CSR practices from businesses. According to the report, CSR initiatives have a major positive societal impact by enhancing access to healthcare, education, and community welfare. They also strengthen corporate resilience by promoting long-term growth and brand loyalty. The results demonstrate how CSR is in line with both company goals and social well-being, highlighting the necessity for businesses to incorporate CSR into their fundamental strategies in order to create shared value.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), social impact, sustainable growth, community development, environmental sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

Modern business strategies now include CSR, which indicates a company's commitment to acting in a socially responsible manner. Corporate Social Responsibility has evolved from the simple act of philanthropy and charitable donations into community development, ethical business practices, environmental sustainability, and employee welfare. The present-day, increasingly interconnected world has made the scrutiny of the business activities by the governments, investors, customers, and other stakeholders, and it now scrutinizes their businesses to make sure that such business activities will bring in revenues not only but also benefit the society and environment. Consequently, corporate social responsibility activities changed from being volunteer-driven into a strategic imperative that would have implications for company sustainability and long-term success besides its reputation. However, not all industries are at the same extent of impact in CSR programs. The nature and effectiveness of CSR initiatives differ in industry due to the specific possibilities and problems that they face. For example, manufacturing organizations mostly focus on environmental sustainability because the operations of manufacturing organizations have more environmental impacts. Hence, they commonly address issues relating to pollution, waste management, and energy use. The financial services industry focuses on community development, ethical business, and responsible investment because it is a backbone in the world economy and maintains closer contact with the businesses and the customers it caters to. Technology-based companies are likely to focus on innovative CSR that encompasses data privacy, digital inclusion, and ethical applications of artificial intelligence.

This study is aimed at comparing the effects of CSR activities in the manufacturing, technology, and financial services industries in terms of their social impact and sustainable growth. In particular, the study will look at how CSR activities in various industries support social welfare through enhancing infrastructure, education, and community health. On the other hand, support to sustainable corporate growth will be accessed through fostering resilience, increased brand loyalty, and long-term profitability. Therefore, in general, the concentration of the paper

on these types of industries focuses on clarifying sector-specific tactics of CSR along with their nexus to the rather general goals that are becoming important in the recent economic climate-the goals of sustainable development.

These research findings will, therefore, bring to light relevant new information in how CSR is actually implemented to cope with the expectations and challenges posed by different kinds of industries at the same time as fostering desirable social change while ensuring long-run business sustainability. This study will be conducted to underpin how the concept of CSR aids in bringing about global sustainable goals, focusing on the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals in the United Nations, and how organizations are increasingly responsible for finding balance between profit-seeking and societal or environmental welfare. In the end, this study will be able to explain how important it is to add CSR into the company plans both as a solution for CSR and as a way to create long-term competitive advantage in a world that is changing fast.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Rajesh et al., (2022) identified average variations in the Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy scores of companies from a few industrialised nations, such as the US, UK, Japan, and Australia, which represent several worldwide areas. They used Thomson Reuters ESG scores, which are based on more than 400 company-level variables and ten key characteristics. 939 companies' average ESG performance over a five-year period (2014–2018) was included in the data. The results showed that there was no statistically significant variation in the mean scores of CSR strategies between companies in these developed economies. The ESG scores of Australian companies, however, differed significantly on average from those of other developed economies. The study also demonstrated that the ESG performance scores of companies in the developed economies under study were significantly predicted by the CSR strategy scores.

Sharma, E., and Sathish, M. (2022) intended to quantify the relationship between economic growth and corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives in the context of a developing nation such as India. Their research looked into whether or not banks' declared CSR spending helped ensure the Indian economy's long-term viability. In addition to India's Human Development Index (HDI) indicators, GDP growth rate, and state-by-state GDP data from 2014–2015 to 2017–2018, the analysis took into account the CSR expenditures of 21 commercial banks on nine development sectors. The study, which using case analysis, correlation, and descriptive analysis techniques, demonstrated that CSR initiatives in developing countries like India were frequently motivated more by the desire for recognition and international investor interest than by genuine benefits to economic sustainability.

Cho et al., (2021) examined how the public reacts to companies whose sustainable development practices deviate from expectations by using the Expectancy Violation Theory (EVT) to sustainability communication. With an emphasis on elements including Organisational credibility, attitude, and supporting behavioral intents, the study investigated how public assessments are affected by the violations of both nonprofit and for-profit organizations. Utilizing a 2 x 2 x 2 between-subjects randomised experimental design, the study examined altruistic motive (high vs. low), sustainability action (positive vs. negative), and organization type. The results showed that, in comparison to expectancy conformance, both positive and negative expectancy violations had a greater impact on public assessments. Furthermore, expectancy violations had different consequences for different kinds of organizations.

Adamkaite et al., (2023) examined how corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives affected the financial results of Lithuanian energy businesses. The report underlined the energy sector's mounting pressure to meet environmental standards due to its substantial environmental effect and social influence. From 2017 to 2020, nine Lithuanian energy companies were examined using a brand-new CSR performance evaluation technique. In order to evaluate the effect of CSR, the researchers chose financial performance metrics that were pertinent. The study found a largely insignificant correlation between energy businesses' financial performance throughout the studied time and their CSR actions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.1. Research Design

A descriptive research design is used in this study to examine the prevalence and effects of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs in different industries. The goal of the study is to evaluate CSR programs and the social and commercial effects that result from them in light of labour standards, ethical sourcing, community development, environmental sustainability, and health and education. The three industries of manufacturing, technology, and financial services are compared to analyse how CSR practices vary and impact social welfare and long-term corporate growth.

1.2. Sampling Method

One hundred businesses from three different industries—financial services, technology, and manufacturing—make up the study's sample. Based on their documented participation in CSR initiatives and their prominence in CSR reports, the corporations were chosen. The sectors include:

- **Manufacturing:** Represented by businesses such as Escorts Kubota Limited, Chambal Fertilisers Limited, and Honda Motor India Pvt Ltd.
- **Technology:** Companies such as HCL Technologies Limited are represented by.
- **Financial Services:** National Westminster Bank is the representative.

To guarantee objective representation of CSR initiatives, these businesses were selected within each industry using simple random selection.

1.3. Data Collection

Primary data was collected through various methods:

- **Surveys:** CSR managers or other important persons at the chosen companies were given a standardised questionnaire to complete in order to collect data on their CSR programs' priority areas, perceived impacts, and CSR actions.
- **Company Reports:** Secondary data was gathered from the firms' sustainability and CSR reports, which include details on the particular investments, activities, and outcomes of their CSR initiatives. Detailed examinations of yearly reports and sustainability declarations were part of this.
- **Interviews:** Selected CSR managers participated in in-depth interviews to gather qualitative information on how CSR initiatives strategically connect with corporate objectives and the societal consequences of these practices.

1.4. Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed using **quantitative** and **qualitative** techniques:

- **Quantitative Analysis:** Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the frequency of CSR efforts and the social effect and company growth outcomes that accompanied them. This involved figuring out the frequency and proportion of answers for several CSR categories, like community development, ethical sourcing, and environmental sustainability. The study gave a clear picture of each initiative's impact and prevalence across industries.

To clearly illustrate the distribution of CSR actions and their effects across the sample size, the frequencies and percentages were displayed in tables. To determine whether there were any notable variations in the effects of CSR across industries, the chi-square test was used.

- **Qualitative Analysis:** Thematic analysis was used to examine qualitative information from interviews. Important topics pertaining to the strategic goals of CSR programs, implementation difficulties, and the perceived results in terms of sustainable growth and social impact were found. The study was able to learn more about the reasons behind CSR practices and their long-term efficacy thanks to this methodology.

1.5. Research Instrument

The primary research instrument was a **structured questionnaire** designed to capture the following:

- CSR initiative categories: Community development, labour standards, health and education initiatives, environmental sustainability, and ethical sourcing.
- The perceived effects of corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs on business sustainability (growth and resilience) and social outcomes (community welfare).
- Sector-specific CSR priorities and how CSR initiatives fit into corporate plans. In order to ease the gathering of both quantitative data (frequency and percentage) and qualitative insights, the questionnaire had both closed-ended and open-ended questions.

DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1: CSR Initiatives by Category

CSR Initiative Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Environmental Sustainability	45	45%
Community Development	30	30%
Health & Education Programs	15	15%
Labor Standards & Fair Trade	5	5%
Ethical Sourcing & Fair Trade	5	5%
Total	100	100%

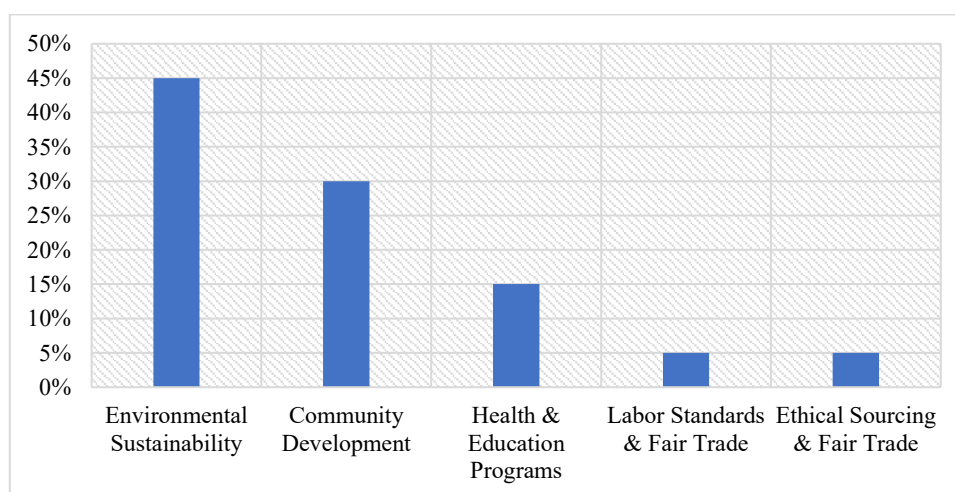


Figure 1: Graphical Representation OfCSR Initiatives by Category

Research actually reveals that most businesses, at 45%, top the list in terms of environmental sustainability as they tend to focus on minimizing environmental effects and taking practices that utilize energy-efficient in response to increasing pressures for sustainability being applied to businesses globally. With 30%, community development comes second; it shows a commitment towards improving welfare within the local setting by means of healthcare and education programs. 15% of such programs are on health and education, which depicts efforts to eliminate disparities in public health and education. Only 5% of businesses have programs that address fair trade, ethical sourcing, and labor standards at the same time.

This means that although community-based and environmental projects are the main CSR activities, there is more to be addressed in improving working conditions and ensuring ethical sourcing up and down supply chains. After all considerations, the data does show an improved industry-wide recognition of the part CSR plays in bringing about social and environmental change.

Table 2: Impact of CSR Categories

CSR Impact Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Social Impact (Community Welfare)	60	60%
Sustainable Growth (Business Resilience)	40	40%
Total	100	100%

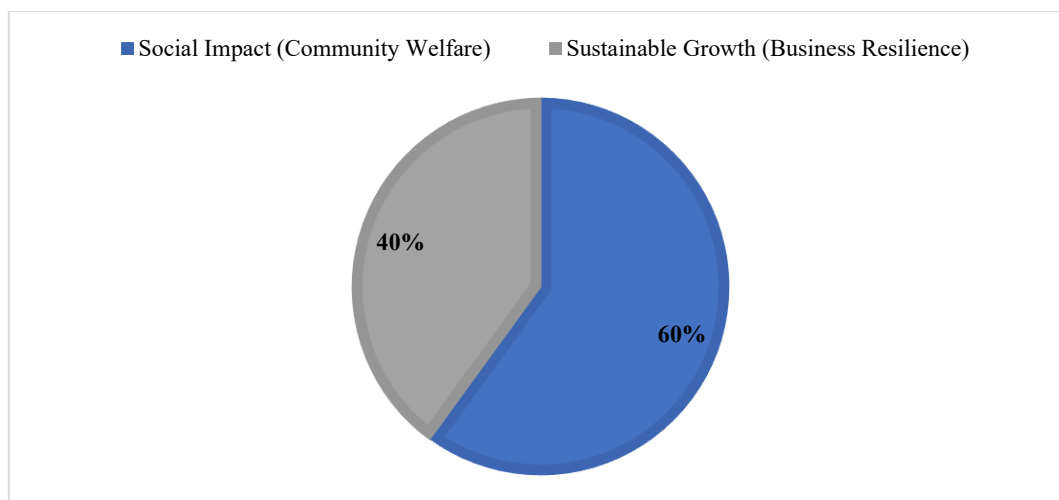


Figure 2: Graphically Impact of CSR Categories

According to the study, 60% of businesses state that their CSR programs have a significant social impact, especially in the fields of health, education, and community welfare. This means that most businesses focus on attaining favourable social results, thus showing a high commitment to solving societal problems and improving the welfare of communities. On the other hand, 40% of businesses focus on company resilience and sustainable growth, which emphasizes the importance of CSR in achieving long-term corporate success. These businesses view CSR as a tactical tool to enhance financial stability, consumer loyalty, and brand reputation. According to data, a big percentage of business firms believe CSR can help sustain their companies over the long run, although still focusing on the social impact.

Table 3: CSR Focus Across Sectors

Sector	Social Impact Frequency	Social Impact Percentage (%)	Sustainable Growth Frequency	Sustainable Growth Percentage (%)
Manufacturing (Honda, Chambal Fertilisers, Escorts Kubota)	30	15%	25	25%
Technology (HCL Technologies)	15	30%	20	15%
Financial Services (National Westminster Bank)	15	15%	10	20%
Total	60	60%	40	40%

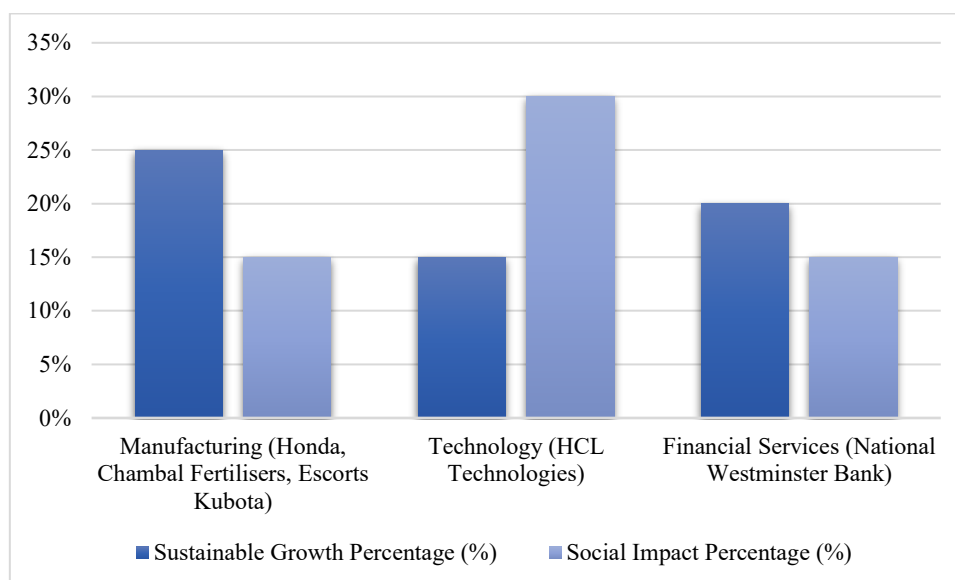


Figure 3: CSR Focus Across Sectors

In general, 60% of the CSR initiatives fall under social impact; however, within this category, the manufacturing sector is the forerunner of initiatives aimed at healthcare, education, and community welfare (30%), followed by the technology (15%) and financial services (15%) sectors. This gives an impression that societal challenges top the list for industrial enterprises. 40% of these businesses associate their CSR activities with sustainable growth for the long-term development of the company; 25% of this percentage are from the manufacturing industry, and 20% are from the technology industry. Within this context, a healthy 10% is noticed in the financial services industry regarding attention to sustainable growth. It also means that the financial services are more concerned about social welfare activities, while both the manufacturing and technology industries explicitly recognize CSR as a form of business excellence and link it to long-run profitability and strength of brand.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study shows that CSR (corporate social responsibility) programs are essential for promoting societal impact and long-term, profitable company growth in a variety of industries. The results show that the

industries of manufacturing, technology, and financial services place varying priorities on CSR: manufacturing emphasises community development and environmental sustainability, technology emphasises innovation and digital access, and financial services emphasises moral behaviour and community welfare. All things considered, CSR initiatives have a major positive social impact, improving healthcare, education, and community welfare. They also support long-term profitability, increased customer trust, and brand loyalty, all of which promote sustainable growth. This emphasises how crucial it is to incorporate CSR into fundamental business plans in order to generate value that benefits organisations and society alike.

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