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A Study of Beyond Sugar: Innovation-Driven Corporate Social Responsibility at Udgiri Sugar & Power Ltd.”Bamani (Pare), Sangli

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Abstract:

This paper examines how Udgiri Sugar & Power Ltd. (USPL) leverages technological innovation particularly its condensate polishing unit and biomass co-generation to shape a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) agenda that extends beyond traditional philanthropy. By integrating green-energy projects, water-recycling systems, and community-focused initiatives, USPL creates shared value that enhances both operational efficiency and socio-economic impact in the Sangli district. The study draws on corporate reports, award citations, and secondary literature on CSR-innovation linkages, offering a replicable framework for integrated sugar-energy firms.

Keywords: CSR Law, Companies Act 2013, Udgiri Sugar & Power Ltd. (USPL)

Introduction:

The Indian sugar sector is at a crossroads: rising input costs, regulatory pressure for ethanol blending, and growing expectations for environmental stewardship. Udagiri Sugar and Power Ltd. (USPL) was established in 2010 by the Kadam family (Vishwajeet & Shivajirao Kadam) in Sangli, Maharashtra, to manufacture sugar, power (co-gen), and ethanol, growing from a 2500 TCD plant to a significant integrated facility with expanded capacities (4900 TCD sugar, 165 KLPD ethanol, 14 MW power). Led by Chairman/MD Dr. Rahul Kadam, the company emphasizes innovation, sustainability, and efficiency, earning awards for its green energy projects and achieving strong financial performance by optimizing byproducts and adopting modern technology, including a Condensate Polishing Unit for water recycling. This paper investigates the mechanisms through which technological upgrades translate into measurable social outcomes.

Objectives:

1. To study innovation-based CSR practices at Udgiri Sugar & Power Ltd.
2. To examine the social and environmental impact of CSR in the Sangli region.
3. To analyze the benefits of integrating innovation with CSR.

Research methodology:

This research paper is based on primary data and Secondary data. The data has been collected through Personal Telephonic interview and Secondary data were gathered from corporate reports, academic journals, books, industry studies, websites, and organizational records.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):

A business makes money, but it also lives inside society. It uses society's resources (like land, water, people) to make goods, and those goods are sold back to society. Because of this give-and-take, a company has a duty to give something back – that's CSR.

CSR comes from:

- The term started in the 1950s in the United States.
- McGuire (1972) said CSR means a company voluntarily takes on responsibilities that go beyond just making profit or following the law.
- Boatright (2007) added that CSR judges actions not only by profit but also by ethical standards and what society thinks is good.

CSR covers:

- It touches every part of a company's work, especially how it deals with all its stakeholders – employees, customers, suppliers, the community, etc.
- CSR is a big piece of a company's overall sustainability plan, mixing social, economic, and environmental actions.

Legal rules in India (Companies Act 2013, Section 135):

The law, operational since April 2014, mandates

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1. Applies to companies that have:

- Net worth $\geq$ ₹500 crore, or
- Turnover $\geq$ ₹1,000 crore, or
- Net profit $\geq$ ₹5 crore in any financial year.

2. Such companies must spend at least 2 % of their average net profit (last 3 years) on CSR each year.

3. They need a CSR committee to decide and recommend the CSR policy to the board.

Allowed CSR activities (Schedule VII):

- Fighting hunger, poverty, malnutrition; health care & sanitation (including Swachh Bharat).
- Promoting education, skill-training, especially for women, children, elderly, disabled.

- Empowering women, supporting homes for women/orphans, old-age homes, reducing inequality.
- Protecting the environment – forests, wildlife, water, soil, air; contributing to Clean Ganga Fund.
- Preserving heritage, art, culture, libraries, traditional crafts.
- Helping veterans, war widows, their families.
- Supporting sports, rural development, slum improvement.
- Donating to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund or similar government funds.
- Funding tech incubators in approved academic institutions.

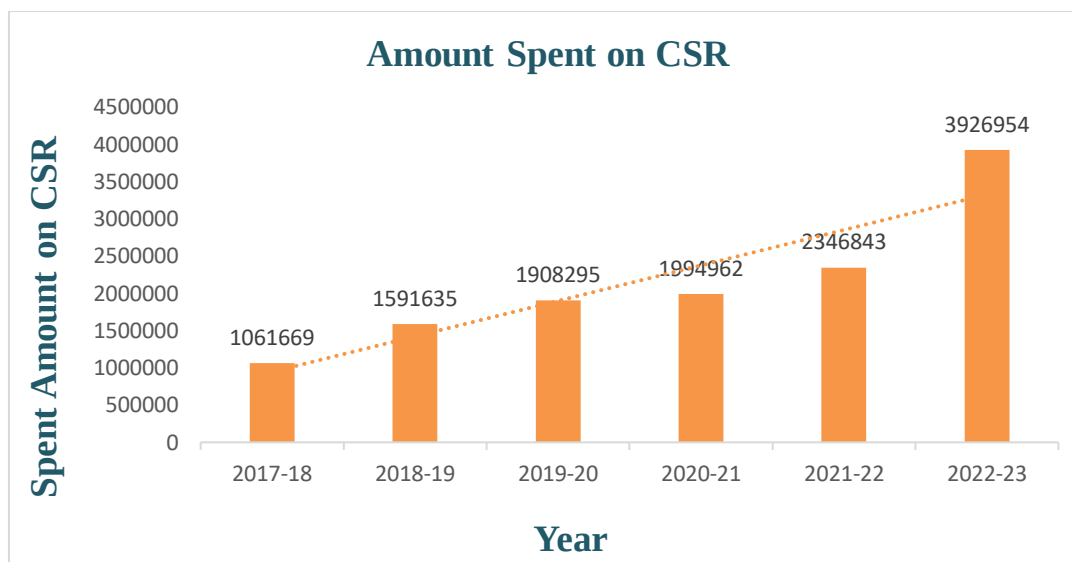
Udgiri Sugar & Power Ltd. (USPL) Organisational Profile:

1	Established Year	2010
2	Address	Udgiri Sugar & Power Ltd.” Bamani (Pare), Sangli Maharashtra
3	Registered office	Savira's No. 97, Plot No. 130, Right Bhusari Colony, Kothrud, Pune- 411 038 Maharashtra
4	Established by	The Kadam family (Mr. Vishwajeet & Mr. Shivajirao Kadam) in Sangli, Maharashtra,
5	Chairman/MD	Dr. Rahul Kadam,
6	Nature of Business	Manufacturer
7	Additional Business	Factory / Manufacturing Office / Sale Office Recipient of Goods or Services Supplier of Services
8	Total Number of Employees	26 to 50 People
9	Products	White & raw sugar, ethanol (from syrup & molasses), and compost (from filter cake/press mud).
10	CSR Started	2017

Udgiri Sugar & Power Ltd. (USPL) and it's 2% CSR

Sr. No.	Yaer	CSR Amt	Growth in %
1	2017-18	₹10,61,669	
2	2018-19	₹15,91,635	+50 %
3	2019-20	₹19,08,295	+20 %
4	2020-21	₹19,94,962	+4 %
5	2021-22	₹23,46,843	+18 %
6	2022-23	₹39,26,954	+67 %

(Source - website <https://udagirisugar.com/about-us/major-achievements/>)



The bar graph of CSR spending for **Udagiri Sugar & Power Ltd (USPL)** from 2017-18 to 2022-23 shows a clear and steady upward trend in expenditure. The company's CSR amount increased from ₹10,61,669 in 2017-18 to ₹39,26,954 in 2022-23, reflecting continuous growth over the years. While the rise was gradual between 2017-18 and 2021-22, a significant jump is observed in 2022-23, indicating an expanded focus on social responsibility initiatives. Overall, the graph highlights USPL's strengthening commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility and sustained contribution toward community development.

CSR Spending Areas of Udagiri Sugar & Power Ltd.

- **Education & Schools:** Supported Zilla Parishad schools in Asad, Chinchani Mangrul, Shirgaon, Kherade Vita, and Pare with computers, projectors, iron sheets, and furniture.
- **Health & Medical:** Donated an oxygen-equipped ambulance to the Primary Health Centre, Nevani, and supported 52 adopted children with medical/educational expenses.
- **Rural Development:** Supported Bamani Gram Panchayat with garbage collection vehicles and assisted the Vitthal Rukmini Goshala with sheds and water facilities.
- **Women Empowerment:** The company allocates funds for uplifting women through community initiatives.
- **Water & Sanitation** – rain-water harvesting, drinking-water facilities and community water projects.
- **Healthcare & Preventive Care** – health camps, medical equipment donations and sanitation initiatives.
- **Environmental Sustainability** – tree-planting, agro-forestry, waste-management and promotion of renewable energy (bagasse-based co-generation).

Findings

- **Technological Innovation** – The condensate polishing unit recycles ~2 million liters of water

annually, cutting freshwater intake and enabling a closed-loop system.

- **Economic Impact** – Ethanol capacity expansion contributed ₹120 crore in revenue (FY 2023-24), while co-gen power reduced reliance on grid electricity, saving ~₹15 crore per year.
- **Social & Environmental CSR** – USPL's "Green Village" program, funded by savings from biomass utilization, installed solar street lights in 5 nearby villages, benefiting ~3,000 residents.
- **Recognition** – Awards for "Best Technical Efficiency" and "Green Energy Projects" validate the credibility of the innovation-CSR linkage².

Conclusion:

USPL's transformation from a conventional sugar mill into an integrated and sustainability-driven enterprise demonstrates how innovation can strengthen CSR impact. By aligning technological advancement with social responsibility, the company has created a model of shared value that enhances environmental conservation, rural development, and economic resilience. This integrated approach offers a replicable framework for agro-industrial firms seeking long-term competitiveness alongside community development.

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