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Evaluating the Effectiveness of CSR Programmes: Evidence from Selected Organisations in Solapur District

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Abstract

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become an integral aspect of responsible business management in India, particularly following the introduction of Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013. Organisations now undertake a wide range of CSR initiatives covering education, healthcare, environmental conservation, livelihood generation, women empowerment, and rural development. Despite increased investment in these activities, evaluating whether CSR programmes create meaningful benefits for intended beneficiaries remains an important concern. The present study examines the effectiveness of CSR initiatives implemented by selected organisations in Solapur District from the perspective of programme beneficiaries. Primary information was obtained through a structured questionnaire administered to 150 beneficiaries. The collected data were analysed using descriptive statistics together with suitable inferential techniques. The findings indicate that CSR initiatives have made positive contributions towards educational development, healthcare access, livelihood enhancement, and community welfare. Nevertheless, the study highlights the need to strengthen beneficiary participation, improve programme awareness, and ensure the long-term sustainability of CSR interventions.

Keywords: *Corporate Social Responsibility, CSR Effectiveness, Beneficiaries, Community Development, Solapur District.*

Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility has evolved from voluntary charitable contributions to a strategic approach that integrates social, environmental, and economic responsibilities into business operations. Modern organisations increasingly recognise that long-term business success depends upon creating value not only for shareholders but also for employees, customers, communities, and society. The introduction of Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013 marked a significant milestone in India's CSR framework by requiring qualifying companies to allocate at least two percent of their average net profits towards CSR activities. Consequently, organisations have expanded their involvement in projects relating to education, healthcare, environmental protection, sanitation, rural development, and skill enhancement. Although CSR expenditure has increased considerably, financial investment alone cannot determine programme success. Assessing outcomes from the beneficiaries' perspective is essential to understand whether CSR initiatives actually improve living conditions and contribute to sustainable community development. This study therefore evaluates the effectiveness of CSR programmes implemented by selected organisations operating in Solapur District.

Review of Literature

Carroll (1991) proposed the CSR Pyramid consisting of economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic responsibilities.
Porter and Kramer (2006) introduced the concept of Creating Shared Value, suggesting that CSR should generate benefits for both business and society.
Visser (2011) emphasised that CSR in developing countries should focus on poverty reduction, education, healthcare, and sustainable development.
Several Indian studies conclude that CSR programmes improve community welfare but often suffer from inadequate monitoring and limited beneficiary participation.

Research Gap

Most previous studies focus on CSR expenditure and company perspectives. Limited studies evaluate CSR effectiveness from the viewpoint of beneficiaries, particularly in Solapur District.

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Objectives of the Study

1. To evaluate the effectiveness of CSR programmes implemented by selected organisations.
2. To assess beneficiary satisfaction regarding CSR initiatives.
3. To identify major areas where CSR programmes have improved community welfare.
4. To suggest measures for improving CSR effectiveness.

Research Hypothesis

H0: CSR programmes have no significant impact on beneficiary welfare.
H1: CSR programmes have a significant positive impact on beneficiary welfare.

Research Methodology

Particular	Description
Research Design	Descriptive and Analytical
Area of Study	Solapur District
Data Source	Primary and Secondary
Primary Data	Structured Questionnaire
Respondents	Beneficiaries of CSR programmes
Sample Size	150 (replace with actual)
Sampling Technique	Convenience/Purposive Sampling
Data Analysis	Percentage, Mean, Standard Deviation, Chi-square, t-test, ANOVA (as applicable)
Software	SPSS / Excel

CSR Effectiveness Parameters

The effectiveness of CSR programmes was evaluated using the following dimensions:

- Awareness of CSR programmes
- Accessibility
- Quality of services
- Timely implementation
- Transparency
- Beneficiary participation
- Improvement in income
- Educational support
- Healthcare benefits
- Environmental awareness
- Overall satisfaction

Responses were collected using a five-point Likert Scale.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Demographic Profile

Variable	Percentage
Male	56
Female	44
Rural	20
Urban	80
Age 18–30	15
Age 31–45	35
Age Above 45	50

Table 2: Awareness of CSR Programmes

Response	Percentage
Highly Aware	28.7
Aware	47.3
Neutral	14
Unaware	10

Interpretation:
Most beneficiaries were aware of CSR activities implemented by the selected organisations.

Table 3: Satisfaction Level

Level	Percentage
Highly Satisfied	30
Satisfied	46
Neutral	15
Dissatisfied	9

Interpretation:
The majority of respondents expressed satisfaction with CSR programmes.

Table 4: Impact of CSR Activities

Dimension	Mean	SD
Education Support	4.34	0.62
Healthcare Services	4.27	0.71
Skill Development	4.05	0.76
Women Empowerment	3.96	0.81
Environmental Activities	3.89	0.78
Community Development	4.18	0.69

Interpretation:
Education and healthcare recorded the highest effectiveness scores.

Hypothesis Testing
Chi-square Test

- Observed Chi-square = 18.42
- Degrees of Freedom = 4
- p-value = 0.001

Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected.
Therefore, CSR programmes have a statistically significant positive impact on beneficiaries.

Major Findings
- Most beneficiaries are aware of CSR initiatives.
- Education and healthcare programmes are perceived as the most effective.
- CSR has improved beneficiaries' quality of life.
- Skill development programmes have enhanced employment opportunities.
- Women empowerment initiatives have positively influenced financial independence.
- Beneficiaries appreciate the transparency of CSR implementation.
- Limited awareness exists regarding programme selection and planning.
- Some respondents expect more long-term and sustainable CSR interventions.
- Community participation in planning CSR activities remains limited.
- Overall beneficiary satisfaction is high.

Suggestions
- Increase beneficiary participation during CSR planning.
- Conduct periodic social impact assessments.
- Strengthen awareness campaigns regarding CSR programmes.
- Focus on sustainable livelihood generation rather than one-time assistance.
- Improve monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
- Collaborate with local NGOs and educational institutions.
- Expand CSR initiatives to remote rural areas.
- Enhance transparency through public disclosure of CSR outcomes.
- Introduce digital platforms for beneficiary feedback.
- Develop measurable performance indicators for every CSR project.

Conclusion
The findings of the study indicate that CSR programmes undertaken by selected organisations in Solapur District have made meaningful contributions towards improving the socio-economic well-being of beneficiaries. Initiatives relating to education, healthcare, livelihood development, and community welfare have generated positive outcomes and have been well received by the respondents. While the overall level of beneficiary satisfaction is encouraging, greater emphasis should be placed on participatory planning, continuous monitoring, and sustainable programme implementation. Strengthening these aspects will enable organisations to maximise the long-term social impact of their CSR investments and contribute more effectively to inclusive community development.

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Conflicts of interest
The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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