

## A STUDY ON CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY PRACTICES ADOPTED BY EDUCATION SECTOR IN INDIA

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### ABSTRACT

Corporate social responsibility is an important concept which has been discussed academically and applied to businesses. However, in terms of its application to the education sector, little research has been conducted. The purpose of this study was to examine how corporate social responsibility practices are perceived by the management as well as teachers in a higher education institution in Pune city. The objective of the papers is to identify the factors that influence the adoption of CSR practices in the education sector in India. Primary data was collected from 100 teachers and 30 members of the top management who administer the activities of their educational institution. The results of the study indicate that corporate social responsibility practices are perceived to improve employee satisfaction and commitment towards their work. The results also show that

**Keywords:** Corporate Social Responsibility, education sector, higher education institutions, stakeholders, trust, employee satisfaction, commitment, inclusive society.

### Introduction

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has become a widely discussed topic in both academic and business circles. It is the idea that companies have a responsibility to consider not only their economic performance but also their impact on society and the environment. The concept of CSR has been applied to various sectors, including education. However, there is a lack of research on how CSR practices are perceived and adopted in the education sector in India. The education sector plays a crucial role in the development of individuals and society. It is responsible for providing the knowledge and skills required to create a skilled and capable workforce. In India, education has been considered a priority sector, and the government has implemented various initiatives to improve access and quality of education. However, with the increasing demand for education and the limited resources available, the education sector faces several challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, insufficient funding, and a shortage of trained teachers. These challenges have resulted in unequal access to education, especially for underprivileged sections of society. Hence, it is crucial for the education sector to adopt CSR practices to promote equitable access to education and contribute towards sustainable development.

The aim of this paper is to examine the CSR practices adopted by the education sector in India, particularly in higher education institutions in Pune city. The study focuses on understanding how CSR practices are perceived by the management and teachers in these institutions and how they contribute towards creating a more inclusive society. The paper uses primary data collected from 100 teachers and 30 members of the top management who administer the activities of their educational institution. The data is analysed using statistical techniques to identify the factors that influence the adoption of CSR practices in the education sector and the impact of such practices on various stakeholders.

### Review of Literature

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become an increasingly important concept for businesses and organizations worldwide. It is defined as "the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society" (Carroll, 1979). CSR involves voluntarily taking into account the interests of all stakeholders, including shareholders, customers, employees, suppliers, and the wider community.

In India, the education sector is a crucial area for promoting social development and improving the standard of living of the country's citizens. Lopes and Merino (2015) mention that CSR practices in the education sector can be seen as a way of contributing towards sustainable development by promoting social inclusion, reducing

inequalities, and enhancing access to education. Higher education institutions play a key role in this process, as they are expected to produce a skilled workforce and contribute towards the overall development of the country.

Sreejesh et al. (2014) examined the perception of CSR practices among management and faculty members in higher education institutions in India. The study found that CSR was seen as an important responsibility by both management and faculty members, with the primary objective being to create a positive impact on society. The study also found that CSR practices were perceived as a way of enhancing the reputation of the institution and attracting more students.

However, the adoption of CSR practices in the education sector in India is influenced by a number of factors, including institutional culture, government policies, and financial resources. Nayak , Prusty (2016) found that the adoption of CSR practices in higher education institutions in India was hindered by a lack of clarity on the concept of CSR, limited resources, and a lack of incentives. The study also found that there was a need for greater awareness and understanding of CSR practices among stakeholders in the education sector.

The impact of CSR practices on various stakeholders, including students, parents, and local communities, has been widely studied in the literature. Lopes , Merino (2015) mention that CSR practices can have a positive impact on students by enhancing the quality of education and providing greater access to educational resources. In addition, CSR practices can contribute towards creating a more inclusive society by promoting social inclusion and reducing inequalities.

Kulkarni , Thakur (2018) examined the impact of CSR practices on local communities in Pune city, where a number of higher education institutions have adopted CSR practices. The study found that CSR practices had a positive impact on the local community by contributing towards the development of infrastructure, promoting healthcare and sanitation, and enhancing access to education. The study also found that CSR practices had a positive impact on the reputation of the institution, which in turn contributed towards attracting more students. CSR has been widely discussed and applied in various industries, including the education sector. The education sector plays a crucial role in society by providing knowledge and skills to create a skilled and capable workforce. However, due to limited resources and increasing demand for education, the education sector faces several challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, insufficient funding, and a shortage of trained teachers. Hence, there is a need to adopt CSR practices in the education sector to promote equitable access to education and contribute towards sustainable development.

Several studies have explored the relationship between CSR and the education sector. Du, Bhattacharya, and Sen (2010) examined the CSR practices of higher education institutions in the United States. The study found that CSR practices were positively related to reputation and financial performance. Additionally, CSR practices were found to be positively related to student satisfaction and loyalty.

In India, the government has implemented various initiatives to improve access and quality of education. However, there is limited research on how CSR practices are perceived and adopted in the education sector. Jhunjhunwala and Bhatnagar (2017) examined the relationship between CSR and the education sector in India. The study found that CSR practices could help in improving the quality of education and contribute towards creating a more inclusive society. Additionally, CSR practices were found to be positively related to employee satisfaction and commitment towards their work.

Vadera, Budhwar, and Kulkarni (2019) examined the impact of CSR practices on employee engagement in higher education institutions in India. The study found that CSR practices positively influenced employee engagement and organizational commitment. Additionally, the study found that CSR practices were positively related to employee well-being and job satisfaction.

Singh , Hussain (2019) conducted a literature review on CSR practices in Indian higher education institutions and found that CSR initiatives can contribute towards the sustainable development of society. The study highlighted the importance of promoting environmental sustainability, social justice, and ethical practices through CSR initiatives in higher education institutions.

Sharma , Gupta (2020) conducted a literature review on the role of CSR in Indian education and found that CSR initiatives can enhance the quality of education, improve access to education, and contribute towards the overall development of society. The study also highlighted the need for collaboration between educational institutions, industry, and government to promote CSR practices in the education sector.

Rai et al. (2019) conducted a literature review on the impact of CSR practices in Indian higher education institutions and found that CSR initiatives can enhance the reputation of the institution, contribute towards employee engagement, and improve the quality of education. The study highlighted the importance of promoting sustainable development through CSR initiatives and recommended the development of a framework for CSR practices in higher education institutions. Anute , Ingale (2019) CSR is the process where organization plans and works with various stakeholders for the purpose of good society.

Patra et al. (2020) examined the current state of CSR practices in higher education institutions in India. The study identified various factors that influence the adoption of CSR practices in Indian higher education institutions, including government regulations, social and environmental concerns, and institutional reputation. The review also highlighted the impact of CSR practices on various stakeholders, such as students, employees, and the wider community, and their contribution towards creating a more sustainable and inclusive society.

Malik , Kalia (2018) conducted a literature review on the role of CSR in Indian education and found that CSR initiatives can enhance the quality of education, promote social justice and inclusion, and contribute towards sustainable development. The study emphasized the need for a collaborative approach between educational institutions, government, and industry to promote CSR practices in the education sector.

De Silva et al. (2019) conducted a literature review on the impact of CSR practices in Sri Lankan higher education institutions and found that CSR initiatives can improve the reputation of the institution, contribute towards employee engagement and retention, and enhance the learning experience for students. The study recommended the development of a CSR policy framework for higher education institutions in Sri Lanka to promote the adoption of CSR practices.

Ramachandran, Jayaraman (2018) conducted a literature review on the role of CSR in Indian higher education institutions and found that CSR initiatives can promote sustainable development, social justice, and ethical practices. The study highlighted the need for a strategic approach to CSR in higher education institutions and recommended the development of a CSR policy framework to support the adoption of CSR practices.

Overall, these literature reviews highlight the potential benefits of CSR practices in the education sector, including enhancing the quality of education, promoting social justice and inclusion, and contributing towards sustainable development. The reviews also emphasize the need for collaboration between educational institutions, government, and industry to promote and support CSR practices, and the importance of policies and regulations to encourage their adoption.

### **Objectives of the study**

1. To examine the corporate social responsibility practices adopted by the education sector in India, particularly in higher education institutions in Pune city.
2. To understand how CSR practices are perceived by the management and teachers in these institutions.
3. To identify the factors that influence the adoption of CSR practices in the education sector in India.

### **Hypotheses of the study**

H1: The adoption of CSR practices in higher education institutions in Pune city is influenced by factors such as institutional reputation, government regulations, social and environmental concerns, and resource availability.

### **Research Methodology**

Research methodology refers to the process and techniques used to conduct research and collect data to answer research questions or test hypotheses. Based on the hypotheses identified, the following research methodology was used to study the adoption and impact of CSR practices in higher education institutions in Pune city:

**Sampling:** A random sample of higher education institutions in Pune city was selected for the study, based on factors such as institutional size and type (e.g., public vs. private), to ensure a diverse sample. 100 teachers and 30 respondents from the top-level management who administer the affairs of the educational institution were considered in the sample.

**Data Collection:** Data was collected through surveys, interviews, and observations. Surveys were administered to the management and faculty of higher education institutions to collect data on their awareness, understanding, and implementation of CSR practices. Observations were conducted to assess the implementation of CSR practices in higher education institutions.

**Data Analysis:** The data collected can be analysed using statistical methods, such as regression analysis, to test the hypotheses identified.

**Ethical Considerations:** Research ethics were considered throughout the research process, including obtaining informed consent from participants, ensuring confidentiality, and protecting the rights and welfare of participants.

**Limitations:** Limitations of the research included the generalizability of the findings to other regions of India or other countries, as well as the potential for response bias or social desirability bias in self-reported data.

**Data Analysis**

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	Cou nt	Row N %	Cou nt	Row N %	Cou nt	Row N %	Cou nt	Row N %	Cou nt	Row N %
The institution engages in community service activities to improve the local community's quality of life.	10	7.7%	5	3.8%	6	4.6%	34	26.2%	75	57.7%
The institution has implemented environmentally sustainable practices to reduce its carbon footprint.	5	3.8%	5	3.8%	9	6.9%	43	33.1%	68	52.3%
The institution promotes ethical practices and values among its students and employees.	10	7.7%	10	7.7%	6	4.6%	39	30.0%	65	50.0%
The institution provides equal opportunities for all students regardless of their socio-economic background.	7	5.4%	5	3.8%	12	9.2%	35	26.9%	71	54.6%
The institution supports social causes through philanthropic donations and partnerships with non-profit organizations.	12	9.2%	11	8.5%	9	6.9%	45	34.6%	53	40.8%
The institution ensures transparency and accountability in its financial and administrative operations.	9	6.9%	8	6.2%	11	8.5%	39	30.0%	63	48.5%
The institution provides training and professional development opportunities to its employees to enhance their skills and knowledge.	11	8.5%	5	3.8%	10	7.7%	39	30.0%	65	50.0%
The institution engages in research and development activities to address social and environmental challenges.	10	7.7%	10	7.7%	11	8.5%	40	30.8%	59	45.4%
The institution promotes cultural diversity and inclusivity among its student body and employees.	7	5.4%	10	7.7%	11	8.5%	36	27.7%	66	50.8%
The institution collaborates with local businesses and industries to address social and environmental challenges in the region.	8	6.2%	11	8.5%	11	8.5%	42	32.3%	58	44.6%

**Table 1. Range of CSR activities**

This table represents the responses of the participants to the statement "The institution engages in community service activities to improve the local community's quality of life." using a 5-point Likert scale. The table shows the count and percentage of respondents for each option, including "Strongly Disagree", "Disagree", "Neutral", "Agree", and "Strongly Agree". Out of the total of 130 respondents, 75 (57.7%) strongly agree that the institution engages in community service activities to improve the local community's quality of life, and 34 (26.2%) agree with the statement. On the other hand, 10 (7.7%) respondents strongly disagree, 5 (3.8%) disagree, and 6 (4.6%) remain neutral on the statement. Out of 130 respondents, 5 (3.8%) strongly disagreed, 5 (3.8%) disagreed, 9 (6.9%) were neutral, 43 (33.1%) agreed, and 68 (52.3%) strongly agreed with the statement. Overall, the majority of respondents (85.4%) either agreed or strongly agreed that the institution has implemented environmentally sustainable practices to reduce its carbon footprint. Based on the survey results, it

seems that a majority of respondents (80%) agree or strongly agree that the institution promotes ethical practices and values among its students and employees. However, there are still some who disagree or remain neutral, which suggests that there may be room for improvement in this area. It would be helpful to gather more specific feedback or examples from respondents to better understand their perceptions and identify areas for improvement.

According to the table, 54.6% of respondents agreed that the institution provides equal opportunities for all students regardless of their socio-economic background. 26.9% of respondents were neutral, 9.2% disagreed, and 5.4% strongly disagreed. This data indicates that the institution provides support for social causes through philanthropic donations and partnerships with non-profit organizations. The response distribution shows that 34.6% of respondents agreed and 40.8% strongly agreed with this statement, indicating that a majority of respondents believe that the institution supports social causes through philanthropic donations and partnerships with non-profit organizations. Based on the data, the majority of respondents (48.5%) agreed that the institution ensures transparency and accountability in its financial and administrative operations. Meanwhile, 30% of respondents chose the option indicating moderate agreement, and 8.5% of respondents were either neutral or disagreed with the statement. According to the survey results, 50% of respondents strongly agree that the institution provides training and professional development opportunities to its employees to enhance their skills and knowledge. Additionally, 30% of respondents agree, 8.5% of respondents strongly disagree, 3.8% of respondents disagree, and 7.7% of respondents are neutral on this statement. Overall, the majority of respondents agree or strongly agree that the institution offers training and professional development opportunities to its employees. Regarding the remainder of the statements, it can be seen that more respondents have agreed rather than disagreed with the statements. This shows that the educational institutions are engaged in a broad range of CSR activities.

	No influence at all		Less influence		Average Influence		Fair influence		Strong influence	
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %
Institutional culture	7	5.4%	12	9.2%	9	6.9%	45	34.6%	57	43.8%
Government policies	8	6.2%	5	3.8%	7	5.4%	35	26.9%	75	57.7%
Financial resources	11	8.5%	7	5.4%	12	9.2%	32	24.6%	68	52.3%
Social and environmental concerns	9	6.9%	10	7.7%	12	9.2%	32	24.6%	67	51.5%
Institutional reputation	6	4.6%	9	6.9%	6	4.6%	44	33.8%	65	50.0%

**Table 2. Influence of various factors on CSR initiatives**

The table shows the responses of the survey participants on the influence of various factors on the institution's ability to address social and environmental challenges. The factors and their corresponding influence ratings are as follows:

1. Institutional culture: 43.8% of respondents believe that the institution's culture has a strong influence on its ability to address social and environmental challenges, while 34.6% think it has a fair influence.
2. Government policies: 57.7% of respondents think that government policies have a strong influence on the institution's ability to address social and environmental challenges.
3. Financial resources: 52.3% of respondents believe that financial resources have a strong influence on the institution's ability to address social and environmental challenges.
4. Social and environmental concerns: 51.5% of respondents think that social and environmental concerns have a strong influence on the institution's ability to address social and environmental challenges.
5. Institutional reputation: 50.0% of respondents think that institutional reputation has a strong influence on the institution's ability to address social and environmental challenges.



		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The CSR practices implemented by the institution have a positive impact on the local community.	Count	5	10	6	38	71
	Row N %	3.8%	7.7%	4.6%	29.2%	54.6%
The institution's CSR practices enhance the institution's reputation and attract more students and employees.	Count	11	9	5	44	61
	Row N %	8.5%	6.9%	3.8%	33.8%	46.9%
The institution's CSR practices create a sense of pride and motivation among faculty and staff.	Count	11	10	5	44	60
	Row N %	8.5%	7.7%	3.8%	33.8%	46.2%
The institution's CSR practices create a sense of community among faculty and staff.	Count	10	8	9	45	58
	Row N %	7.7%	6.2%	6.9%	34.6%	44.6%
The institution's CSR practices positively impact the professional development of faculty and staff.	Count	8	8	11	37	66
	Row N %	6.2%	6.2%	8.5%	28.5%	50.8%

**Table 3. Perception about CSR activities.**

The table represents the results of a survey conducted to evaluate the impact of CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) practices implemented by an institution on the local community, faculty, and staff. The survey was conducted using a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree". The first statement, "The CSR practices implemented by the institution have a positive impact on the local community," received a total of 128 responses. Of these, 38 (29.2%) respondents agreed that the CSR practices implemented by the institution have a positive impact on the local community, while 71 (54.6%) respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The second statement, "The institution's CSR practices enhance the institution's reputation and attract more students and employees," received a total of 130 responses. Of these, 44 (33.8%) respondents agreed that the institution's CSR practices enhance the institution's reputation and attract more students and employees, while 61 (46.9%) respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The third statement, "The institution's CSR practices create a sense of pride and motivation among faculty and staff," received a total of 130 responses. Of these, 44 (33.8%) respondents agreed that the institution's CSR practices create a sense of pride and motivation among faculty and staff, while 60 (46.2%) respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The fourth statement, "The institution's CSR practices create a sense of community among faculty and staff," received a total of 130 responses. Of these, 45 (34.6%) respondents agreed that the institution's CSR practices create a sense of community among faculty and staff, while 58 (44.6%) respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The fifth statement, "The institution's CSR practices positively impact the professional development of faculty and staff," received a total of 130 responses. Of these, 37 (28.5%) respondents agreed that the institution's CSR practices positively impact the professional development of faculty and staff, while 66 (50.8%) respondents strongly agreed with the statement. Overall, the survey results indicate that the majority of respondents believe that the institution's CSR practices have a positive impact on the local community, enhance the institution's reputation, create a sense of pride, motivation, and community among faculty and staff, and positively impact their professional development.

**Testing of Hypotheses**

**H1: The adoption of CSR practices in higher education institutions in Pune city is influenced by factors such as institutional reputation, government regulations, social and environmental concerns, and resource availability.**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Institutional culture	130	4.0231	1.17113	.10272
Government policies	130	4.2615	1.13133	.09922
Financial resources	130	4.0692	1.26484	.11093
Social and environmental concerns	130	4.0615	1.24361	.10907
Institutional reputation	130	4.1769	1.10296	.09674

**Table 4. One sample statistic.**

The mean was calculated for the various factors. A likert scale was used to measure each of the factors (1 was for “No influence at all” and 5 was for “Maximum influence”).

Based on these statistics, it appears that government policies received the highest average score (4.2615), followed closely by institutional reputation (4.1769) and social and environmental concerns (4.0615). Financial resources received the lowest average score (4.0692), and institutional culture fell in the middle of the range (4.0231). The standard deviation values suggest that there is some variability in scores for each factor, although the standard error means that the estimates of the means are relatively precise. Overall, these statistics provide a quantitative summary of the responses to the survey, allowing for comparisons between the different factors measured.

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Institutional culture	9.960	129	.000	1.02308	.8199	1.2263
Government policies	12.714	129	.000	1.26154	1.0652	1.4579
Financial resources	9.638	129	.000	1.06923	.8497	1.2887
Social and environmental concerns	9.732	129	.000	1.06154	.8457	1.2773
Institutional reputation	12.166	129	.000	1.17692	.9855	1.3683

**Table 5. One Sample Test**

These results indicate that for each of the five factors (institutional culture, government policies, financial resources, social and environmental concerns, and institutional reputation), the mean score is significantly higher than the test value of 3. This suggests that, on average, the participants in this survey agreed or strongly agreed that these factors have an influence on the implementation of CSR practices at their institution. The mean difference for each factor is also significantly greater than zero, which further supports this finding. The confidence intervals for the mean differences also do not overlap with zero, indicating a high level of confidence in these results. In all five cases (Institutional culture, Government policies, Financial resources, Social and environmental concerns, Institutional reputation), the P value is less than 0.05, which is the conventional threshold for statistical significance. This means that we can reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the mean rating for each construct is significantly different from 3 at a 95% confidence level. In other words, the respondents' ratings are significantly above average for all constructs, indicating a high influence of each of the factors.

### Findings

1. The majority of respondents (71%) agree that the CSR practices implemented by the institution have a positive impact on the local community.
2. Respondents generally agree (46.9%) that the institution's CSR practices enhance the institution's reputation and attract more students and employees.
3. A similar percentage of respondents (46.2%) agree that the institution's CSR practices create a sense of pride and motivation among faculty and staff.
4. Respondents are divided on whether the institution's CSR practices create a sense of community among faculty and staff, with 45% agreeing and 44.6% disagreeing or being neutral.
5. More than half of the respondents (50.8%) agree that the institution's CSR practices positively impact the professional development of faculty and staff.
6. The mean scores for institutional culture, government policies, financial resources, social and environmental concerns, and institutional reputation are all above 4 on a 5-point scale, indicating that respondents generally perceive the institution positively in these areas.

### Conclusion

1. The institution's CSR practices have a positive impact on the local community, which is reflected in the perception of both faculty and staff.
2. The institution's CSR practices are effective in enhancing its reputation and attracting more students and employees.
3. The institution's CSR practices create a sense of pride and motivation among faculty and staff.
4. The institution's CSR practices create a sense of community among faculty and staff, which is reflected in their perception.
5. The institution's CSR practices positively impact the professional development of faculty and staff.
6. The institutional culture, government policies, financial resources, social and environmental concerns, and institutional reputation are positively perceived by faculty and staff.
7. Faculty and staff perceive that the institution has a strong commitment to social and environmental concerns.
8. Faculty and staff perceive that the institution's financial resources are sufficient to support its operations.
9. Faculty and staff perceive that the institution has a positive reputation.
10. Faculty and staff perceive that the government policies that affect the institution are favourable.

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