

THEORETICAL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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ABSTRACT

Rapid developments in science, technology, and economy have harmed the environment more than any other factor. They have accelerated environmental degradation and ecological imbalances. As a result, many specific regulations are developed to protect the ecology and environment. The Environment (Protection) Act of 1986 and its associated regulations were also designed to prevent, control, and mitigate all types of pollution as well to these laws. Organizational social responsibility is, nonetheless, a demand from firms (CSR). They argue that protecting the environment and taking care of human resources is their social obligation. Because the norms of behaviour for these businesses are developing or already exist. The phrase "Corporate Social Responsibility" describes the initiatives taken by companies and corporations to improve the standard of living for people, society, and the environment. Businesses are expected to solve environmental challenges since CSR is mandated, possibly assuring environmental sustainability. Businesses might theoretically support sustainable development by implementing environmental protection programmes through their corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities, which would also be advantageous for society, the environment, and themselves. This essay discusses any knowledge gaps as well as the theoretical framework that connects CSR, environmental protection, and environmental sustainability in the real world. The suggestions from the literature review to enhance the study questions and objectives are also taken into consideration.

Keywords: Corporate social responsibility, Sustainability, Environmental protection, Society, Pollution

Introduction

Enlightening and informing enhancing the legal and institutional framework, cooperation, opening channels of communication and transparency between businesses and stakeholders, and firms' voluntary commitment to take the environment seriously into account over the long term are all necessary for the development of Corporate social responsibility is implemented to promote sustainable business. (Stojanovic et al. 2016; Rana & Goel, 2015). The necessity for making green investments for investors and investors and for investors and investors to design their investment strategies with environmental considerations in mind highlight how crucial it is to preserve the environment for businesses to manage societal responsibility activities that assist environmental conservation in order to address environmental challenges (Andrei et al. 2014; Goel et al. 2014). Environmental challenges have risen in recent decades as a produced by humans activity and the unchecked control of technological development that disrupts eco-systems. To protect the environment, there is a societal movement in motion. Growing industrialization has increased the need to protect the environment because it not only overuses despite also polluting the air, water, vegetation, and wildlife. Natural resources. Every economy must expand, but it's also essential to prevent irreversible environmental damage (The Indian Institute of Company Secretaries, 2005; Rana & Goel, 2018). Environmental damage, according to Al-Maazawy (2004), is the alteration of the natural characteristics of the elements (the earth, water, and air) that control the environment in which people live. This alteration is harmful to the misuse of these components by the addition of substances that they are unfamiliar with (Rana & Sharma, 2017). Contaminants could occur on a chemical, physiological, or both levels. a lack of hygiene or hazardous garbage. any modification of the environment's characteristics that has an adverse effect on biological diversity, living beings, or natural elements, or that interferes with people's ability to live their natural lives and maintain their health (Rana et al. 2017). A "quantitative shift" that "leads to imbalance in nature due to qualitative alterations in environmental components" is another way to define it. Christopher John (Barrow, 2000). Alternatively, "an unfavourable change in the environmental biological, physical, and chemical components" (Wagner, 1994; Goel & Rana, 2014). Also, "any quantitative or qualitative change in the living or non-living environment components that ecosystems cannot absorb without upsetting their equilibrium" may qualify (Dabis, 1997; Rana, 2014).

Many of the environmental policy criteria from 2006 and the environmental protection laws from 1986 are not being followed by businesses in India, It has caused the condemnation of businesses (Rana, 2011) that have damaged the ecosystem, as well as contributed to environmental imbalances. The CSR agenda is merely formal as they present social responsibility measures to demonstrate that they are Officials Socially and Human Society as a Whole in order to save face, but in reality, they do this to hide the true activities that they engage in and do not care about the problems and environmental harm that occur (Tiwari, 2010; Rana & Sharma, 2021). In order for the community to live in wellness, wealth, and happiness and not squander time wasting natural assets and disregarding it must also impose restraints on development and advancement in order to guarantee future generations' equal access to the advantages of a cleaner environment. In addition to employment and human rights, environmental preservation is one of the interested parties and problem areas for businesses that engage in CSR initiatives (2005's Blowfield & Frynas as well as 2012's De Roeck & Delobbe; Rana, 2015; Gillis & Spring, 2001; Rana, 2014).

The establishment's accountability for any adverse environmental impacts emanating from its operations in reaction to societal pressures that involve doing specific necessary tasks in order to uphold social obligations imposed by the applicable rules, regulations, and social customs. This study aids in comprehending the integration of CSR with environmental elements, particularly with regards to protection, as we get closer to compulsory CSR information sharing (Rana, 2015). This essay presents the theoretical framework that unites the four ideas—CSR, environmental protection, environmental sustainability, and sustainable development in practice—and examines the knowledge gaps (Rana, 2015).

Objectives of the study

1. The primary objective of the paper is to investigate the factors such as rules, regulation and social obligation which protect environment.
2. The paper instigate how the main four ideas about CSR activities, environment protection and sustainability leads to sustainable development.

Review of literature & theoretical framework

Thanks to the 2013 Companies Act, there are now numerous provisions for establishing and running enterprises in India. The act contains a provision requiring certain categories of Indian corporations to engage in CSR (CSR). The law now makes it necessary for firms to engage in CSR, which was mostly elective before. Schedule VII of the 2013 Companies Act, Section 135 contains the CSR provisions. The CSR provision went into force on April 1 of 2014 thanks to the Regulations for Corporations (Corporate Social Responsibility Policy), 2014, which were issued on February 28. Businesses have responded to the growing importance of environmental concerns in two ways: (a) collectively by joining organisations to engage with; and (b) individually by establishing and incorporating incorporating sustainability concerns into their mission and plan (Pogutz, 2008). According to Bansal and Roth (2000), the three motivating elements for businesses to take action on environmental issues were legitimacy, competitiveness, and ecological responsibility (Rana & Goel , 2014 & 2015). Furthermore, the vast majority of past studies exploring CSR, its influences, and connections with other dimensions were carried out in the industrialised countries (Brammer et al., 2012; Crisostomo et al., Tsoutsoura, 2004; Goel & Rana, 2013; Servaes & Tamayo, 2013; Lin et al., 2009; Rana et al. 2013). in its developed countries are involved to numerous environmental rules that affect businesses' decisions to engage in environmental measures, the findings from these research may only provide a limited amount of insight into underdeveloped countries (Rana et al. 2012).

However, developing countries struggle with environmental regulations either not existing or being ineffectively enforced (Reinhardt & Stavins, 2010). The case for developing countries is very different from that of their industrialised counterparts due to differences in their institutional and economic structures (Prasad & Mishra, 2017; Jamali & Karam, 2016; Rana et al. 2022)

Activities under CSR

Schedule VII, published by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs of India, specifies the many CSR activities that companies with operations in India may do out (The Companies Act, 2013 and Amendment of 2014's Schedule VII). The Companies Act of 2013 permits companies to contribute or invest to federal, state, or local government resources designated for socioeconomic by selecting the CSR initiatives listed in schedule VII, item iv), which includes projects directly relating to environmental preservation and sustainability. and environmental development (Schedule VII of The Companies Act, 2013 and Amendment 2014).

The many dimensions of environmental sustainability are comparable, there are many research examining the meaning and aspects of CSR, which leads to a variety of interpretations Dahlsrud (2008) and Lee (2008). According to Carroll (1979), social responsibility is the act of giving voluntarily to one's community in addition

to fulfilling obligations under the law and the marketplace. Freeman (2010) defined CSR in the sense that a firm has a responsibility to more than just its shareholders. The Aguinis definition of CSR (2011) is "context-specific organisational activities and policies that take into consideration stakeholders' expectations and the triple bottom line of economic, social, and environmental performance." Sustainability of the corporate environment and CSR from an economic perspective While a company can take a number of different steps to achieve environmental sustainability, it is suggested that embracing being a component of the CSR strategy, the environment will help it be more sustainable (Pogutz, 2008). Social responsibility and environmental sustainability share the goal of lessening the environmental impact of business operations.

The amount of market rivalry, socially conscious investors, morally oriented personnel, and pressure from global markets all contribute to the demand for environmental CSR (De Roeck and Delobbe (2012), Jamali and Karam (2016), and Lyon and Maxwell (2008). This study examines these questions in the context of collective environmental responses and their role. As the nature of society changes, the economy must compensate for the growing environmental gap. To hold businesses responsible for environmental damage, it is important to understand the activities that cause environmental damage. Activities directly related to the use of natural resources as materials for production or production, such as automobiles, mining, oil and chemical companies, are covered by environmental policy, but many other activities will be affected. . There is no direct interference with the use of natural resources or hazardous materials, but they still harm the environment in many ways. Examples include large software companies, nonprofits, etc.

However, they have nothing to do with using natural resources or hazardous materials to run their business, as they use large tracts of land for infrastructure development and use water and electricity which cause them to affect the environment. Many business activities cause environmental pollution, often there is a risk of pollution and damage to the ecosystem, causing people to experience food health problems, destroying things and affecting biodiversity. In good environmental management, this risk is translated into legal liability for the consequences of environmental damage to the owners and operators of these projects. The most common face of institutional damage include water quality, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, natural resources, and global climate change.

The right to equality and protection of the environment

Article 14 of the Constitution provides equality before the law and equal protection before the law. This fundamental right emphasizes the State's responsibility to act with integrity in the protection of the environment and therefore cannot violate Article 14. Where arbitrary powers are exercised in the name of national law, the judge's role is strictly not to allow arbitrary punishment. The exercise of discretion without considering the public interest violates the basic human right of equality (Hasia & Khalid , 1981).

Bangalore Medical Trust

B.S Muddappa is a project developed by Bangalore Urban Development Committee for urban expansion. The plan is to build a low-rise park and conserve the area for it. However, according to the Prime Minister's instructions, the low parking area will be transformed into a city center where a hospital will be built. When the construction started, the residents of the neighborhood moved to the Supreme Court.

The application of the residents of the neighborhood was accepted by the Supreme Court. In their appeal to the Supreme Court, however, the petitioners argued that the power to divide the space was purely discretionary and that the building law had the power to allow the hospital to become a hospital rather than a playground. The plaintiff therefore believes that the transfer of land is necessary. The Supreme Court rejected the objection, explaining the importance of open space and parks in urban development. The court added that open space, recreation, recreation and ecological protection are important for the public interest and development. The space must be kept open to the public interest and may not be sold or leased to a private person for financial gain.

In the last few years, Indian courts have supported the protection of the environment from destruction, pollution, ecological famines and disasters. Courts consider the right to environmental health as a fundamental right in Article 21 of the Constitution of India and therefore often enforce the law. Many businesses, tanneries, businesses that harm the environment (such as mining) have been shut down, reported and advised by the courts to view environmental protection as a major issue. People have observed that in many cases, Indian courts refer to international conventions and agreements in their decisions to explain the meaning of development. Letters may be sent to the Supreme Court and the Supreme Court under Article 32 and Article 226, respectively, to uphold faulty laws.

The right to a free and healthy environment is enshrined in Article III of the Indian Constitution. One of the most important aspects of the Constitution is that a fundamental right, according to Article 32 of the Constitution, is the right to apply to the Supreme Court itself, Lij Choj. Article 32 of the Constitution authorizes the Supreme Court and all High Courts in accordance with Article 226 of the Constitution. According to these provisions, the Court of Cassation and the Court of Cassation are authorized to issue instructions, orders or verdicts in the nature of habeas corpus, mandamus, injunction, initiate waiver and certiorari when necessary. The difference between the jurisdiction of the Court of Cassation and the Court of Cassation is that a judgment can be brought to the Supreme Court for the enforcement of substantive rights, whereas the Supreme Court can apply for the enforcement of fundamental rights depending on the situation. rights or for other possible purposes.

From this point of view, the jurisdiction of the Court of Cassation is wider than that of the Court of Cassation. However, it can be noted that the laws enacted by the Supreme Court are binding on all courts in India. "In addition, the Court of Cassation can make decisions or give orders that it deems necessary in the use of its authority. "Justice will be served" in every case and issue. All companies that meet the criteria set out in Section 135 of the Companies Act 2013 are required to form a CSR Committee. Board of Directors, dated July 7, 2007 and dated 2014 and dated 2014 and dated 2014 and dated 2014 and The Board of Directors of the company will establish and approve the "Corporate Social Responsibility Policy" based on its activities in the specified fields or subjects. Item (iv) of the above Agenda is: "Ensuring environmental stability, ecological balance, preservation of fauna and flora, animal welfare, agroforestry, conservation of resources, and preservation of soil, air and water quality, including funding for the Clean Ganges Fund." - Central government He is committed to supporting the Ganges." CS can develop strategies based on this input. The expertise of experts in this field will improve the company's social image as a good business.

The Supreme Court has acted in favor of the environment in many cases. In a case involving erosion, deforestation and other environmental problems caused by limestone quarries in the Doune Valley, the Supreme Court said people have the right to live in a healthy environment with little impact on the ecological balance. In the Bhopal Gas Leak case, the Supreme Court declared that the right to a pollution-free environment is part of the right to life under Article 21. In the Vellore Citizens Forum case, the Supreme Court said that "sustainable development" is a concept. Equivalent to ecology and ecology. Development has been recognized as part of international law. There are always huge penalties and responsibilities from regulators, especially for environmental organizations. For this reason, the company secretary (both at work and in practice) needs to pay attention to the legal environment and provide himself first as the savior of the company and top management.

Cost-saving measures include enhanced environmental efficiency and government control. are two supply-side factors driving environmental CSR (Lyon & Maxwell, 2008; Rana & Sharma , 2021). Given that some organisations continue to draw the majority of their profits from their former commercial activities, empirical evidence on the relationship between social responsibility and environmental effect is rare and conflicting. despite switching to cleaner production methods and marketing themselves as environmentally friendly (Portney, 2008). According to Morelli (2011), Environmental sustainability is a condition of balance, adaptation, and connectivity that enables human civilization to meet its needs without depleting the capacity of the ecosystems that support it or by causing a decline in biological diversity.

Ecological balance: Ecological balance describes the relationship between species and their environment as one of adaptation, harmony, and unity. The maintenance of a healthy environment and the proper operation of distinct ecosystems depend on ecological equilibrium.

Preservation of Flora and fauna: Fauna refers to the many species of animals, whereas flora generally refers to the plants that are found in a certain area or habitat. Some of the significant issues deforestation, environmental harm, habitat loss, and fragmentation are factors threatening the survival of flora and fauna, infrastructure growth, illegal trade, logging and poaching, and immoral human conduct.

Animal welfare: The term "animal welfare" refers to an animal's physical and psychological health. If an animal is safe, comfortable, fed properly, allowed to express its natural behaviour, and not experiencing negative emotions like pain, fear, or distress, it is in a good state of welfare.

Agroforestry: Agroforestry is a strategy of land use that incorporates trees and shrubs into rural and agricultural landscapes to increase ecosystem resilience, diversity, and production. Agroforestry offers local residents the chance to generate revenue and employment, as well as food and fodder, wood for building and burning, and a variety of other natural resources.

Natural resource preservation: Materials or chemicals that can be found in nature in their most basic forms are known as natural resources (NR).. To sustain the life of the human species and support its diverse activities, a variety of NR, renewable and non-renewable, are required, including water, soil, vegetation, wildlife, fossil fuels, minerals, etc.

Maintaining quality of air, water and soil: To improve lifestyle quality and promote sustainable growth, environmental quality must be maintained. The state of the environment, including the soil, water, air, and other elements has been deteriorated as a result of unprecedented population growth, industrialization, urbanisation, agricultural development, and rapid resource use. To achieve the aforementioned goals, some of the areas that can be covered under CSR are: migration, pollution control, utilising renewable energy, supporting environmental R&D, increasing people's environmental consciousness through environmental education, awareness, and communication, reducing waste and waste management, treating water and wastewater, and more, conserving natural resources, and providing safe drinking water.

The schedule VII item iv) lists the various CSR initiatives that are specifically dedicated to sustainability and environmental preservation (2013's The Companies Act's Schedule VII and Amendment 2014). The following list of CSR activities is taken from schedule VII:

- i. encouraging the provision of adequate drinking water, sanitation, and preventive health care; fostering employment and special education; and advancing vocation skills, particularly women and children, elderly people, and people with disabilities; and promoting livelihood improvement projects;
- ii. Agroforestry, ecological balance, animal welfare, the preservation of flora and animals, and soil, air, and water quality preservation;
- ii) Establishing senior housing, childcare facilities, and other services, as well as residences and hostels for women and orphans; advancing gender equality; empowering women; and iii) Putting measures in place to lessen the injustices that socially and economically disadvantaged communities must endure.
- iii. public library establishment, promotion of traditional crafts, and measures to enhance the welfare of war widows, veterans, and their families; repair of historic structures, locations, and works of art; preservation of the nation's aesthetic, cultural, and historical inheritance;
- iv. Training for the Olympics, Paralympics, and the promotion of rural sports; contributions to the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund or any other Central Government fund established for the socioeconomic development, assistance, and welfare of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes, other backward classes, minorities, and women; contributions or funds provided to technology incubators housed within academic institutions that are authorised by the Central Government. This is the scheduled action under the CSR that deserves the most acclaim among the others. These efforts will significantly contribute to the environment's betterment. Although the aforementioned areas might at first glance seem autonomous, they are actually interconnected, so success in one area could affect others. The subsequent sections of this essay go into further detail on various aspects of environmental preservation and sustainability for a better knowledge and application of CSR standards.

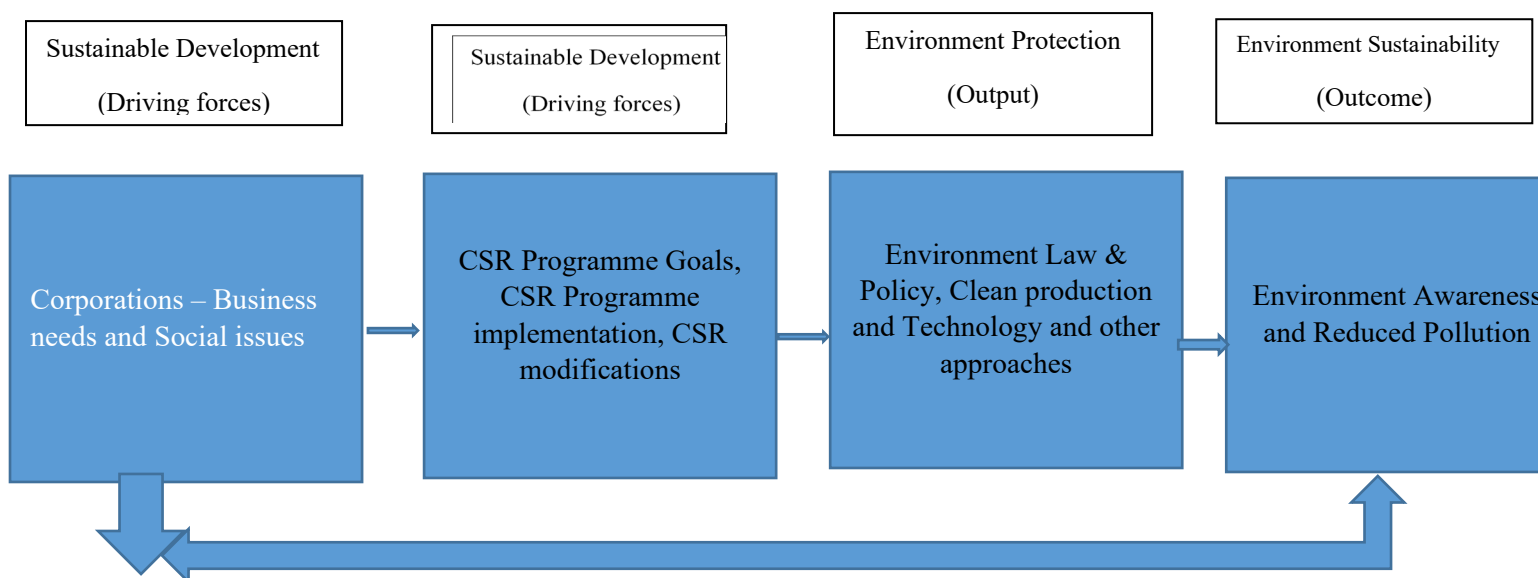


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework (Sources: Researcher own's)

In other words, the established model can create a positive feedback loop for the business, By fulfilling the company's goals for economic, social, and environmental performance, CSR risks can be minimised and shared value can be created with the community and other significant stakeholders. A theoretical framework can be used to summarise how the four notions are related to one another (Figure 1). The theoretical presumption that CSR initiatives, environmental protection, and environmental sustainability change through time is summarised in the figure. The company's desire to contribute to by addressing social issues while taking care of business demands and accomplishing its corporate objective, sustainable development is what motivates the CSR programme.

Research gaps identified

1. Why do businesses choose to participate in CSR programmes that support environmental sustainability and protection in underdeveloped nations?
2. How effective are CSR programmes? assist in promoting sustainable development?

Findings

Such a theoretical framework (figure 1) seeks and requires real-world exploration and validation. Consequently, there are two main goals for this research. First, environmental remediation differs from environmental protection in that its main goal is to return an ecosystem or natural analogous to exploitation, this means that it is associated with purposefully produced change rather than the prevention of change. environment to a state that it was in before (Hamilton and Bastianoni, 2019). Additionally, policies and practises meant to preserve the natural resources, keep the environment in its existing state, and, whenever feasible, reverse the decline of (Zhang et al. 2019). Therby, To make sure that actions made to safeguard the environment do not impose excessive burdens on business and society, it is important to develop a solid understanding of the socio-economic dimensions of environmental preservation. The following research gaps have been discovered from the literature review. First, little is known about CSR in underdeveloped nations, especially in relation to the contributions that corporations make to sustainable growth (Fukukawa, 2014; Valente and Crane, 2009). This is especially true when firms take on expanded responsibilities in increasing the capabilities of low-income workers across their supply chain (Scherer and Palazzo, 2011; Ansari et al., 2012), in order for the business and the community to jointly create value that will help the business achieve its economic, social, and environmental goals while also enhancing the quality of life for the community (Ansari et al ., 2012). Additionally, businesses in poor nations must operate in a climate where governments lack social accountability and responsibility. Due to these deficiencies, empirical study on business incentives, structure, and governance is required (Mahoney, McGahan, and Pitelis, 2009), as well as research towards CSR frameworks or models fit for underdeveloped countries Furthermore, multiple levels of assessment of the responsibilities of company leaders in adopting CSR, from the CEO to field managers, that are contextualised to satisfy the needs of the poor are required. (Waldman et al., 2006). (Prieto-Carron et al ., 2006). Communities still experience negative social and environmental effects despite certificates a multinational business (MNC) and its local suppliers have earned. To close the research gap, further empirical study is required. Furthermore, by investing in environmental initiatives as part of the CSR strategy, CSR is expected to assist businesses in improving their environmental performance (Lys et al. 2015). As part of their social duty, Indian businesses are allowed to make investments in a variety of fields, including the environment, education, sanitation, and community development are all priorities.. If businesses do not anticipate a growth in demand for environmental CSR, they may diversify into other sectors since CSR activities are done on a volunteer basis. When firms have excess cash, they are more inclined to invest in environmental improvement initiatives. turning their involvement into a charitable deed. This implies that there is no link between social responsibility and environmental progress (Lys et al. 2015). Rai and Bansal contend (2014), companies spend more on CSR in India, the social sector is more important than the environment.

Conclusion

Economic activity and growth are fundamentally dependent on a healthy environment. In addition to providing the resources required for the economy to manufacture products and services, it also takes in and assimilates undesirable byproducts in the shape of wastes and toxins. Economy and ecology are typically thought to be in opposition to one another. In reality, if businesses, people, and governments behave responsibly, both can thrive at the same time. Significantly beneficial actions in protecting the environment include including environmental components in CSR operations in the Companies Act of 2013 and making it mandatory for businesses. If correctly implemented, CSR may significantly contribute to environmental sustainability and environmental protection. Corporate and business organisations must be made aware of the value of the three pillars of sustainable development—economic, social, and environmental. All stakeholders, including business, civil society, academia, technocrats, and regulatory agencies, must collaborate and make significant contributions to their respective fields in order for CSR to operate well.

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