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Corporate Social Responsibility and Rural Transformation A Socio-Economic Impact Study in Satara District

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Abstract

This study examines the transformative role of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in driving social development within the Satara district. Historically characterized by its agrarian economy and drought-prone regions, Satara has seen a significant shift in developmental dynamics due to targeted interventions by major industrial players such as Bharat Forge, Cooper Corporation, and Alfa Laval. The core of these CSR initiatives focuses on four critical pillars: water conservation, public healthcare, quality education, and women's empowerment.

Keywords: CSR drives sustainable growth through infrastructure and empowerment.

Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has emerged as a vital tool for companies to contribute to social development, beyond their economic obligations. Satara district, with its rich cultural heritage and diverse industrial base, presents an interesting context to explore CSR's impact on social development. This study aims to assess the contribution of CSR initiatives to social development in Satara district, identifying gaps & challenges in CSR implementation.

The study adopts a mixed- methods approach, combining surveys, case studies, and stakeholder interviews to gather comprehensive data. The survey targets companies operating in Satara district, while case studies focus on select CSR projects. Interviews with stakeholders, including company representatives, beneficiaries and local authorities, provide additional insights.

The study explores CSR's impact on education, healthcare, livelihoods and community development, examining the extent to which CSR initiatives address local needs. It also analyzes the challenges and gaps in CSR implementation, including resource allocation, stakeholder engagement and monitoring and evaluation.

The study presents a unique opportunity to examine the impact of CSR initiatives on local communities with a mix of rural and semi-urban populations; the district is an ideal case for studying how CSR initiatives are shaping social development.

Purpose:

This paper seeks "Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility on Social Development in Satara District"

1. Assessment Impact
2. The Sector Analysis like water scarcity, rural healthcare, and educational gaps.
3. To Examine Public-Private Synergy.
4. To identify Sustainability Review

Significance of the Study:

1. **Improved education-** CSR initiatives in Satara district have led to the establishment of schools, scholarships, and educational programs, enhancing access to quality education for underprivileged children.
2. **Enhanced healthcare** – CSR projects have improved healthcare infrastructure provided medical aid, and organized health camps benefiting the local community.
3. **Livelihood opportunities** – CSR initiatives have generated employment, promoted entrepreneurship and supported vocational training empowering individual and communities.
4. **Community development** – CSR projects have focused on community development, including infrastructure development, environmental conservation and social welfare program.
5. **Women Empowerment-** CSR initiatives have emphasized women's empowerment through education, skill development and economic independence.
6. **Environmental Sustainability** – CSR projects have promoted environmental sustainability through initiatives like waste management, renewable energy and conservation.

7. **Disaster Relief** – CSR initiatives have provided critical support during natural disasters, ensuring relief and rehabilitation for affected communities.
8. **Social inclusion** – CSR projects have promoted social inclusion by supporting marginalized communities, including tribal groups, people with disabilities, and the elderly.
9. **Capacity building** – corporate social responsibility initiatives have strengthened local institutions, built capacities and fostered partnerships for sustainable development
10. **Economic growth** – corporate social responsibility contributions have stimulated local economic growth, attracted investments and promoted entrepreneurship

The significance of CSR contributions in Satara district lies in their positive impact on social development, demonstrating the potential for collaborative and sustainable growth.

Statement of research problem-

Despite the growing presence of corporate entities in Satara district, the contribution of corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives to social development in the region remains unclear. While CSR activities are undertaken by companies, their impact on education, healthcare, livelihoods and community development is not well-documented.

Furthermore, the challenges and gaps in CSR Implementation, including resource allocation, stakeholder engagement and monitoring and evaluation are not adequately understood. Therefore, the research problem can be stated as –

“What is the contribution of CSR initiatives to social development that need to be addressed to enhance its impact?”

This research problem aims to investigate the impact of CSR on social development in Satara district, identify the challenges and gaps in CSR implementation, and provide recommendations for improving corporate social responsibility effectiveness in the region.

Review of Literature: -

- **Carroll (1979)** developed a conceptual framework for corporate social responsibility, defining it as a pyramid of responsibilities that includes economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic responsibilities. This framework provides a clear structure for understanding CSR and its various components. Carroll's work is foundational in the CSR literature, and his pyramid has been widely used and adapted by subsequent researchers.
- **Friedman (1970)** argued that the primary responsibility of business is to increase profits, and that CSR is a distraction from this goal. He believed that companies should focus on maximizing shareholder value, rather than pursuing social or environmental goals. Friedman's argument is a classic critique of CSR highlighting the tension between social responsibility and profit maximization
- **Freeman (1984)** introduced stakeholder theory which emphasizes the importance of considering the interests of all stakeholders not just shareholders. He argued that companies have a responsibility to balance the interest of various stakeholder groups, including employees, customers, stakeholder theory has had a significant impact on CSR research and practice.
- **Orlitzky et al (2003)** conducted a meta-analysis of 30 studies and found a positive correlation between CSR and financial performance. They found that CSR is associated with improved financial performance, and this relationship is robust across different industries and contexts. This Meta-analysis provides robust evidence of the positive relationship between CSR and financial performance.
- **Bhattacharya et al (2008)** conducted an empirical analysis of 300 employees and found that CSR initiatives can increase employee engagement and commitment. They found that employees who work for companies that engage in CSR activities tend to be more engaged and committed to their work. This study highlights the importance of CSR in enhancing employee engagement and commitment.
- **Margolis et al (2009)** conducted an empirical analysis of 536 US companies and found a positive relationship between CSR and financial performance. They found that companies that engage in CSR activities tend to have better financial performance than those that do not. This study provides evidence that CSR can contribute to a company's financial success.
- **Muthuri et al (2012)** conducted a case study of a multinational company and found that CSR initiatives can contribute to community development, but challenges and opportunities exist. They found that CSR can have a positive impact on local communities, but that companies must be mindful of the potential risks and challenges associated with CSR.
- **Jamali et al (2015)** developed a conceptual framework for understanding the role of CSR in sustainable development. They argued that CSR is essential for achieving sustainable development goals, and that companies have a critical role to play in addressing global challenges such as poverty, inequality and climate change.

Research Gap –

There is a significant research gap in understanding the contribution of corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to social development in Satara district, as existing studies lack empirical evidence, have narrow focus and fail to consider the unique local context, resulting in a lack of comprehensive understanding of CSR's impact on marginalized communities, women and the environment and limiting the ability to inform policy and practice ultimately hindering the potential for CSR to effectively improve lives in the district.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To examine the current state of CSR initiatives.
2. To understand the effectiveness of CSR initiatives in improving the lives of marginalized communities, women, and the environment.
3. To identify best practices and areas for improvement in CSR initiatives.
4. To provide recommendations for policymakers, companies, and stakeholders to enhance the contribution of CSR to Social and sustainable development.

Hypothesis of the study -

1. **H₀:** There is no significant relationship between CSR initiatives and social development outcomes in the community.

H₁: CSR initiatives have a positive and significant impact on social development outcomes in the community.

2. **H₀:** CSR initiatives do not significantly contribute to women's empowerment in the community.

H₁: CSR initiatives have a positive and significant impact on women's empowerment in the community, leading to increased economic, social, and political participation.

3. **H₀:** CSR initiatives do not significantly improve environmental sustainability in the community.

CSR initiatives have a positive and significant impact on environmental sustainability in the community, leading to reduced carbon footprint, improved waste management, and conservation of natural resources.

Research methodology of the study -

A. **Area** – As discussed earlier the area of Satara district is purposively selected for study

B. **Taluka** – There are 11 tahsil in Satara district, out of which 50% (i.e.6)

Tahsil will be selected for the study.

In Satara district, Satara, Wai, Phaltan, Karad, Khandala, Koregaon these 6 tahsil will be selected for the study.

C. **Village** – In satara Tahsil 212 villages, Wai tahsil 126 villages, Karad tahsil 65 villages, Koregaon tahsil 138 villages. 10% of villages will be selected from the study from each tahsil. Thus, out of 832 total villages. 88 v villages will be selected for study

D. **Respondents**- There 5 sample from each selected village will be selected for the study. Thus, the total number of sample for study will be 440.

E. **Sample design** – A multi-layered random sample selection system is summarized in below table No.1

Table No.1

Sample Design

Sr.no	District	Tahsils selected for study	No. of villages	10 % Selection of villages	Total samples (5samples from each village)
1.	SATARA	SATARA	212	21	105
		WAI	126	13	65
		PHALTAN	125	12	60
		KARAD	216	22	110
		KHANDALA	65	06	30
		KOREGAON	138	14	70

F. **Methods of data collection**- The researcher will collect the primary and secondary data for the study.

a. **Primary data** – For the study the primary data will be collect from the selected area.

b. **Secondary data** – Secondary data will be collected from various report of government of India and Maharashtra. PHD thesis, unpublished M.Phil. dissertation, Research paper related to CSR funding, social development in Satara district.

G. **Statistical tools** – Statistical tools like average, percentage and growth rate as well as various tables and graphs related to research will be used to analyze the available statistical information.

H. **Period of the study** – The present study aims to examine the impact of CSR on social development in satara district. The period from year 2020 to 2023 is selected for analysis.

I. **Scope of the study**- The present study is limited to satara distict. It includes 6 tahsils in Satara district form Maharashtra. The researcher purposively selected industrial area Satara district for the study to understand the impact of CSR on Social development includes women empowerment and environmental impact also.

Chapter Scheme-

1. Introduction and Research methodology
2. Review of literature
3. Profile of the Study Area
4. Data Analysis and Presentation
5. Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion

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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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