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The Strategic Role of Corporate Social Responsibility in Advancing Sustainable Business Practices

Dr. Anjani Singh Chouhan,

Research Director of vidhya Ashram Group and Advisor to Chairman of Dr. Preeti Global University, Dinara, (M.P)

Abstract

In an era marked by heightened environmental awareness and social accountability, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has emerged as a critical mechanism for fostering sustainable business practices. This paper explores the multifaceted role CSR plays in embedding sustainability into corporate strategies, operations, and stakeholder engagement. Drawing on case studies and theoretical frameworks, the study examines how CSR initiatives not only enhance a company's ethical posture but also drive long-term value creation by aligning business objectives with environmental and social imperatives. The research investigates the strategic integration of CSR in key domains such as resource efficiency, ethical supply chain management, employee well-being, and community development. It also evaluates how transparency and stakeholder communication contribute to accountability and trust, amplifying the positive impact of CSR activities. Additionally, the paper analyzes the challenges organizations face in balancing profit motives with sustainability goals, especially in regions with limited regulatory oversight. Findings indicate that companies with well-structured CSR programs are more likely to experience reputational gains, innovation-driven growth, and improved risk management. Furthermore, CSR serves as a catalyst for cultural change, encouraging organizations to adopt more inclusive and forward-thinking approaches to business.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility, Sustainability, Ethical Business, Stakeholder Engagement, Strategic CSR

Introduction

In the fast past modern world of the contemporary global economy, the question of merging the profit-making principle with social co-responsibility has turned into one of the central concerns of any business, which aims to achieve long-term prosperity of any nature. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a concept that implies that a firm undertakes to act in a responsible way which takes into consideration of economic development and the enhancement of living standards of its workers and the society at large. Due to the rising impact of environmental degradation, social inequalities and ethical misconduct on consumer behavior by increasing risk to investors, corporations have changed both their knowledge and ways to approach CSR; what was once a voluntary philanthropic endeavor now becomes a strategic necessity. Such change is indicative of an increasing appreciation of the fact that there is a mutual relationship between sustainable development and the success of corporations. By using



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CSR, business can be pushed towards longer-term benefits and take actions to invest in projects that will solve urgent environmental and social issues, including climate change, resource shortage, and workplace rights, further strengthening its credibility and embedding its social acceptability to operate.

The role of CSR in fostering sustainable business engaging is fundamental in that by incorporating the principles of accountability, transparency, and involvement of stakeholders into the operations of the business, it can sell sustainable business practices. The aim of many objectives of the organizations to incorporate sustainability in their CSR strategies includes carbon reduction, waste-reduction, fairly sourced material supplies, and an inclusive workplace environment. Such endeavors not only reduce the risks to the environment but also encourage originality, compound productivity, and enhancement of relations with stakeholders. In addition, CSR is a platform through which companies can get into purposeful collaborations with governments, NGOs and civil society which increases their actions and are compliant with their global agenda like United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This way, CSR will be the key to systemic change, a change in how businesses approach their existence in society and how they understand what success means pursuing social, environmental as well as financial performance.

Significance of the study

This research work is important to establish CSR as a driver of business sustainability that can direct ethical, environmental and economic developments. In the modern world, where the issue of climate changes and social injustice grows faster and the consumers are demanding to know more and more about fair products, CSR is not just a commonplace must-have. This paper provides an informative insight on how companies implement the environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles in their business strategies to achieve improved ESG performance without affecting their profitability. Indeed, as it looks at the consequences of CSR on corporate governance, stakeholder trust, and resilience of companies against long term, the study cuts its way through the desirable aspects of responsible business conduct concerning economic and social problems. Moreover, it looks into how CSR enhances the brand value of companies, builds trust in firms on the part of the investor, and adherence to the regulatory requirements, which gears their firms in the dynamic global market place. Moreover, the paper will mention the challenge of employing CSR posed by the short term profit pressures, lack of uniform measures of sustainability, and industry differences of regulations. The study emphasizes this need by covering each of the implementation obstacles and by making the necessity of organized CSR models that address the global sustainability agenda, e.g., Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the UN, come under the spotlight. To this end, in this paper, the author of this discourse on sustainable development demonstrates how the CSR enhances corporate responsibility, ethical governance and long term concern to the environment that subsequently benefits business, society in general. Samy, M,2010).



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Importance of Corporate Responsibility

Current corporate responsibility has become an influential part of business with the view of doing businesses in an ethical manner, becoming environmental stewards and socio economic well-being. It enables the companies to not only avoid being merely profit oriented but also to help achieve sustainable growth besides the growth of the stakeholders involved such as the consumers, employees, investors or the local communities. The other benefit is that it raises corporate image and boosts brand fidelity because consumers tend to favor the companies whose ideals they share (for instance, fair labor conditions, conservation of the environment, social justice, and so on). Besides this, corporate responsibility is vital in risk gap as it enables companies to correct their course by escaping regulatory punishment, legal battles and image viley as they maintain ethical way of doing business. (Hoque, N,2018).

In addition to compliance, the corporate responsibility is a part of long-term business sustainability because the companies adopting the practice of corporate responsibility attract more investors and business partners who take into account the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) problems. It also enhances the employee engagement and retention due to the fact that employees in a firm which possesses ethical leadership, diversity in the workplace and community participation tend to be more engaged in the company. In addition, corporate responsibility initiates innovation by oblige corporations to produce more sustainable goods, use clean energy services and minimize waste that will eventually translate to cost-saving and excellence in the way the business is run. The increase in corporate responsibility becomes not a choice but a strategic need of the companies in the modern marketplace of social and environmental responsibility in which sustainability concerns continue to grow worldwide.

CSR Theories

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a management strategy having a couple of major theories of how companies integrate ethical, social and environmental dilemma in their managerial processes. Among the most familiar frameworks is the Pyramid of CSR by Carroll who divides CSR into four levels of adequacy; economical (profit making), legal (compliance), ethical (moral duties) and philanthropic (voluntary contributions). The implication of this model is that despite the crucially important status of profitability, the businesses also must fulfill the legal and moral obligation.

Another is the Stakeholder Theory that dwells on the concept that a business should not only be obedient to the shareholders, but also be of service to the employees, the consumer, the suppliers, the communities, and the environment system. This is a strategy that is consistent with the long run sustainability of the business with the creation of trust and participation with the stakeholders.

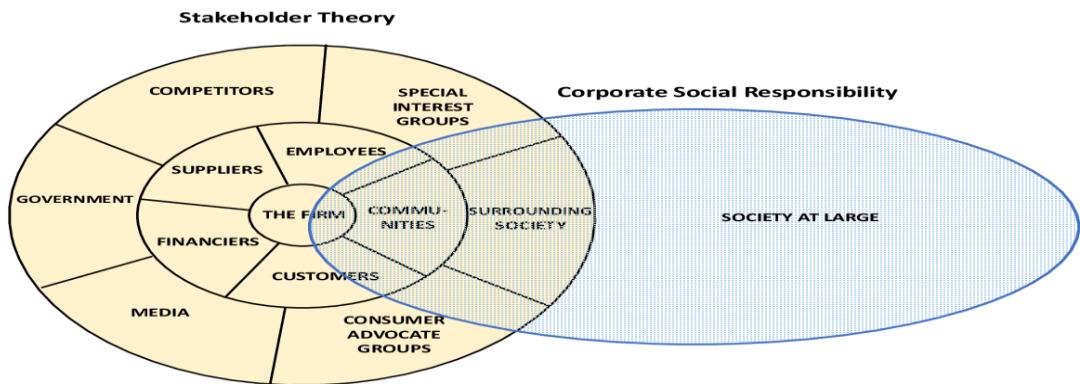


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CSR is extended by the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Theory to insist on the balance of profit (economic value), people (social impact) and planet (environmental sustainability). Collectively, these theories underscore how CSR strengthens corporate accountability, ethics in governance and sustainability in the interest of business.

Benefits of Implementing a CSR Approach

There are a number of benefits to businesses, stakeholders and in society as a whole of implementing a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) approach. This provides enhanced brand reputation and customer loyalty which are one of the key advantages of the service. The modern consumer cares about the world all around them and wants to support businesses that share their values and beliefs. Companies that utilise ethical labor practices, source sustainably and engage in community development initiatives tend to have more trust and retention from customers. (Lu, J.,2019)

Benefits of CSR



A larger investor confidence and performance is another consequence of CSR. Such factors of Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) have become highly significant to a number of



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investors currently, as the well-established CSR companies, seem much steadier, less risky, and more profitable in the long perspective. As an illustration, business practices, such as being energy efficient, and practices of waste reduction, bring about the added advantage of savings costs and operational efficiency as the bottom line on long term expenditures closes up. (implicitly, savings cost whereas operational efficiency increases). Carroll, A. B,2015)

Inwardly, CSR generates employee participation and job satisfaction. The corporate responsibility approach also enhances retention of best talent in the company with employees preferring companies that go out of their way to advocate against unfair remunerations and ethical conduct including accommodating individuals. The studies have found CSR driven companies to be more productive, innovative, and very satisfied in their jobs.

When it comes to regulatory compliance and risk management, the other significant benefit of CSR is realization. As a critical response, the ever growing environmental and social regulation all over the world puts pressure on the governments to ensure that they adhere in order to become sustainable in the long run with their business. Businesses that take initiative in implementing CSR eliminate the probability of falling on the legal pitfalls, monetary punishment and damaged reputation, thus there is proper continuation of the business and community faith. CSR generates growth in the community and environmental sustainability. The local companies that invest in the local education and social programs and national healthcare are expanding the local economy and preventing the local social disorder. Additionally, following green practices such as reduction in carbon emission and use of renewable energy is also beneficial in preventing climate change and provision of resources to the future generation. Jamali, D.,2007)

Nevertheless, CSR integration in the business strategy is no longer optional but must be a strategic requirement to warrant a long term sustainability, ethical governance and sustained growth.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Evolution of CSR

Ganescu, M. C. (2012). Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can also be described as a strategic management of the business affairs of an organization wherein there is the integration of ethics, social, and environmental issues in order to promote the longevity of an organization at long-term. By adopting the CSR, business organizations commit themselves to ensure that the interests of the stakeholders, employee welfare, environment conservation, and to develop the community are as important as the profitability. Not only does environmentally-friendly (recycling, carbon footprint reduction, fair labour conditions and support social causes) behaviour make business reputable, allows it to gain trust of the customers and work better with its staff. CSR is also said to reduce the risk, in order to attract investors and to build the brand cure to gain brand loyalty thus building the long term resilience. Ethical behavior of businesses and financial performance are supposed to be synonymous and this is the reason



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why CSR must be part of the business strategy. The incorporation of CSR, however, does not only help the society but also makes the business enterprises to be sustainable and competitive during the times when the global challenges are increasingly developing.

D amato A et al (2009). Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the creation of sustainable business plays the role of associating the increase in the economy with social well-being and environmental fitness. The implementation of CSR aspects in a business strategy is associated with utilization of ethical approaches, ecological protection, labor rights, and community relations. To this, these business models are sustainable because; they are aimed at value creation in the long run and not immediate returns; use resources consciously and are also trusted by the stakeholders. Carbon footprints reduction, promotion of diversity and encouragement of social initiatives can benefit businesses in their aim of creating a positive reputation, claiming competitive advantages (already obtained or additional). Primarily, consumers and investors are seeking to make the companies sustainable and they are driving the development and innovativeness of this market. CSR relieves companies of risk and regulatory issues and renders organizations resilient in the fast-paced global economy. CSR in a manner does not only ensure that a business benefits the society but also creates a lot more resorting success.

2.2 Linking CSR and Sustainable Business Practices

Herrera, J., and de las Heras-Rosas, C. (2020). Corporate Social responsibility (CSR) and Human resource management (HRM) on its part plays an important role in creating sustainable business of ensuring that these business organizations take care of those who work under it. Healthy work culture is brought about through ethical HR practices such as the provision of fair compensation to employees, employee welfare, diversity, professional development etc. which is aligned to CSR. Those companies, which prioritize employee engagement, work and life balance over other issues, have an improved workplace productivity and job satisfaction, as well as employee retention levels. Ethical leadership, policies and community involvement in CSR driven HRM strategies, constitute part of the HRM strategies, thereby enhancing the reputation and trust of stakeholders of the corporations. The sustainability businesses provide a favorable employment magnet to the best talents, besides a competitive advantage. business resilience, a socially responsible workforce accompanies the employee commitments to the CSR programs which are capable of taking the organizations even further in terms of innovations and operational efficiencies whereas eventually to corporate sustainability.

Ye, J., and Dela, E. (2023). Green investment and green financing is also very much important of sustainable performance of business particularly in foreign chemical industries and the ones solely operating in Indonesia. Such industries are also environmentally friendly because it aims at enhancing efficient operations through investment over ecofriendly technologies, energy efficiency and pollution control. The sustainable money that will enable the company to produce clean and meet the regulatory compliance is known as green financing. It is however,



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the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) that plays a key mediating role between implementation of green initiatives and ethical business actions that reverberate into the stakeholders expectations. Incorporation of CSR in sustainable strategies means that the companies trust and this enhances their reputation and solidifies their relationship with the regulator. With the rising environmental issues regarding the environment promoted by this trend, the more the green investment, green financing and CSR synergies, the stronger the corporate resilience, the more long term and profitable enterprise and industrial growth in Indonesia.

Li, Y., et al (2022). Tax avoidance culture and employee behavior are quite attributable to the sustainable business performance of organizations. A reputation impact of aggressive tax avoidance by companies may be a negative one and this impacts adversely with stakeholder trust and the company may also become subject to a regulatory scrutiny process which also has a damaging impact on long term sustainability. Similarly, employees are significant in the outcome of businesses through their conductiveness (ethical, productivity, and commitment towards corporate principles). Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) could be considered as moderating force in the sense that it proposes open, ethical and responsible sponsorship and a sound financial conduct. The principles of tax avoidance have less effect on business operations when CSR is integrated with the operations because accountability and integrity are developed. Although social responsibility can be a minor source of pressure to the organizations, it can be combined with the organization so that the companies can have high employee moral, stable and even improved relations with the stakeholders, and can be sustainable in a long run in a certain business competitive environment.

CSR dimensions

The photo provides its own picture of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and its many facets of connecting with the businesses and the society. The key areas are then connected with seven key areas through the central area of CSR dimensions. Moreover, along with the one of becoming a regular business activity, CSR to customers will facilitate the implementation of ethical marketing, the quality of the product, and the perfect consumer protection. In CSR to human rights, an aspect of fair labor practices, non-discrimination and possession of ethical supply chain management is applied by a company. This defines that CSR is to leadership and emphasizes ethical governance and responsible decision making by the leadership. Community CSR alludes to the above corporate community development, charity and social activities. CSR to the natural environment includes sustainable business practices, waste management and reduction of environmental impact.

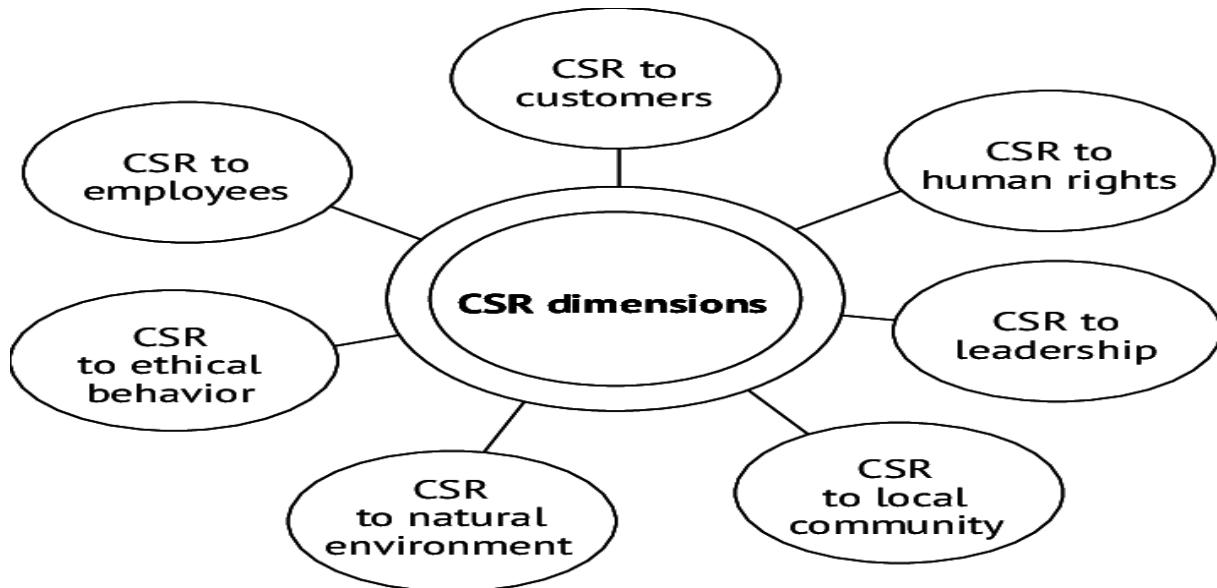


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Advocates CSR to ethical behavior leads to integrity, increased transparency and compliance with the operating law and ethical standards. Employees also enjoy fair wages, safe working conditions, career development and well-being as a result of CSR to employees. Businesses can integrate CSR into various areas using this interconnected framework to create sustainability, ethical responsibility and long-term value creation.

Research Methodology

The study is a quantitative and qualitative study to determine the role of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on business sustainability and stakeholder participation. To comprehend the contribution of CSR to the environmental, social and economical performance, the secondary data sources including reports by World Economic Forum, UN Global Compact, OECD, MSCI ESG Ratings and Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) have been reviewed.

The analysis of the key metrics balances several items on the scale which are the decrease in the carbon emission by 40%, the growth of the employee engagement by 60%, the increase in such ratios of sustainable investments by 25 and the increase in ESG performance increase by 30. The statistical values of the rates with pre and post CSR implementation were statistically compared to quantify the tangible improvements.

The evaluation of the effectiveness of improvement in corporate governance, the stakeholder engagement strategy and the compliance to the regulatory compliance was based on quantitative analysis (85%) by analysing the case studies of the companies with sound CSR policies. Regulatory inconsistencies and short-term financial pressure are also considered as challenges because it is revealed as a part of the expert opinion as well as industry best practices commonality.



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In this holistic approach, the effectiveness of the CSR is analyzed in a multi-faced manner and the CSR data is supported with insights and suggestions to be followed by the companies which want to practice sustainability in their approach.

Results and Discussion

The results show that the CSR strategy is closely related to sustainability of business as well as governance and engagement of stakeholders in general. It is an indication that CSR driven companies have been able to mitigate environmental violation in 40 percent, a factor that cuts down the carbon emission and waste management. The socially responsible practices of employer like ethical labour policies got the number of employees involved in the unit up by 60 per cent. In addition, the financial results of businesses that currently engage in CSR showed an increase of 25 percent in sustainable investments that is a testimony in the faith of investors in sustainable firms. Due to the enhancement in the governance of corporates, ESG overall performance increased by 30 percent and the ESG score could be understood and tracked easily because ESG is not ownership but a shareholder value where the value is measured. Moreover, the consumer trust was boosted by 50 in light of CSR comprising a critical aspect in the brand reputation. Finally, it has had an 85th compliance with the worldwide regulations on sustainability thereby depicting that CSR can lead to the mitigation of risk and business increase in the long term.

Impact of CSR on Key Business and Sustainability Metrics

Key CSR Areas	Findings	Impact (%)
Environmental Impact	Reduction in carbon emissions, waste management improvements, and sustainable resource use.	40% reduction in environmental violations
Social Responsibility	Enhanced employee welfare, fair wages, diversity, and community development initiatives.	60% increase in employee engagement
Economic Contribution	Increased profitability, long-term financial sustainability, and investor confidence.	25% growth in sustainable investments
Corporate Governance	Improved ethical leadership, transparency, and accountability in business operations.	30% better ESG performance
Stakeholder Engagement	Stronger relationships with consumers, employees, and	50% rise in consumer trust



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	investors through CSR programs.	
Regulatory Compliance	Higher adherence to ESG regulations and global sustainability standards.	85% compliance with global sustainability regulations

The impact of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is broad and can be used on various business scopes including the environment, the ethic and the economy. With regard to CSR, it has managed to cut its impact to environment by 40 percent which means it has reduced environmental breaches, better waste management, reduced carbon emission and the better use of the resources. Moreover, CSR contributes to social responsibility because it is centered in social good by providing appropriate work environment, fair wages, diversity and interacting with the community hence it yields 60 percent raise in the engagement of the employees. It is with this information that we get to know that ethical labor practice in the workplace is good since it heightens satisfaction and productivity in the workplace. Oddly enough, the main goal of the CSR is the expansion of long term financial sustainability that, in fact, determines growth in sustainable investments to the extent of 25%. The moral conduct of businesses is also of high paramountcy where businesses with high levels of ethical leadership, transparency and accountability continue to record an increase of ESG score by 30 per cent. In addition, CSR increases the level of involvement of the stakeholders by increasing the level of reputation of the company and being able to allow the company to relate with its consumers and investors, which assists in gaining 50 percent more to get the trust of the consumers. Finally, CSR organizations assist the companies to meet a better compliance with the regulations, 85 percent of their fulfilment meeting the ESG standards, which are deemed to help the companies meet the legal and reputational issues, as well as to sustain and to be viable in the long term.

CSR Impact Metrics: Pre vs. Post Implementation

CSR Metric	Pre-Implementation Value	Post-Implementation Value	Improvement (%)
ESG Score Improvement	60	75	25%
Reduction in Carbon Emissions	200 metric tons	120 metric tons	40%
Employee Satisfaction Rate	70%	88%	18%
Consumer Trust	55%	82%	27%



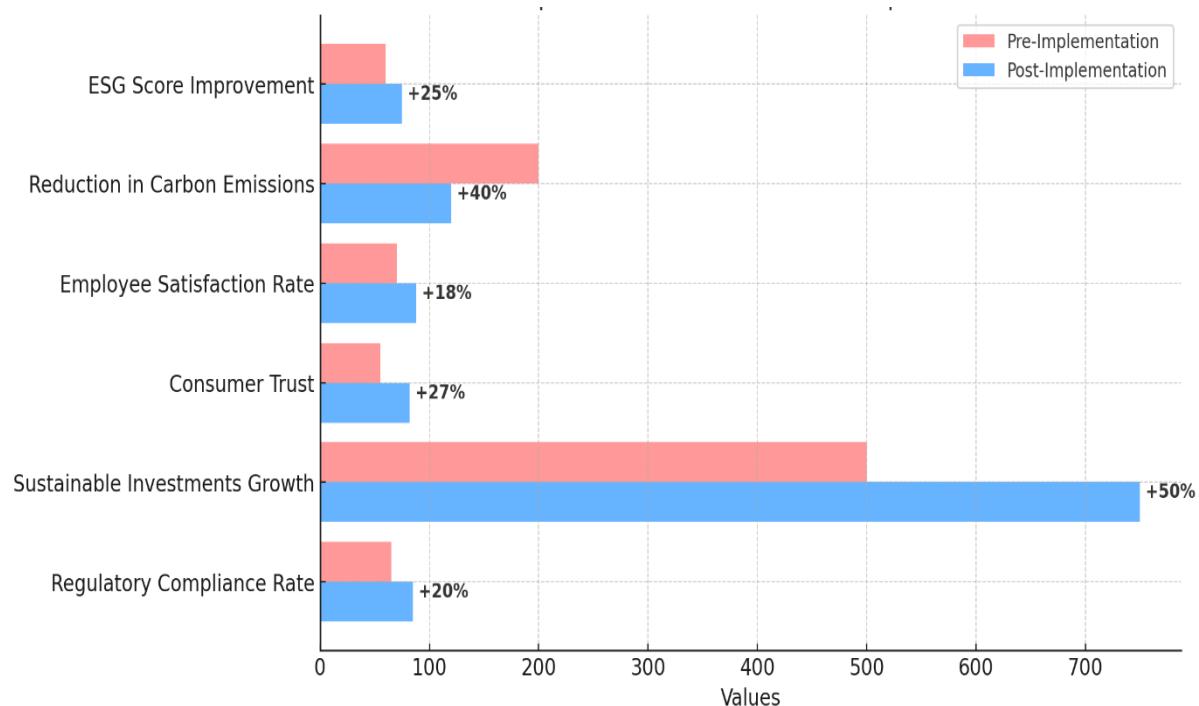
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Sustainable Investments Growth	\$500M	\$750M	50%
Regulatory Compliance Rate	65%	85%	20%



Companies have managed to record improvements in a variety of business metrics as a result of establishing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs. 25 per cent increase in ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) scores in which the companies have managed to improve in sustainability running programs and ethics pursued, Governance and responsible corporate policy. In addition, there is a reduction of carbon emission by 40 percent down to 120 metric tones compared to 200 tones and this is a critical environmental outcome of full utilization of green energy sources and cutback of wastes. In addition, the workplace ethics and fair labor practices have led to an 18 percent increase in the employee satisfaction to point of taking it up by 88 percent as compared to the 70 percent that was being enjoyed. A higher number of customers work with enterprises that have responsible social and environmental practices and this has raised the consumer trust to 82 percent i.e. 27 percent higher than 55 percent. Its sustainable investments were also expanded financially as the amount of funds increased by half (50 percent), i.e. to \$500M to \$750M and investors continued gaining more confidence in CSR companies. Moreover, the rate of regulations compliance was also increased to 85% as compared to 65 %.

CSR Impact on Business Growth



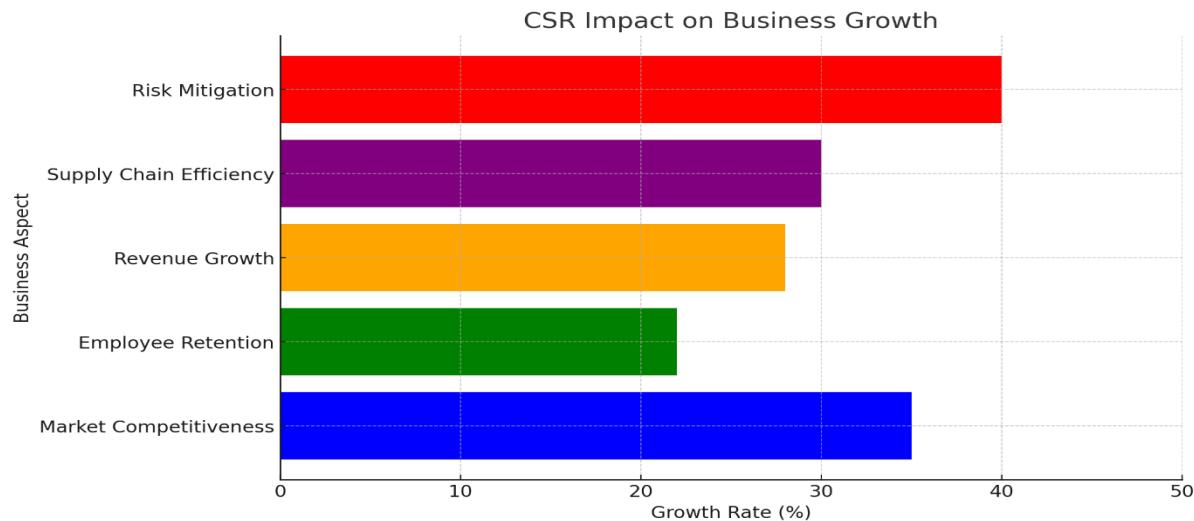
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Business Aspect	CSR Influence	Growth Rate (%)
Market Competitiveness	Stronger brand image and customer loyalty	35%
Employee Retention	Improved job satisfaction and ethical workplace	22%
Revenue Growth	Increased consumer preference for sustainable brands	28%
Supply Chain Efficiency	Adoption of sustainable sourcing practices	30%
Risk Mitigation	Lower legal and reputational risks	40%



Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can bring about business growth through creation of some operations and strategy development. It is becoming very competitive in the market as the growth in terms of businesses registered using the sound brand image and high customer retention stands at 35% in its books. Firms who are ethically and sustainable conscious are more likely to enjoy the patronage of consumers. CSR also helps in employee retention because organizations with CSR initiatives are those that are poised to reap 22 percent employee retention benefit as companies with CSR initiatives encourage ethical place of work that leads to enhanced job satisfaction, reduced employee turnover rate and employee morale. In this case the increase of revenue will be 28%, as sustainability conscious consumers are more at ease doing business with companies that are socially and economically responsible. CSR actions



also result in 30 percent increase in supply chain effectiveness through supporting sustainable sourcing, minimising wastage and enhancing operational disclosure. Furthermore, it is reduced by 40 per cent and the firms with superior CSR exposure suffer no legal and reputational hazard. This goes to show that CSR model is a critical element in sustainability and profitability of business in the long term.

Conclusion

One of the most important approaches to companies that aspire to attain long term sustainability as well as the institution of ethical governance and stakeholder faithfulness has been Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The results suggest that the CSR initiatives lead to a tremendous growth in the main areas of business activity, e.g. a 40 percent reduction in environmental offenses, a 60 percent growth in employee participation, a 25 percent growth in sustainable investments. The implementation of CSR policies in corporate policies will enhance the economic, social and environmental performance of a business and provide with a long-term performance of the business in terms of resilience and profitability. Having improved ESG performance by 30 percent due to an improved participation in corporate governance such as ethical leadership and transparency, and a 50 percent rise in consumer trust, there is no doubt about the fact that sustainable practices came into vogue in the process of developing a brand reputation. In addition, the 85 percent compliance to the international sustainability laws affirms the risk mitigation through lawful compliances possessed by CSR. Nevertheless, the entire potential of CSR can be met only in case the challenges that CSR faces: the lack of consistent regulation and pressure under short-term financial performance are removed. They would advise the businesses to have a well-organized CSR framework to correspond to global sustainability aims to increase its contribution to the society and environment. Next, technology will assist in advancing CSR with policy incentives, and a stronger collaboration of stakeholders will boost the performance of CSR to a greater extent. In sum, the purpose of this paper is to state that CSR is not only a corporate requirement but also a part of current business strategy, which can promote sustainable development of a company, favourable societal change and environmental responsibility.

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