

Corporate Social Responsibility and Women Development: A Survey of Cement Industry

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Abstract

Women play an important in the upliftment of economy of a nation. So, it is essential to focus on the development of women. The present study deals with the contribution of corporate social responsibility initiatives undertaken by cement industry of Himachal Pradesh in the growth and development of women especially. The study is descriptive in nature and a sample of 200 women respondents have been selected by using convenience or purposive sampling technique. The main objective is to study the impact of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities on the growth and development of women. The primary data has been analysed by using SPSS statistical software and after analysing the data it has been found that the corporate social responsibility activities initiated by Cement industry have positive impact on women development in Himachal Pradesh.

Keywords: CSR, Cement Industry, Women development, SPSS statistical software

Introduction

Business people have a responsibility to promote policies, make decisions, or form relationships that are desirable in light of societal goals and values. This is what CSR was all about (**Bowen 1953**). The term "corporate social responsibility" (CSR) was first used in the USA in the 1950s, but it gained popularity between 1980 and 2000 as businesses began to acknowledge and embrace some social obligation (**Srivastava et al, 2012**). **Milton Friedman (1970)** made the case in his famous essay that corporations had a duty to "conduct the business in accordance with shareholders' desires, which, in general, will be to make as much money as possible while complying with the basic rules of the society, both those embodied in law and those embodied in ethical custom." **Carroll (1991)** outlined four kinds of responsibility for corporate performance, including economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary, and described CSR as the whole spectrum of societal responsibilities that company has. Among them, "discretionary" obligations were the company's voluntary support of social causes including participation in community development or other social programmes relevant to public health and awareness. CSR, also known as business virtue, was described by **Vogel (2005)** as "practices that enhance the workplace and help society in ways that go above and beyond what firms are legally obligated to do."

A new Companies Bill was approved by the lower house of the Indian parliament in December 2012. It states that Public Sector Units (PSUs) and private businesses with annual revenues of over 10 billion rupees, net worth of at least 5 billion rupees, or net profits of at least 50 million rupees are required to contribute 2% of their average net profits over the previous three fiscal years to corporate social responsibility. This implies that reporting CSR expenditure to the corporate affairs ministry will become a required yearly task for 2500 firms in India, even if spending as such is not presently required. Approximately 100 billion rupees might be spent yearly on CSR initiatives, according to expert estimates. As a result, CSR would become an area where there would be regular expenditure rather than continuing to be sporadic corporate charity actions, as has been the case for many Indian corporations. Before this obligation, several multinational giants, including Tata, Mahindra, and others, gave a set percentage of their revenues to the societal good (**Abraham, 2013**). Small business units may not have the same economic clout as multinational corporations. This economic power is more crucial for improving women's empowerment in developing nations like India. The ideal definition of corporate social responsibility is business behaviour and governance that supports the attainment of women's empowerment. Corporate social responsibility may undoubtedly empower women by supporting their pursuit of an education and a dignified means of support so they can become contributing members of society. True female empowerment is not always simple to achieve. It needs the assistance of devoted individuals, motivated workers, rich financing sources, and strong political will. Therefore, it is necessary to provide some scientific data and connections between various elements linked to women's empowerment in order to get the attention of these individuals and organizations. The current study is not intended to be a goal in and of itself; rather, it is an effort to investigate the different social, economic, and other

factors that influence women's empowerment and serve as a roadmap for future scholars in this area. Multinational corporations are a part of the solution, not the issue, when it comes to women's rights. Indian businesses support women's rights in a variety of ways for moral and practical grounds. The empowerment of women in India is significantly improved by multinational corporations (**Kalva and Kumar, 2013**).

It seems like an impossible effort to empower women in social, economic, educational, political, and legal spheres. However, eradicating the deeply ingrained problem of contempt for women is doable with the committed and determined effort of family, society, corporate organisations, NGOs, local organisations, and the government. This essay illustrates how a company's CSR initiatives may support women's empowerment and the creation of a more just and equitable society. In addition to demonstrating the connection between CSR activities, women's empowerment, and organisational performance, the article demonstrates how the system dynamics method helps to revitalize women's emancipation through CSR. A casual loop is used to clearly demonstrate the relationship; the study only uses the casual loop; simulations have not been performed. The causal loop model shows in detail how CSR initiatives benefit women. From the loop, it is obvious that health and knowledge are crucial for any woman to feel powerful. While health leads to education and also offers women a sense of security and physical strength to take out acts and resist harassment against them, education gives them the skills needed to support themselves as well as the confidence and awareness of their rights. Women won't comprehend the rights and laws defending their interests unless they have access to education. Therefore, it is obvious that empowering women depends greatly on education and health (**Babu and Sahay, 2018**).

Company must responsibly and sustainably manage its societal responsibilities as a producer, employer, marketer, consumer, and citizen. CSR initiatives aim to make a difference in society as well as increase company reputation. Education, improving social norms, family planning, health and sanitation, establishing livelihoods, the environment, encouraging tree-growing and kitchen gardening, and other elements all have a role in the success of any approach for women's empowerment. To increase women's endowments and improve their exchange outcomes with the family, markets, state, community, and socio-cultural and political spaces—all of which are necessary for both poverty reduction and women's empowerment—collective strategies by organisations and different NGO's at the grassroots level must be developed. These strategies must go beyond microcredit (**Gupta and Kumar, 2018**).

Nayak and Khatei (2021) illustrate the need for more attention and a systematic strategy on CSR initiatives, even if Indian businesses are making efforts in these areas. Some businesses aren't even complying with the CSR Act's regulatory requirements. The development of CSR expenditure in relation to various CSR activities is not consistent across the entire nation of India. By enhancing job possibilities and raising women's engagement in economic activities, corporate houses should pay greater attention to promoting the advancement of women while engaging in CSR initiatives. Businesses operating in rural regions should also guarantee that these firms can offer sustainable revenue and become self-sufficient in the long run, resulting in long-term employment and true economic empowerment.

Thus, the CSR was first used in the USA in the 1950s, but it gained popularity between 1980 and 2000. CSR would become an area where there would be regular expenditure rather than charity initiatives. A new Companies Bill was approved by the lower house of the Indian parliament in December 2012. This implies that reporting CSR expenditure to the corporate affairs ministry will become a required yearly task for 2500 firms in India. As a result, CSR would become an area where there would be regular expenditure rather than continuing to be sporadic corporate charity actions, as has been the case for many Indian corporations. CSR initiatives in India empower women by supporting their pursuit of an education and a dignified means of support so they can become contributing members of society. This essay illustrates how a company's CSR initiatives may support women's empowerment and the creation of a more just and equitable society. The causal loop model shows in detail how CSR activities benefit women. The development of CSR expenditure in relation to various CSR activities is not consistent across the entire nation of India. CSR initiatives aim to make a difference in society as well as increase company reputation. Education, improving social norms, family planning, health and sanitation and other elements all have a role in the success of any approach for women's empowerment.

Research Gap

Several studies on the role of corporate social responsibility on women's development have been undertaken by scholars all around the world. However, the current study's primary focus is on analysing the role of corporate social responsibility efforts in elevating women in the mountainous state of Himachal Pradesh. There has been little or no research on this problem in the Himachal Pradesh cement industry. As a result, it is critical to evaluate the role of

corporate social responsibility in the development of women in Himachal Pradesh. As a result, this study was undertaken on "Corporate Social Responsibility and Women Development: A Survey of the Cement Industry."

Research Methodology

The research work has been conducted in a systematic manner which is required in research design. This study is descriptive in nature. The research methodology has been given as under: -

- **Statement of the Problem**

The current study looked on the role of the cement industry's corporate social responsibility efforts in the growth and development of women in the state of Himachal Pradesh. The issue is named as, **"Corporate Social Responsibility and**

Women Development: A Survey of Cement Industry".

- **Delimitation of the Study**

The current study focuses on the impact of the cement industry's corporate social responsibility initiatives to the upliftment and development of women living in the neighborhood of Cement Industry established in the state of Himachal Pradesh. The survey did not include women residing in cities or near Himachal Pradesh's manufacturing, service, transportation, tourist, processing, and construction industries.

- **Objectives of the Study**

- To investigate the impact of corporate social responsibility activities initiated by Cement industry for women development in Himachal Pradesh.

- **Source of Data**

The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale to measure responses to ten criteria, with 1 indicating "Strongly Disagree", 2 for "Disagree", 3 for "Neutral", 4 for "Agree" and 5 for "Strongly Agree".

- **Sampling Techniques**

The study's empirical findings are based on primary data obtained from a sample survey of 200 women respondents from locations where cement businesses operate in Himachal Pradesh. Because the ACC and Ambuja Cement businesses are now closed due to a disagreement between Adani Group and truck unions in the Barmana and Darlaghat regions, they were not included in the current research. Only Cement Corporation of India, Rajban, and Ultratech, Baga were chosen for the study. To collect samples for the study, convenience and purpose sampling strategies were used.

- **Reliability Test**

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
0.735	10

Internal consistency in the scale items is referred to as reliability. The Cronbach's Alpha test was used to assess the scale's reliability. Cronbach's Alpha is determined to be 0.735, which is more than 0.060, indicating that the scale is credible.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents. It demonstrates that all of the participants in this study are women, as the study's major focus is on women empowerment through corporate social responsibility efforts performed by the Cement Industry. It reveals that the bulk of respondents (49%) are between the ages of 26 and 35 years old, with over 35 years old (27%) and 15 to 25 years old (24%) correspondingly. According to the education variable, 69 respondents are graduates, while 49 have a plus certification. Out of 200 female replies, 35 are Matric students and 26 have qualifications other than those listed in the options. Other qualifications may include a diploma in computers, vocational training, and a diploma in painting and tailoring, among others, whereas just 21 women respondents had a postgraduate degree. Sixty-two percent of the overall sample chosen for this study is unmarried women, whereas 38 percent are married women. The income level indicates that the majority of respondents, 68.5 percent, have income less

than Rs. 10,000 per month, 17 percent have income greater than Rs. 20,000 per month, and the remaining 14.5 percent fall somewhere in between the two. As a result, the demographic features of the respondents, such as their age, marital status, level of education, and income, influence how they feel about corporate social responsibility operations undertaken by the Cement Industry in the state of Himachal Pradesh.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable		Number	Percentage
Age Group	15-25	48	24
	26-35	98	49
	35 and Above	54	27
	Total	200	100
Education	Matric	35	17.5
	Higher Secondary	49	24.5
	Graduate	69	34.5
	Post Graduate	21	10.5
	Others	26	13.0
	Total	200	100
Marital Status	Married	76	38
	Unmarried	124	62
	Total	300	100
Income Level	0-10,000	137	68.5
	10,001-20,000	29	14.5
	Above 20,000	34	17.0
	Total	200	100

Table 2: Responses of Respondents Regarding CSR Activities Initiated by Cement Industry

S.No	CSR Activities	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	S.D.	Skew.	Kurt.
1.	Cement Industry is paying immediate attention towards the pandemic such as COVID-19 and other microbial infections etc.	010	009	003	070	108	4.31	0.985	-1.956	3.739
2.	The process of recruitment and selection is fair and transparent especially for women.	011	035	002	091	061	3.79	1.227	-0.879	-0.429
3.	Funds have been provided for the maintenance and construction of separate women hostels and accommodations for women workers.	021	012	001	113	053	4.29	0.991	-1.840	1.838
4.	Providing Merits Scholarships, stationary items and meals facilities to the female children from underprivileged sections of the society	031	037	006	064	062	3.43	1.494	-0.431	-1.361
5.	Proper measures have been followed by the management while promoting the women employees	027	029	005	099	040	3.45	1.357	-0.671	-0.943
6.	Schemes for re-enrollment of dropouts female students especially in rural areas	007	018	001	103	071	4.13	1.078	-1.376	1.323
7.	Charitable activities have been undertaken for the welfare and development of women especially	021	036	005	099	039	3.41	1.301	-.0658	-0.962

8.	Schemes and Financial support programmes for the women-upliftment through establishment of self help group	003	007	09	099	082	4.27	0.893	-1.521	2.962
9.	Providing opportunities to generate employment via establishment of self help group	002	019	007	103	069	4.11	1.112	-1.154	0.797
10.	Education, Training and development programmes for women to enhance their competence	007	09	007	104	073	4.31	1.476	-1.454	1.987

The above table shows response of respondents regarding CSR activities initiated by Cement industry for women development in Himachal Pradesh. It reveals that the majority of respondents are agreeing with all the above statements, a few respondents are disagreed with in these statements. The table 2 also presents the descriptive statistics analysis of response of respondents regarding CSR activities initiated by Cement industry. The calculated mean value is more than expected mean value it reveals that the responses of respondents are shift from lower side to higher side on the five point likert scales. Standard deviation shows approximately 1.20 variations for the mean. Negative value of skewness shows its variation higher side from the mean and positive value of skewness depicts variation towards lower side from the mean. With the evidence of negative value of skewness, it explains the majority of responses show variation higher side from the mean. However, Kurtosis helps to know the shape of a frequency curve. It measure with the help of beta value. If beta value is more than 3 it knows leptokurtic, if beta value is less than 3 it shows platykurtic and if beta value is equal to 3 it show mesokurtic. In the above table maximum shape of distribution is platykurtic. It has been found that the majority of respondents are satisfied with the various CSR activities initiated by Cement industry for women development in Himachal Pradesh. It has been concluded that the corporate social responsibility activities initiated by Cement industry have positive impact on women development in Himachal Pradesh.

Findings and Conclusion of the Study

From the above discussion, it has been found that the Himachal Pradesh Cement Industry's major focus is on women empowerment through corporate social responsibility efforts. The demographic characteristics of the respondents reveal that all of the participants in this study are women. As a result, their age, marital status, level of education and income all have direct influence about the corporate social responsibility activities initiated by the cement industry for the welfare, growth and development of women in the state of Himachal Pradesh. The descriptive statistics analysis of responses of respondents regarding CSR activities initiated by Cement industry in Himachal Pradesh reveals that the responses of respondents are shift from lower side to higher side on the five-point likert scales. Negative value of skewness shows its variation higher side from the mean. Kurtosis helps to know the shape of a frequency curve; it measures with the help of beta value. Thus, it has been found that the majority of respondents are satisfied with the various CSR activities initiated by Cement industry for women development in Himachal Pradesh.

Policy Implications of Study

The present study helps to determine the contribution of corporate social responsibility activities undertaken by cement industry in the upliftment and development of women especially. Taking into consideration the outcomes of present study the management of the cement industry and state authority may frame the appropriate policies and strategies in order to focus more on the women development.

Limitations of the Study

This study has some limitations such as:

- The primary focus of this study was solely on women's development through corporate social responsibility activities by the cement industry.
- Despite efforts to assure accuracy, it is unknown if the data provided by respondents is correct or incorrect.

Further Scope for Study

This study looked into the role of corporate social responsibility on the development of women in the Himachal Pradesh cement industry. It is necessary to investigate the role of other sectors, including as education, services, pharmaceuticals, construction, and telecommunications, among others, in the advancement of women in the state. It is also necessary to investigate the role of political, social, ecological, environmental, international, legal, and geographical elements in the growth, upliftment, and development of women in Himachal Pradesh.

Conflict of interest on behalf of all authors, the corresponding author states that there is no conflict of interest.

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