

The Intersection of Corporate Social Responsibility, Sustainability and Community Engagement in Pharmaceutical Industry- A Review

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Abstract

Public reception decides the effectiveness of CSR practices. Poor reception might interrupt good intention of companies and results in withdrawal of more attempts and shift the focus towards business goals alone. Pharmaceutical sector is no exception for this assertion as there is criticism regarding waste elimination, non-accessibility of life saving drugs and non-compliance issues. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is the one effective way to create more awareness about the nature and character of industry to communities. Creating Sustainability and enhancing community engagement through CSR activities is another way to communicate the communities about the issues and facts of industry. This study glorifies the concept of understanding 'role of effective CSR in bridging gap between community perception and industry communication on sustainable corporate giving within the industry specific ethical framework'. To get insight on this, the study adopted the Systematic Literature Review of published studies sourced from databases and other resources. The implications have been drawn from the review process with three intentions in mind, namely **a)** Identifying relevant theoretical implications from the past studies, **b)** Understanding the challenges of current CSR scenario in the Pharma industry in relation to sustainability and community engagement **c)** Formulating research propositions and agenda for future research.

The study after critically reviewing 72 studies, finds that the community perception and community engagement (CE) has been the biggest challenge for pharma sector to achieve and there is a need for development of integrated framework that connects community engagement with CSR strategy of companies. CE has emerged as the key component to determine the impact of CSR activities in pharma industry. Apart from balancing profitability and ethical responsibility, creating environmental sustainability is a biggest concern for CSR in pharma. Another under researched and sector specific challenge of CSR especially in Indian context is, understanding the social fabric of marginalized communities. There is a need to identify and study the necessary factors that stimulates community engagement in those communities. The cases of firms balancing these challenges through their CSR strategy has been discussed.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility, Challenges of CSR, Community Engagement, Sustainability.

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I. Introduction

The pharmaceutical industry in India is on rapid growth with the market size to reach soon to the estimate of 130 billion USD (**ibef.org**). With the traditional strengths like cheap skilled workforce, low-cost manufacturing process, the industry placed itself on the global supply chain maps of well-developed countries. The industry is renowned for its resilience, strong pursuit of innovation, manufacturing potential, expertise of performance during crisis times, sustainable practices for long-term growth, digital transformation and automation, adoption of IOT technology and strong global presence. Despite of all these strengths that explains the optimal profitability curve, industry gained lot of criticism regarding demeaning public trust, aggressive pricing, environmental pollution especially water sources, ethical and compliance issues and meagre operational efficiency in marginalized communities. These real banes will affect the longevity of reputation and good will of industry. So, there is a drastic need to understand more about the equation of pharma industry with society. Firms have to understand the fact that, 'it's not about manufacturing medicines alone, it is about making them accessible and affordable for the people who really need it' (**Bluestone et al.,2002**). Industry has to focus on higher purposes like stakeholder welfare, societal trust, healthcare equity and well-informed consumer. In this era of digitization and highly accessible information resources, the informed consumers are looking for benefits beyond utility and price. This aforementioned benefit can be offered through practicing certain sustainable policies and being socially responsible (**Sundar.p.,2013**).

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a way for businesses to balance the equilibrium between private wealth creation and public good. CSR is always present in the business scenario in the form of philanthropy and corporate giving from centuries. But the insight here is to understand the fact that empowers the companies in multiple ways is, to understand the thick line difference between 'doing charity' and 'being responsible'. Understanding this difference contribute to inspire a holistic perspective towards CSR implementation (Ratan Tata & Sundar.,2013). The major CSR activities in pharma industry focusses on creating health care awareness, preventive disease care, education and skill development, green manufacturing and green chemistry etc (Biswas.,2019). The CSR implementation reaches its goals only when there is complete engagement from all of its stakeholders. It is essential to study and explore the engagement levels of people involved in this activity namely policy makers, employees and communities. Along with impact assessments, CSR in pharma is in dire need of theoretical frameworks that interconnects community engagement and sustainability.

So, the point of contention here is to understand the necessary theoretical underpinnings to integrate these elements and develop a framework that commends public trust and societal wellbeing for CSR in pharma. In the upcoming sections the review and personal observation of theoretical literature is discussed. The studies that investigated the nuanced relationship between CSR in pharma, sustainability and community engagement in both theoretical and empirical perspectives were considered. The rationale behind selection of literature for the study is discussed below. the discussion presented in this study provides a reminder to the CSR strategy makers to rethink the institutional and human capacities and realign with achievable goals.

1.2 The Rationale behind the Study

Every research starts with a basic point of question in mind. This study started with the fundamental point 'Does CSR adds value and insight to companies in the pharma industry?'. Since executing CSR is mandatory activity in India according to Section 135 of Companies Act 2013, companies are implementing it. Another of point of concern here is 'Are companies in pharma really concerned about the impact programmes rather than charity?'. In literature there are two schools of thought here. The first one is concerned about the basic understanding that CSR is a business strategy and works as any business function. Invest in CSR and get reputation and good will as the ROI (Return on Investment). The second view speaks about the enlightened understanding and general intention to be good to society which is called normative function of business (Smith, 2003). The pharmaceutical industry should adopt second school of thought for CSR in order to achieve sustainable growth both in terms of profitability and social welfare. Numerous studies and growing body of evidence asserted this fact that companies can earn more by just being good (Pohle & Hittner, IBM, 2008). Numerous studies investigated both the views on CSR and investigated the benefits that companies going to earn by being good to themselves and society. They categorized the benefits as intrinsic (Company personal gains) and extrinsic (Societal gains).CSR directly correlates with Company Financial Performance, managing stakeholders in the positive direction and improves profitability (Min M et al.,2018). CSR impacts organizational level outcomes in many different ways. CSR with improved engagement in sustainable practices increases the level of organizational performance (Saxena et al.,2021). Another reason for selecting study of CSR in pharmacy industry is the more percentage of environment effect the industry have when compared to other sectors. The sector should contribute themselves better by exercising more altruistic motives. Academic researchers must act at this part to contribute more theoretical knowledge to the sector that aligns profits and social good on the same line. Making affordable and accessible vaccine during Covid -19 pandemic saved the whole world from all kinds of social and economic fallouts (Chan et al.,2020). However, its is not a simple thing to do for the industry to maintain balance between sustainability and profitability amid growing operational costs. Even the research and development in the industry also struggling to reduce carbon emissions through green chemistry (Smith A.,2008). This raised interest to investigate more about pharmacy industry regarding sustainability aspect. The aim is to find any literature that connects these issues in the more beneficial way for all the stakeholders involved: employees, investors, consumers, government, business partners, community and NGOs.

1.3 Theoretical Overview of the Study

This section explains the elements involved in the research. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Sustainability and Community Engagement constitutes major elements for the study. The fundamental theory that defines these three elements in this study is as follows:

1.3.1 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

There are multiple definitions, views, perspectives and frameworks that define CSR in the literature. Few authors viewed it as a phenomena, concept, philosophy and construct (Dahlsrud,2008). But there is no particular way to define responsibility in business context. After reviewing lot of definitions and ideas about CSR, it is clearly understood that it is multi-dimensional, changes according to the context, changes according to

the sector. Here are some effective ways to define CSR from the personal observation. The most commendable way to define CSR is by **(Pohle & Hittner, IBM, 2008)** in their value report “CSR for Sustainable growth”. They extracted this understanding from the perspectives of CSR practitioners and strategists from 200 companies around the world. CSR can be understood through the process of transformation from: ***Cost to growth; Visibility to transparency and containment to engagement.*** This explains how a company can incorporate CSR as core strategy to manage its impact on business, handle information and dive through relationship with all stakeholders. It gives a 360-degree perspective of what an actual CSR must be. Any activity that addresses these three aspects defines CSR for a company in any sector. The most adopted view and definition of CSR is by **Carroll (1979,1991)** as “Any activity that encompasses economic, ethical, legal and philanthropic expectations of organization and society”, can be termed as CSR activity. **Van Marrewijk (2003)** stated that CSR cannot be defined generally as the social, economic, environmental concerns differs for different sectors. It is more sector specific. It can be defined as *the necessary voluntary interactions company make with its stakeholders to include economy, social and environmental benefits in their business operations.* WBCSD (**World business Council for Sustainable Development,2000**) opened the new dimension of sustainability into CSR. According to council, *the continuous commitment that ensures the benefit of workforce, environment and ethical conduct and improves of quality of life of communities at large can be termed as CSR.* Another important aspect of CSR was added by **Indian NGOs (2003)** i.e., CSR is a business process that occurs in the environment where everyone is sensitive and careful about the activities, they do with each other, nature and society. This opened the lot of discussion about the significance communication patterns in CSR and difference between intrinsic CSR and extrinsic CSR. **Dahlsrud (2008)** after critically analysing 37 definitions of CSR given by different authors and organizations stated that *CSR cannot be defined and it is only understood based on social construct and sector.* Effective CSR never ignores these five dimensions; Environmental, Economic, Social, Stakeholder and Voluntariness. Apart from these the important aspect of CSR is to satisfy all these dimensions with ethical conduct and transparent reporting (ISO 26000).

The most suitable definition to define CSR in pharma industry must the combination of these combination of views and different definitions. The dimensions that defined CSR by these three authors namely, Dahlsrud (2008); WBCSD (2000) and ISO 26000 (2010) comprises key dimensions of CSR in pharma. Based on all these viewpoints, the current study define CSR in pharma assumes the following dimensions: *Ethical Conduct, Social Equity, Growth mindset for society at large, Environmental sustainability, Engaging communities, Economic Concerns, Legal Concerns and Transparency* while chasing the goal of health care equity.

1.3.2 Sustainability

The fundamental of sustainability in business is to maintain ecosystems today for the future requirements. Most of the learners think sustainability and CSR are one at the same. They are interconnected in certain ways, as they both speak volumes about environment and societal benefits. Sustainability is a much broader concept than CSR (**Bansal,2005**). Sustainability mostly explained as TBL (Triple Bottom Line) sustainability in most of the studies. Businesses irrespective sectors should attain sustainability in three dimensions, Economic sustainability, Social Sustainability and Environmental sustainability often refereed as profit, people and planet in studies (**Elkington,1997**). There are many frameworks that gives a clarity and vision for companies about the exact goals of sustainability. SDGs (Sustainability Development Goals) developed by UN (United Nations) in 2015 provide exact guidelines to all the corporates. Business can align their strategies with these goals according to sector specifications. Integrating sustainability into business strategy can be a driving force for ethical behaviour and inclusivity (**Porter & Kramer, 2007**). It gives edge for the companies in competition. Sustainability is the biggest challenge for pharmacy industry because of more waste disposal and heavy carbon emissions and chemical wastes. The industry has direct influence on human health unlike other sectors. It has to deal with numerous issues like high pricing issues, less affordability of drugs by poor people and making life saving decisions critical for certain sections of society. So, it needs more studies to investigate how pharma companies can aim for SDGs through their CSR activities?

1.3.3 Community Engagement

The Community can be defined as a group of people living together on the ground of sharing common resources for survival, common interests for development, coordinating with each other for living, and coexisting in the same place for communal harmony and welfare. It can be a lot of things other than these according to different streams like psychology, sociology, anthropology, political science, etc. Business and Community are deeply interconnected as they coexist with each other. Both uses resources from the place. It is the responsibility of companies to share common goals of development and welfare with the communities they exist with (**Freeman et al.,2006**). Key aspects that define coexistence are Social Capital (**Cooke, 2002**) and Social Interaction (**Godwin, 1997**). *Social Capital functions as the development of common values and norms between avenues*

through the aspects of spatial proximity, culture, and religion. Its works as a self-reinforcement tool that eases social interaction between the community and business.

Communication and networking are very important between communities and business. *With the right levels of social capital and interaction community and business can become a virtuous circle with high levels of trust, co-operation, reciprocity, civic engagement and social equilibria (Deigh et al.,2016)*. Community engagement is the key factor in success of any CSR project. The support from each other contribute to resilience in the times of crisis. Community participation in CSR activities gives strategic advantage to the firms. Community is a significant aspect of stakeholder group of business. The limited research and understanding of community engagement in CSR activities motivated this study. Exploring theoretical foundations of how firms can maintain this engagement for long term is the need of the hour.

This gap in the literature and the primary quest to come up with a conceptual framework for CSR and sustainability in pharma industry has been the main motivators of this study. With all these three elements in mind the, we planned to investigate the dynamic between these three aspects, namely

- ➔ Corporate Social Responsibility
- ➔ Sustainability
- ➔ Community Engagement

Therefore, the study has started with some questions in mind. These questions are the guidelines for the review of literature which the coming sections are going to bring forth. The fundamental of this study is to investigate the possibility of integrated network between the three dimensions. To understand and measure the statistical viability between these aspects, a right context is much necessary. There are certain objectives researcher has set for this review process

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1. To identify relevant studies for the review of literature
2. To understand the research questions, objectives and limitations addressed in the past studies
3. To identify research gap that may help in the advancement of this study
4. To formulate a conceptual framework that explains the relationship between CSR and Community engagement, and how they compensate each other for sustainability.

1.5 Methodology

The study is completely dependent on secondary data as it is mainly a review study. Learning and developing new perspectives from the already existing knowledge are the core purpose of any review study. After framing research objectives, the first stage is to collect the relevant literature for the study. Systematic Literature Review method guided us to understand the process of collecting the literature from databases. The three-step process includes a) Searching for relevant articles from the existing databases both digital and non-digital, b) Identifying relevant studies based on the criteria selected manually, and c) Acquiring those articles from the databases. Firstly, searching the databases like Scopus, Google Scholar, JSTOR, Emerald, ProQuest, EBSCO, Wiley, Springer, Science Direct, and Sage publications. To identify relevant research, thesis and dissertation searches were undertaken on ProQuest, Google Scholar, and other sources all across the globe. The basic keywords used for the search are following:

- ➔ First Search: Evolution of CSR -theories and definitions
- ➔ Second Search: CSR in pharma- Driving force to sustainability
- ➔ Third Search: Challenges of CSR in pharma in Indian Context
- ➔ Fourth Search: CSR and Community Engagement in all sectors
- ➔ Fifth Search: Challenges of CSR in general
- ➔ Sixth Search: Community engagement in successful CSR activities
- ➔ Seventh Search: CSR, Sustainability and Community engagement in pharma sector

The basic criteria for screening the articles for final review depends on relevance to the objective of the study, number of citations, peer reviewed, language (mostly English), availability of paper. Based on the results produced by the search engines and the criterion selected, a total of 72 papers were acquired including published research articles, thesis reports, survey reports by organizations, reports of companies from their websites, reports by government, etc. The review of these articles is discussed in the following sections.

1.6 Review of Literature

1.6.1 Studies related to CSR – Pharma Sector-Challenges

Aurora & Puranik (2004) in their study on foundations of CSR in India, have given some theoretical insights for the learners. The findings of this study might not be relevant for this study because of timeline. There are lot of policy changes in CSR during this period. CSR has been mandated after this study. But the theoretical

insights are still relevant. The constant discussion in the paper is between ‘rhetoric and practice’ of CSR. It is still relevant as we see mismatch between CSR vision statements and actual reports. The important insight onto understanding the current day CSS. The success of contemporary CSR lies in understanding the difference between mandatory and voluntary behaviour.

Smith A.D. (2008) in their research on understanding the role of CSR in leveraging sustainable competitive advantage in pharma industry stated that *it is must to keep all stakeholders informed about value added CSR activities of the sector*. The case studies on GlaxoSmithKline and Bayer corporation explained how effective CSR strategies can create sustainable competitive advantage. The key is investing more into accessibility and affordability of drugs through CSR rather than R&D (manufacturing new). Improving operational effectiveness and manufacturing potential will definitely bring competitive advantage. According to their observation it is short lived when compared the sustainable competitive advantage through CSR. *The major finding of the study is the immense pressure on pharma to improve their CSR potential*.

Min et al., (2017) investigated the impact on CSR on the Corporate Financial Performance in pharmaceutical industry. A total 20 companies participated in the survey. All the hypotheses of the study were proved except for one. The finding include; *the significant contribution of CSR on corporate profitability, pharma companies’ approach TBL for understanding their sustainability; all dimensions of TBL have impact on corporate profitability except for one, environmental, and then size of the firm doesn’t matters to conduct CSR*.

Ashrafi.M. et al., (2018) investigated the theories and their impact on CSR and CS integration. The study attempted to develop an integrated framework of CSR & CS. The study utilized Carroll pyramid theory, legitimacy theory, stakeholder theory and institutional theory to construct a conceptual framework. Even though the model needs empirical evidence, the conceptual clarity embedded in this model is real. The bottom of pyramid is the CSR of company balancing economic, social and environment goals of company, with CS in the middle and sustainability being the tip of the pyramid.

Droppert .H & Bennet. S (2015) explored CSR in multi-national pharmaceutical companies. the authors conducted personalized interviews with managerial personnel, who were actually responsible for CSR in their respective companies. the interview comprises of aspects like the existence detailed action plan and execution of CSR in their companies, some notable CSR practices like health system strengthening, product involvement, and motivation for CSR in their firms. The findings presented in this study have some valuable insights for CSR researchers. One of respondents responded like the follows when inquired about their perspective/definitions of CSR

“We view CSR as a spectrum ranging from philanthropy to non-profit activities, to shared value activities where we pursue initiatives that generate societal value and economic value for the company”.

This is one of the best ways to perceive CSR. The study highlighted the struggle the companies of same industry often face with these kinds of concepts. The so called “*Wide Pluralism of Values*” phenomena is present in pharma industry regarding CSR. This can be investigated further. The study identified public reputation, competitive advantage and philanthropy as the strong motives for CSR practitioners in pharma industry.

Harvard Business Review Analytics) (2023) article on “Reframing Health Equity as a Strategic Pharma imperative” is one of the best insightful articles for this study. It addressed how pharma companies are addressing the complexity of health equity. The authors urge of perceive health equity as a business opportunity to the companies is so rational. This is the best goals for CSR activity in pharma industries. The suggestion of converting CSR goals into business objectives is one good way to receive CSR. The report identified “DATA” as one of the complexities that is promoting inequity. One of the major concerns for pharma companies “*lack of primary data regarding public reception of pharma practices*”. *The report identified certain challenges like lack of funding in collection of primary data (patient related equity data), inability to demonstrate the impact of health equity, trouble finding and engaging with community partners*. The current takes inspiration from these challenges.

Baumann-Pauly, D et al., (2013) in the investigation of “Does size of the firm matters for the implementation of CSR?” explored the key issues like company logics, personal values of owners and stakeholder pressure. The study rightly pointed out the difference between small and large firms in understanding and organizing CSR. This study is relevant for any sector as it studied about the common issues. *The study suggested that every firm needs a context sensitive CSR strategy based on the size of firm as certain factors motives, decision-making, drivers of CSR, impact, stakeholder engagement, accountability mechanisms vary according to the size of the firm*.

Ray.R.(2021) investigated the trends in CSR in Pharmaceutical sector in Indian Context. The study focussed on aspects like CSR and Statutory Compliance, Percentage of utilization of funds, status of unutilized funds, fundamental CSR activities in pharma, focus on SDGs by pharma, private partner collaboration for conducting

CSR and impact of COVID-19 crisis on CSR in pharma in Indian context. The study selected the top BSE pharma companies and studied their secondary data reports in order to understand the disclosure trends also. Companies like Sun, DRL, Cipla, Biocon, Torrent, Lupin, Abbott, Cadila, and Alkem were selected. The study observed out of 10 five companies had unspent funds on CSR. Pharma companies are aligned with SDG3, SDG6, SDG9, SDG10, SDG12, SDG13, and SDG17 of SDGs prescribed by UN. The selected Indian pharma companies were mostly focussing on SDG3, SDG13 and SDG6. The study commented that “Law alone cannot do everything” when analysing about the nature the disclosure reporting on CSR by these companies.

Datta, S., & Karande, V. (2017) attempted to define ‘STRATEGIC CSR’ & ‘RESPONSIVE CSR’ through their data analysis on select Indian Pharmaceutical companies. Both the forms of CSR have zero financial risk on the companies. strategic CSR was defined as any activity that opens new markets or opportunity for the business whereas responsive CSR as any activity that brings direct benefit to the business. One of the insightful findings of *this study is to understand the necessity of executing CSR in the plant locations rather than project locations. The study suggested to continue more activities of CSR around plant locations.* Strategic CSR around plant locations improves ‘inclusive nature of growth’ of companies.

Crane, A., & Glozer, S. (2016) reviewed the importance of having a proper CSR communication policy and framework for the companies. *The study highlights the pivotal role of communication in stakeholder engagement.* It is very difficult for the companies to keep their message clear and authentic in the contemporary digital world, where there are high chances of misinterpretation, criticism, scrutiny, distractions etc. *Communicating about CSR objectives and activities from stakeholder point of view is the best practice for the pharma firms. Stakeholder perception plays a prominent role in effective CSR communication.* The communication properly designed is half work done in the matters of CSR. The study after intensive review of numerous theories, perspectives formulated an integrated framework called 4Is framework of CSR communication.

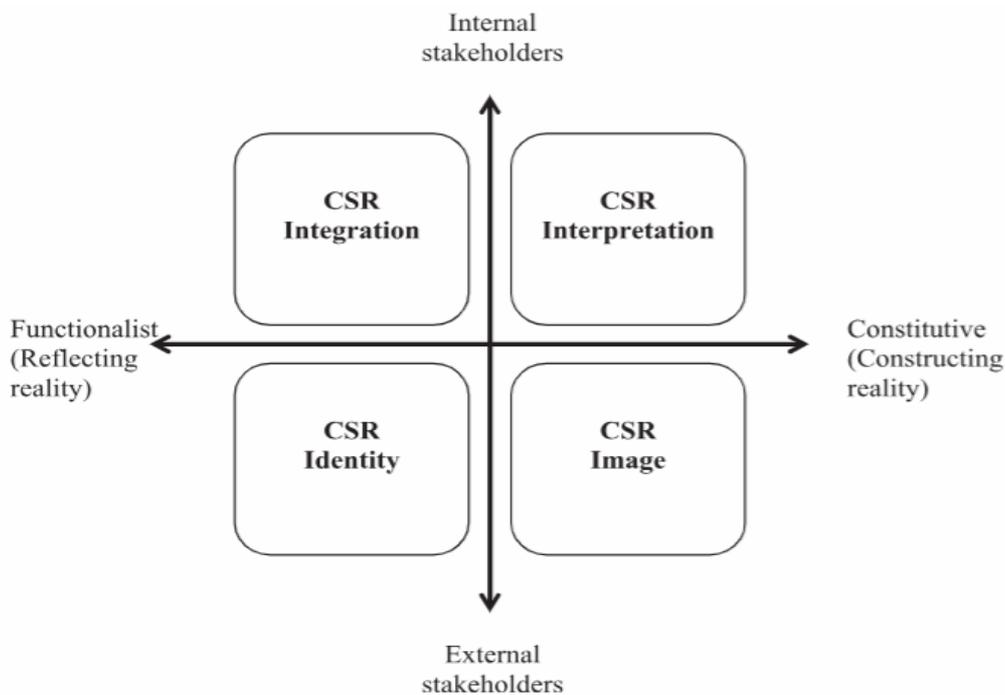


Figure 1: 4I framework of CSR Communication (Source: Crane, A., & Glozer, S. (2016))

Arevalo, J. and Aravind, D. (2011) enlisted some approaches, drivers and barriers of CSR in India through interviewing managers and policy makers of top UN Global Compact Companies. So, these insights are directly from the minds of practitioners. The study was mainly aimed to understand three things: firstly, among Liberal, Statist, Stakeholder and ethical approaches, which one is dominant in Indian CSR; secondly the motives of CSR for Indian companies and lastly the obstacles for CSR implementation. The findings of this objectives are: Firstly, *Indian CSR is dominated by Stakeholder approach*; Secondly the ethical mindset and managerial personal values majorly, motivates Indian CSR and: Lastly the main obstacle of *CSR is the non-availability of knowledge resources regarding CSR approaches and theories by companies. majority of managers felt CSR is a highly complex process and requires proper training to perform which is absent in many cases.* The knowledge management of CSR in companies is not existent. This is definitely one major concern and area of research for

future thinkers. Other obstacles involve no coordination between departments, miscommunication, lack of clarity in CSR strategies, not prioritizing CSR as business function etc.

Jothi, M. (2016) attempted to explore the executives' take on CSR in both public and private firms of all sectors. The study provides an in-depth analysis into minds of internal people of companies. The perception studies and surveys are of utmost importance for every subject to evolve from time to time. Based on the survey conducted regarding the strong motivators of CSR inside the company, the mandatory Companies Act 2013 been the one. Some other key observations between public and private firms 'views regarding CSR: *public treated it as social obligation, whereas private treated it as strategic tool for branding. This study has given a raw insight into the CSR implementation in companies. No matter how strong and humanly the philosophy is constructed and written on vision statements, if stakeholders are not perceiving it as same way...its going to be an obligatory duty only.*

Samantara, R. and Dhawan, S. (2020) work on studying CSR issues and challenges in Indian context is a relevant study for pharmaceutical sector also. They thoroughly reviewed literature, reports, company reports on CSR and CSR Acts in India and identified key issues and challenges of CSR in India. This study offered meaningful insights for the current study. The study disclosed the '**failure of Indian companies to develop a holistic view towards CSR**'. According the authors holistic view means inclusive impact strategies that creates impact on stakeholders, society, economic and environment at the same time. Lack of transparency in reporting, Greenwashing, lack of participation by communities are some of other challenges of contemporary CSR. The current study is intended to understand community participation more deeply.

Mareta, S., & Doktoralina, C. M. (2024) conducted a very interesting study on how CSR strategy formulation and implementation differs for coastal communities. *According to authors coastal communities needs a different kind of "All Inclusive Model of CSR" because of their vulnerable geography and non-availability of infrastructure.* They conducted both qualitative and quantitative study on both companies and communities to understand basic requirements for a successful CSR model for coastal communities. *The important ingredient for such kind of communities is "COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT". Companies must work towards their engagement by developing local leaders first and working on them to be their representatives. Second important ingredient is "COMMUNICATION SENSITIVITY". Maintaining a proper communication channel and clear messages understandable by local communities is very significant. For companies they listed some effective CSR activities for those communities namely, Capacity Building, Disaster Management, Livelihood Diversification, and Environment Conservation.* These can be objectives of CSR of any sector combined with sector specific activities. for example, if its pharma, there must be health care equity programmes.

Mahalakshmi S (2024) primarily investigated the increasing role of CSR in improving health care accessibility and facing the challenges of public health. *The study identified certain practices like access to medicine, public health education, disease prevention, community development and environment sustainability as best CSR practices.*

1.6.2 Studies related to CSR-Environment-Sustainability-Pharma Sector

Matthew & Unni Krishnan (2012) in their article on "The emerging Environmental Burden from Pharmaceuticals" raised some alarming issues regarding pollution by the sector. the paper especially focussed on the point of how Indian pharma companies and government are constantly ignoring water contamination from the industry. *Industry is constantly ignoring the consequences of more outsourcing. More production leads to more pollution inside the country.* The article stated the fact that 'how west wake up to the PHARMA POLLUTION and as solution outsourcing their requirements to other developing countries like India'. The paper questioned for the existence of stricter compliance regarding environment regulations inside the country. Industry needs more R&D and innovation regarding green chemistry. *Environmental sustainability must on the top of their goal charts for pharma industry.*

M.Sharma et al. (2020) in their exploration on sustainability in pharma sector, highlighted the role stakeholder's awareness on sustainability make the change. They stated tat sustainability in pharma is best investigated only through triple line bottom approach. *Companies should focus on balancing the three types of sustainability social, economic, and environmental rather than achieving one.* The study conducted a survey on the workforce and managerial team of pharma companies to understand their level of awareness and also identified the key drivers of sustainability from managerial perspective. The study highlighted the role economic aspects, social aspects, process optimization, material impact along with key drivers like environment regulations, government initiatives and R&D influence sustainability of sector.

Milanesi et al., (2020) conducted a systematic literature review on sustainability in pharmacy sector through the TBL approach. The study identified *Environmental Sustainability is dominant dimension* to describe sustainability in pharma sector. The sector should shed more light on cleaner production, green supply chain management, green material for the sake of environment. The specified research gaps regarding environment

sustainability in pharma sector were waste management, disposal and recycling, supply chain transparency, impact of government policies on promoting environmental sustainability. This study underlines the drastic need of pharma sector to foster environment sustainability practices and also balance social and economic.

Veleva et al. (2003) provided some foundational insights on environmental sustainability in pharma sector. Study designed a framework that is both qualitative and quantitative measurement and also tested it on one US based pharma company. The indicators, that were tried and tested in this framework which were also called as *sustainability indicators: Resource Use (Energy Water and materials), Product-related impacts, Emissions and Waste, Employees and Community, and Economic Performance*. The study emphasized the importance of considering inputs from internal and external stakeholder on regular intervals in designing indicators for the sustainability. *Stakeholder engagement is the key in attaining environmental sustainability*.

Ni~ no-Amezquita et al. (2017) investigated the intersection of sustainability in Indian SMEs pharma companies. The study empirically investigated the correlation between economic performance of SMEs with sustainability initiatives. *The findings of the study stated that sustainability initiatives are the drivers of growth for economic performance in pharma companies. The study observed the positive correlation between dimensions of waste management, environmental compliance and stakeholder engagement with financial outcomes of the company.*

Andersson et al. (2005) in their study explored ecological sustainability in multinational companies by applying VBN (Value-Belief-Norm) framework. *The study described the utility of psychological aspects like pro-environmental behaviour at the work place*. The study also provided empirical evidence for the same fact. *This study brought psychological element into the research on sustainability in the corporates. Sustainability not only depends on effective strategies, policies, operations and metrics, but also on the individual commitment and engagement to perform.*

Najiul Laskar &Gopal S. M. (2016) surveyed the readiness of Indian companies to publish their corporate sustainability report (CSP). The finding of the study observed that companies perceive the insufficiency in Global Reporting Initiative framework for sustainability reporting. It is also observed that, out of 28 MNCs participated 80% firms are reporting disclosure reports while the *quality of reporting need lot of improvement*. It is also observed that reporting has tremendous impact on strategic making of sustainability and firm performance.

According to report on “Indian Pharma-Transitioning into sustainable future-2022” by CAPGEMINI, approximately 38% of Indian pharma companies maintains a dedicated ESG (Environment, Social, Governance) Reporting or sustainable reporting. The rest of 62% of companies are falling behind to report ESG even though maintaining sustainability objectives on their websites. The report contains some very interesting findings regarding environmental sustainability practices by Indian pharma companies. *The report suggested future targets for sustainability in pharma: climate, water, zero waste, green chemistry, and wellbeing of people.*

Clavo-Flores.F.G.(2009) in their article on “**Sustainable Chemical Metrics**” explained the role of green chemistry and its interventions in reducing environmental problems by chemical-based industries. The article is technical in nature with the explanation of chemical equations and mathematical theorems of how one can limit the amount of toxicity in their operational processes. There are significant insights for managerial researchers too. Understanding the basic philosophy on which green chemistry works is meaningfully explained. The criterion on which a product should develop is best explained through certain frameworks. Few metrics like Waste Reduction Algorithm (WAR), Potential Environmental Impact (PEI), EcoInnovation Compass (EIC) and Product idea Tree diagram (PIT) were explained for the convenience of academic researchers. The figure shows the eco innovation compass which is a metric used to compare of overall environment impact of ideas.

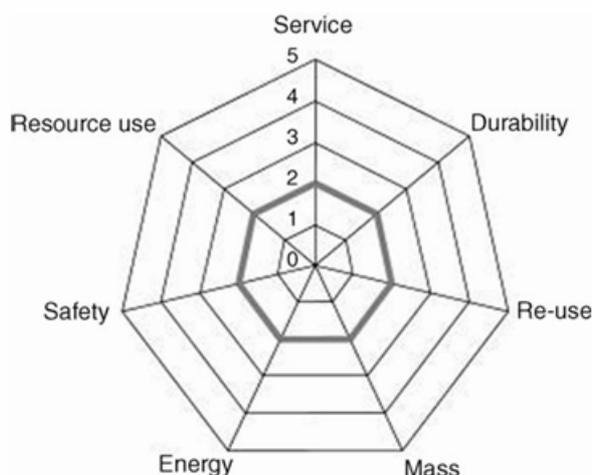


Figure 2: Eco Innovation Compass (Source: Clavo-Flores.F.G.(2009))

P Prevents Waste	I Inherently Non-hazardous
R Renewable Materials	M Minimize Material Diversity
O Omit derivatization steps	P Prevention instead of treatment
D Degrade Chemical Inputs	R Renewable materials and Energy
U Use of safe synthetic method	O Output-led design
C Catalytic reagents	V Very Simple
T Temperature, Pressure ambient	E Easy to separate by design
I In-process Monitoring	M Meet the need
V Very few auxiliary products	E Efficient use of mass,energy,space,time
E E factor, maximize feed	N Networks for exchange local mass, energy
L Low Toxicity of chemicals	T Test the life cycle of design
Y Yes, it is safe	S Sustainability throughout product life cycle

Figure 3: Explaining Green Chemistry philosophy in pharma sector (Source: ClavoFlores.F.G.(2009))

Peukert J & Sahr K (2010) studied the benchmarking process of sustainability metrics in pharma industry. Their study that there is no singular way to predict sustainability risks and opportunities in the industry, as it differs for one company to another. According to the study TBL approach is the best way to understand sustainability in the industry. According to this Ernst & Young report the *metrics of pharma industry are Time Intervals of Sustainability Reporting, CR strategy, Corporate Governance, Environment, Employees, Supply chain, Corporate Citizenship, Stakeholder Communication, Stakeholder Engagement, and Private Partnership.*

1.6.3 Studies related to CSR-Community Engagement -Pharma sector

Edward Freeman (1984) proposed the stakeholder theory of CSR. This theory contrasted the view of fulfilling interests of only shareholder. Business must focus on fulfilling stakeholder interest too. *The stakeholder perspective of CSR brought a lot of responsibilities to the business towards the communities who live around them.* Moral, ethical. Legal, economic and social responsibilities towards communities must accelerate the vision of CSR of any company. This is the most accepted perspective of CSR in India.

Levy, R. (1999) book entitled Give and take, is still relevant and offers some nuanced understanding of effective CSR. Few insights from the book includes how companies should ease the process of “value flow”. This value flows from both sides, from business to society and vice versa. Giving economic, social and moral value to the society brings long term benefits to the firm. One of the important mentions in the book is “*how companies are responsible for community engagement*”. *Engaging communities with business through CSR fosters business resilience.*

Hallahan, K. (2004) in the chapter of Community as a foundation for public relations offered impeccable insights for CSR about how to perceive communities. from organizational point of view the most idealistic thing to do, is to adopt the process of “Community Building” as CSR activity. According to the author community building requires three steps: *Community Nurturing, Community Involvement and Community Organizing.* With these as objectives organization can build their engagement strategies.

Deigh.L et al., (2016) properly investigated how firms can engage communities through CSR. This empirical study approached CSR through Carrolls pyramid theory and conducted a survey study on the service sector firms. The findings of the study stated that *engagement requires four kinds of activities: philanthropy, donations, employee voluntarism and projects and partnerships.* This study contributed a lot to the CSR and community engagement through identifying those four spheres of activities. the only limitation of this study they worked on organizational inputs of community engagement but not the outcomes.

Ismail et al., (2015) in their study on relationship between CSR and community development discussed how CSR has to go beyond philanthropy for community development. Formulating projects from community point of view must be the strategic imperative of CSR. The study also stated that for any company to involve community the approach must be “*Combination perspective of Carroll theory and triple Bottom Line Theory*”. *This combination can be termed as inclusive framework of CSR of any sector. the study stated that improving living conditions, health care and education must be the core of any community development project.*

Sahiba. Z & Pradhan.P (2024) in their qualitative analysis on CSR and Community engagement has taken the cases of TATA and NTPC. With the help of secondary data of these two company’s CSR reports, impact assessments and sustainability disclosures, the study is able to find a knowledge base for those who are looking for making community involvement projects. *The idealistic community development programmes by both the firms include preventive health care, water, ecological balance programmes for environment, tribal development, renewable energy, disaster mitigation and others.* The two companies CSR policy is so idealistic in nature and can be a knowledge resource to the beginners in the field. The factors that aided their effective CSR strategy are dedication, personal value system, comprehensive reporting methods, good CSR communication through websites. TATA is well known for its more organized CSR policy and implementation in India.

1.6.4 CSR Projects of Indian Pharma Companies and their Community Building Projects

S. No	Name of the Company	Focused Areas of CSR & Flagship Projects of Cases
1.	LUPIN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Economic Development ➤ Social Development ➤ Rural Infrastructure Development ➤ Natural Resource Management ➤ Learn and Earn programme ➤ Disaster Relief Mitigation <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Lupin Human Welfare and Research Foundation</u> Operations in 4546 villages in nine states continuously works on upliftment of poor to attain sustainable development</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Natural Resource Management Programme</u> Focusses on developing land, water resource development and Alternate energy development</p>
2.	DIVI’S LABS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Environmental Health & Safety ➤ Sustainability

		<p>Green Belt Development 12 lakhs trees were planted and cared.</p> <p>Reducing Carbon foot print 21,300 T CO2e emissions were reduced</p> <p>Preventive HealthCare preventive healthcare camps in 39 villages</p>
3.	DR. REDDYS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Education ➤ Climate Action ➤ Inclusion ➤ Rural Livelihoods ➤ Skill Development ➤ Healthcare <p>Drreddys Foundation Digital Projects of this foundation are phenomenal. GROW DIGITAL- launched in 2020, it's a digital learning management system, handy tool for skill development for lot of unemployment youth.480957 lives touched.</p>
4.	AUROBINDO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Education ➤ Preventive Healthcare ➤ Eradicating Hunger ➤ Environmental Sustainability ➤ Malnutrition ➤ Conservation of Natural Resources <p>Accessible Healthcare Aurobindo pharma Foundation is constructing a cancer hospital in 2,18,474.50 sq. ft., can accommodate 2.5 lakhs poor patients</p>
5.	HETERO DRUGS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Education ➤ Healthcare ➤ Infrastructure Development ➤ Drinking Water ➤ Eyecare ➤ Green initiative <p>Accessible Healthcare Conducts regular health care camps at marginalized communities and have reputation of free medicine donation in underprivileged communities. Collaborated with Gilead Sciences and distributed COVID vaccine to 127 countries.</p>
6.	BIOCON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Healthcare ➤ Education ➤ Art and Culture ➤ Safley of Women and Children ➤ Gender Equality ➤ Support for the differently-abled ➤ Rural Development <p>Biocon Foundation Adopted some villages in north Karnataka and developed an institutional mechanism for 360-degree infrastructure development of villages.</p>
7.	SUN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Malaria Elimination ➤ Model School Development ➤ Sun Pharma Science Foundation ➤ Mobile Health Care Units ➤ Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Environment, Health and safety <p>SUNKALP-AN INITIATIVE SUN pharmacy invested 100 crores in this project of supporting doctors and their families who lost their lives during COVID pandemic. It launched Mental Health support initiative for doctors called Mann Talk.</p>
8.	CIPLA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Health ➤ Environmental Sustainability ➤ Education ➤ Skilling ➤ Disaster Response <p>CIPLA PALLIATIVE CARE & TRAINING CENTRE(CPC), PUNE A 50-bed facility for the patients of life limiting illnesses. Established in 1997, it is first of its kind. Offers free and holistic care to patients.</p>

Table-2: List of Pharma Companies and their CSR projects (Source: Company Websites)

1.7 Research Gap

Objective 3: To identify research gap that may help in the advancement of this study

Based on the above-mentioned reviews and personal observations from all other sources, the following gaps guided the learner to advance with further steps.

Gaps observed based on Conceptual Framework of the studies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Studies are required on the knowledge management of CSR literature and training of employees regarding CSR implementation. ➤ Lack of attention on psychological aspects like personality requirements to be CSR leaders. ➤ Absence of an inclusive framework that connects stakeholder engagement, CSR activities with organizational sustainability. ➤ Lack of context industry specific CSR studies with reference to pharma sector.
Gaps observed based on the Methodology, Findings & Limitations of studies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Insufficient empirical studies that survey the stakeholder perception on Corporate Social Responsibility impact on their welfare specifically in pharma sector. ➤ Very limited studies that actually approached communities and interacted about their perspective regarding CSR of companies whose plants operates in their geographies. ➤ Lack of sufficient knowledge on how to report TBL sustainability in the context of measuring CSR Impact. ➤ Absence of studies that explored the awareness of green chemistry in the communities nearby chemical industries ➤ Lack of studies on impact of CSR on the livelihood of marginalized communities. ➤ Need for developing context specific CSR models that can impact the standard of living of vulnerable communities in the society and understanding their social context

Table-3: Research Gaps based on the Review of Literature

1.8 Findings for compilation of Research Propositions for the current Study

Objective 4: To formulate a conceptual framework that explains the relationship between CSR and Community engagement, and how they compensate each other for sustainability.

1.CSR Goals of Pharma

The reviews from past literature indicate the presence of effective CSR activities in pharma companies. The awareness of environmental sustainability in Indian pharma industry is there, but a very less percentage of firms are reporting it. It is understood that sustainability and CSR must go hand in hand especially in this sector with the definitive goals of

- ➔ Environmental protection
- ➔ Economic growth
- ➔ Social Equity

2.Measuring Community Engagement as an objective

Quantifying community engagement is a significant activity in CSR, as measuring impact beyond profits is essential. The outcomes of this measurement create mutual trust in both the avenues and empower both of them to go forward with activities full of confidence. CSR works on the principle of reciprocity. So, the active community engagement can identify potential risks in the policies at the earliest and encourage companies to be proactive.

3.Green Chemistry as an effective CSR tool in pharma sector

Another important observation from the reviews on the “how to handle environmental problems in the chemical oriented pharma industry” is green chemistry. Almost every author identified it as a solution for the social and scientific concerns for pollution problems. Green chemistry is a tool that promotes innovative chemical technology in the industry to reduce or eliminate the use of toxic and chemical substances in the whole process of product manufacturing to utility.

4.Strategic CSR Communication

The role of communication in CSR and community engagement is the less discussed concept in the literature. Strategic CSR communication is the art of clearly communicating our CSR initiatives to the whole world in order to gain trust and reputation. It integrates the company values with authentic expression through multiple channels and impact assessments of CSR efforts. An effective communication correlates with positive stakeholder perception and achieves sustainable business. It is important to measure the effectiveness of CSR communication from time to time from stakeholder’s point of view.

5.Feedback Mechanism that combines CSR, Community Engagement & Sustainability

A strong feedback mechanism or two-way communication, is the fabric that connects all these three aspects. Timely feedback from stakeholders to CSR policy makers helps in quality control, impact assessment and motivation to do more. CSR is still not a core business function in so many companies; it is just a mandatory activity imposed by law. Like every other business function, it needs skilled people, training, specific potentials to perform. But those SOPs are non-existent in companies. In their absence, the simple and strong feedback mechanism motivates people to formulate and implement effective CSR policy that targets to achieve sustainability in the business. A simple positive reception of stakeholder keeps the CSR system active and vibrant.

1.9 Research Propositions and Conceptual Framework

Based on the findings from the reviews and personal observation, we propose the following research propositions for the study on the intersection of CSR, Community Engagement, and Sustainability with reference to pharma sector.

Paper	Author& Year	Key Findings	Research Proposition
The relationship among corporate social responsibility, sustainability and organizational performance in pharmaceutical sector: a literature review	Saxena, K., Balani, S., & Srivastava, P. (2021).	CSR is related to the organizational performance and sustainability is related to organizational performance. So, both are interconnected with a feedback mechanism and impact assessment.	P1 &P4
Optimizing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) for Enhancing Economic Resilience in Coastal Communities: An Inclusive Development Model.	Mareta, S., & Doktoralina, C. M. (2024).	For developing engagement in communities CSR communication policy is very important.	P2
Community” as a foundation for public relations theory and practice.	Hallahn. K (2004)	Community engagement is an empowering tool. It comprises of steps like community building, community nurturing and community organizing	P3
Corporate social responsibility: Engaging the Community	Deigh, Linda et al., (2016).	Engagement requires four kinds of activities: philanthropy, donations, employee voluntarism and projects and partnerships	P1
Indicators for measuring environmental sustainability: a case study of the pharmaceutical industry	Veleva, V., Hart, M., Greiner, T., Crumbley,	Stakeholder engagement is the key in attaining environmental sustainability.	P3 &P4

	C., 2003	
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Table-4: Development of Research propositions

Based on the specific reviews that guided the study theoretically, the following research propositions are proposed. These propositions need further empirical investigations for more reliable findings.

Proposition 1: The effectiveness of CSR initiative can be increased by the positive perception of local communities.

Proposition 2: CSR communication impacts the engagement of community in CSR activity.

Proposition 3: Community Engagement of CSR initiatives by companies can be measured through understanding the process of community nurturing and community organizing.

Proposition 4: CSR initiatives that incorporate continuous feedback from community stakeholders are more adaptive and better aligned with local sustainability priorities.

Proposed framework based on propositions:

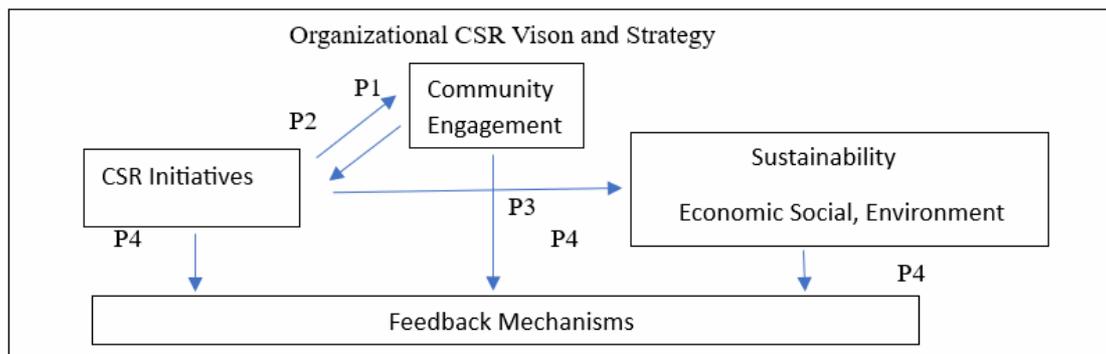


Figure: Proposed Framework of Intersection of CSR, CE and Sustainability

1.10 Limitations of the Study

This study is based totally on the review of the literature available and accessible by the authors. The major limitation of the study is limited literature available on the specific sector, Pharma. Studies on CSR, sustainability are ample, but very less when compared to other sectors. We considered the studies mostly in Indian context and only after 2013 mostly due to the major policy changes in CSR processes. Due to the time constraint and we analysed and screened the papers on self-constructed criterion. There is no intervention of any software in paper selection process due lack of resources. So, there is a scope of personal bias in the selection of studies for reviews. There is always a scope of reviewing more, understanding more and reflecting more theoretical knowledge into the study. This is quiet a limitation for every study.

II. Conclusion

Sustainability is a collaborative effort. Only business cannot thrive for it. it requires participatory approach from all stakeholders of the planet. Planet is everybody's responsibility. CSR is one such collaborative and partnership activity between all sorts of people in the society. Hence, there is always a need for this kind of studies to rethink the organizational, individual, and system capacities to make it more effective. Betterment only comes in the functionality when we keep questioning and learning. This study is one such attempt to understand the dynamic of CSR, sustainability and community engagement in ever growing pharma industry. Though the proposed conceptual study needs further empirical investigation, it is based on sufficient theoretical grounds. It needs more statistical investigation and evidence to get the reliability. The framework will be investigated to get primary data evidence as the next step. While conducting review on exploratory studies, we observed that every study attempted to give a novel perspective to perceive this topic. This study, until this stage attempted the same and aimed to study the role of community engagement in CSR and Sustainability in pharma sector. The further exploration on constructing a standard feedback mechanism between these three dimensions specific to pharma sector will definitely makes the things a bit easy for policy makers.

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