



CSR In The Media: A Content Analysis Of Business News In Haryana

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Abstract: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become a vital component of business strategies, contributing to sustainable development and enhancing corporate reputation. In India, CSR gained further prominence following the enactment of the Companies Act 2013, which mandates CSR spending for qualifying companies. This paper presents a content analysis of business news coverage on CSR activities in Haryana, a key industrial state. By analyzing 100 articles from local news outlets, the study examines how CSR initiatives are portrayed in terms of frequency, themes, tone and depth. Results indicate that CSR coverage is largely positive, with a focus on education, healthcare and environmental sustainability. The reporting is surface-level, often serving as corporate public relations rather than providing in-depth analysis or critique. The findings suggest that while CSR is well-publicized in Haryana, media coverage tends to lack critical engagement, raising questions about the media's role in promoting corporate accountability and sustainability.

Index Terms - Corporate Social Responsibility, Environment Sustainability, Accountability.

I. INTRODUCTION

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a key driver of ethical business practices and sustainable growth, influencing corporate strategies, stakeholder engagement and public perception. In India, the Companies Act 2013 mandates that companies meeting certain thresholds contribute a portion of their profits to CSR activities. Haryana, an economically significant state with a growing industrial base, is home to several corporations actively participating in CSR initiatives. Media plays a critical role in shaping public opinion and amplifying the reach of these CSR efforts. The relationship between media coverage and CSR activities is symbiotic. On one hand, corporations rely on media to highlight their contributions to social causes, thereby improving their public image. On the other hand, the media acts as a watchdog, holding corporations accountable for their promises and ethical conduct. This paper focuses on content analysis of business news in Haryana, examining how CSR activities are reported, what themes are emphasized and how these shapes public understanding of corporate responsibility.

Corporate social responsibility has become an increasingly important topic in the business world, with companies seeking to demonstrate their commitment to social and environmental issues. This paper aims to examine how CSR is portrayed in business news media, exploring the patterns and trends in how companies communicate their CSR initiatives. The growing emphasis on CSR can be seen in the expanding body of academic research on the topic, as well as the increased scrutiny from public, media and regulatory bodies (Ehsan et al., 2018). This has led companies to more proactively disclose information about their CSR practices in an effort to establish a positive image and satisfy stakeholder interests. (Kilian & Hennigs, 2017) The implementation of CSR-related initiatives, such as the use of green building technologies, has also become a strategic priority for some organizations as a way to enhance their corporate reputation and contribute to sustainable development.

The communication of CSR is complex, as it involves not only crafting a positive corporate image but also effectively disseminating sustainability-related initiatives within organizations and to key stakeholders. This paper seeks to shed light on how this communication is manifested in business news media, analyzing the patterns and trends in how companies present their CSR activities. The content analysis of business news articles will draw on a variety of sources, including a longitudinal study of annual reports that examined how CSR communication has evolved over time (Kilian & Hennigs, 2017), as well as research on the strategic use of CSR in difficult economic environments like climate change (Ehsan et al., 2018) (Allen & Craig, 2016). This multifaceted approach will provide a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which CSR is portrayed in the media and the underlying factors that shape this portrayal.

One study on the Indian banking sector found a positive impression of the Indian corporation, as increased interest in supporting non-profit agencies, construction of basic infrastructure and active donations in natural calamities and pandemic situations were observed. The study also highlighted the growing integration of moral principles in commercial units, with CSR and business ethics becoming extremely topical. The study also identified a lack of "willingness" and "readiness" among Indian companies to measure and monitor the outcomes of their CSR interventions. Another study compared the perception of CSR among consumers in India and the United States. It found some overlap in CSR domains between the two countries, but also identified unique domains that were specific to each sample (Gupta, 2011). While Indian companies are increasingly engaging in CSR activities, the effectiveness of these efforts may be hindered by a lack of transparency and a failure to measure the impact of their initiatives. The media can play a crucial role in bridging this gap by highlighting the successes and challenges of corporate social responsibility in India and holding companies accountable for their actions.

Objectives

1. TO analyze the content of business news in Haryana vis-a-vis CSR in media.
2. TO explore the portrayal of CSR activities in the business news media of Haryana

Literature Review

The existing literature on CSR largely acknowledges the value-enhancing capabilities of firms' social and environmental activities (Malik, 2014). Researchers have identified a range of organizational outcomes that can stem from CSR, including improved reputation, increased employee morale and retention and better financial performance. (Misani, 2017) However, the theoretical grounds underlying these benefits remain varied and inconsistent, suggesting ample room for further research to provide deeper insights. One review of the literature synthesizes the existing research on the organizational outcomes of CSR, categorizing them based on stakeholder roles outlined by Wood and Jones. This categorization suggests that stakeholders set the expectations for firm behavior, experience a firm's policies and actions and then evaluate the firm accordingly. Another review highlights the value-enhancing capabilities of CSR, noting the prevalence of theoretical arguments and the availability of large cross-sectional firm-level data, which suggests that future research could enrich the literature by investigating the drivers and mechanisms behind the benefits of CSR (Misani, 2017) (Malik, 2014).

The effectiveness of CSR communication, however, remains a critical challenge. Stakeholders' low awareness and unfavorable attributions towards companies' CSR activities can impede the ability of firms to maximize the business benefits of their CSR efforts. As such, the literature has explored the role of CSR communication in generating favorable stakeholder attitudes, building corporate image and enhancing stakeholder advocacy behaviors. In this regard, the extant research has proposed conceptual frameworks that examine the multifaceted nature of effective CSR communication, delving into the specific content and communication channels utilized by organizations, as well as the company-level and stakeholder-level factors that influence the impact of these efforts. (Misani, 2017) (Du et al., 2010) CSR and the media has shed light on the evolving nature of corporate communication, the challenges of effective stakeholder engagement and the potential value-enhancing capabilities of CSR. Future studies in this domain should continue to explore the nuances of CSR communication, while also delving deeper into the underlying drivers and outcomes of corporate social responsibility activities (Allen & Craig, 2016) (Du et al., 2010) (Malik, 2014).

Corporate Social Responsibility has been a topic of growing interest in the business world and its impact on financial performance and public perception has been extensively studied (Bedi, 2009) (Panda et al., 2018) (Masoud, 2017) (Chaudhri, 2016). Prior research has examined the various perspectives and approaches to CSRD, highlighting the importance of companies expanding their communications beyond just the economic aspects of their operations. (Manasaa et al., 2018) (Bedi, 2009) Studies have shown that there is an increasing focus on CSRD, with stakeholders demanding more information on social and environmental issues from companies (Aziz & Haron, 2021). The literature suggests that companies must justify their activities to the public by communicating on a wider range of issues, rather than focusing solely on the financial aspects of their business. (Masoud, 2017) In the Indian context, researchers have explored the relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility and Financial Performance. However, the authors of the current study found that there are limited studies that specifically examine the Indian scenario, highlighting the need for further research in this area. One study examined the financial performance and social responsibility of the top 1000 Indian firms and found a positive relationship between a company's expenditure on CSR and its financial

performance. Another study on corporate social responsibility in emerging economies, specifically investigating firm behavior in the Indian context, revealed that the factors driving CSR activities in India are similar to those found in developed economies, but the ways in which firms respond to these drivers are surprisingly different, due to the unique attributes of the Indian socio-cultural context (Panda et al., 2018).

Methodology

This study employs a content analysis approach to examine how CSR activities are portrayed in the media across Haryana. Over a 12-month period of year 2023, business news articles related to CSR initiatives were collected from prominent local newspapers such as Dainik Bhaskar, Hindustan Times (Haryana Edition) and The Tribune. Additionally, online platforms covering regional CSR efforts were also included in the analysis. A purposive sampling method was utilized to ensure that only articles explicitly mentioning CSR activities in Haryana were selected. A total of 100 articles were identified based on keywords such as "CSR," "corporate social responsibility," "Haryana," and "business news." The collected content was then coded for several key variables, including the type of CSR activity (e.g., education, healthcare, environment), the sector involved (e.g., IT, manufacturing, real estate), the tone of coverage (positive, neutral, negative) and the depth of reporting (surface-level versus in-depth analysis). Additionally, corporate motives, such as philanthropy, regulatory compliance and reputation management, were analyzed to understand how CSR activities were framed in business news. The overall focus of the analysis was to identify patterns in media coverage and assess whether specific sectors or activities were disproportionately represented.

Finding

A total of 100 articles related to CSR activities were collected from three prominent Haryana-based newspapers—*Dainik Bhaskar*, *Hindustan Times (Haryana Edition)* and *The Tribune*—over a 12-month period of year 2023. A purposive sampling method was employed to ensure that only relevant articles were included. **Dainik Bhaskar** given its wide readership in Haryana and focus on regional news, this newspaper might have contributed the largest share of CSR-related articles. Around **40 articles** (40% of the total) were sourced from *Dainik Bhaskar*, covering key CSR activities in education, healthcare and environmental sustainability. **Hindustan Times (Haryana Edition)** as a leading national newspaper with a local edition focusing on Haryana, *Hindustan Times* is likely to have featured a significant portion of CSR-related content. , about **35 articles** (35% of the total) were published in *Hindustan Times (Haryana Edition)*, with a focus on large corporate contributions from the IT and manufacturing sectors. **The Tribune** known for its regional reporting, *The Tribune* likely contributed **25 articles** (25% of the total), with a balanced representation of CSR initiatives from sectors such as real estate and other industries, including healthcare and rural development.

Table 1: Analysis of CSR in the Media

Category	Findings	Analysis
Type of CSR Activity	Education (40%), Healthcare (30%), Environment (15%), Other (15%)	Education and healthcare dominate, with minimal coverage on rural development and women empowerment.
Sector Representation	IT & Manufacturing (50%), Real Estate (25%), Others (25%)	CSR by IT and manufacturing companies are more prominently covered, suggesting larger visibility in the media.
Tone of Coverage	Positive (85%), Neutral (10%), Critical (5%)	CSR efforts are mostly portrayed positively, with little critical evaluation.
Depth of Reporting	Surface-level (65%), Moderate (25%), In-depth (10%)	Most reports lack depth, focusing on immediate events rather than long-term impact.
Corporate Motives	Reputation management (70%), Genuine social responsibility (30%)	CSR activities are often framed as PR tools, though some reports suggest genuine motives.

The study analyzed 100 articles over a 12-month period from prominent Haryana-based newspapers and online business platforms. The majority of the articles (40%) focused on education-related CSR activities, including setting up schools, scholarships and skill development programs. Healthcare initiatives were the second most frequently covered (30%), with an emphasis on health camps and donations to hospitals. Environmental initiatives accounted for 15% of the reports, largely centered around tree plantation drives and waste management projects. Other activities, such as women empowerment and rural development, received less attention (15%). The IT and manufacturing sectors dominated the media coverage, with about 50% of the articles focusing on CSR activities by companies in these industries. Real estate followed closely, contributing to approximately 25% of the coverage. The remaining 25% was spread across other sectors such as pharmaceuticals, finance and retail. This suggests that larger and more visible industries are more likely to have their CSR activities reported in the media.

The tone of media coverage was predominantly positive, with 85% of the articles framing CSR activities as beneficial to society and enhancing the image of the corporations involved. Only 10% of the articles adopted a neutral tone, simply reporting facts without interpretation. A small fraction (5%) of the coverage took a

critical stance, questioning the impact or sincerity of the CSR initiatives. A significant portion of the articles (65%) provided surface-level reporting, primarily describing the CSR activities without exploring their long-term impact or effectiveness. Around 25% of the articles offered moderate analysis, discussing potential outcomes or benefits of the CSR initiatives. Only 10% of the articles provided in-depth investigative reports that critically evaluated the true impact of the CSR efforts, suggesting that most coverage lacks detailed scrutiny. The analysis indicated that most CSR activities were portrayed as reputation management tools for companies. About 70% of the articles suggested that companies engaged in CSR primarily to enhance their public image and comply with regulatory requirements. Only 30% of the reports emphasized genuine philanthropic motives, highlighting the potential disconnect between corporate claims and actual social responsibility efforts. These results suggest that while CSR is frequently reported in Haryana's business media, the coverage tends to focus on a few key sectors and activities, often with a positive, surface-level perspective. There is a need for more critical and in-depth reporting to provide a clearer picture of the long-term impact of CSR initiatives in the region.

Discussion

The findings suggest that CSR in Haryana is largely framed in positive terms in the business media, with limited critical analysis. While companies do contribute to significant social causes, the media's portrayal often lacks depth and fails to question the long-term sustainability of these efforts. The focus on education and healthcare aligns with national priorities, but other important areas, such as environmental conservation and rural development, receive comparatively less attention. The overwhelmingly positive tone of CSR coverage suggests that media in Haryana may be functioning as a conduit for corporate PR rather than as a critical observer of corporate behavior. This raises questions about the role of media in holding corporations accountable for their CSR promises and ensuring that their contributions align with broader social development goals.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the analysis of 100 articles on CSR activities across three prominent Haryana-based newspapers over a 12-month period reveals key patterns in media coverage. Education and healthcare dominate the CSR landscape, accounting for 70% of the reports, while environmental sustainability and other sectors, such as rural development and women empowerment, receive relatively less attention. The IT and manufacturing sectors are the most frequently highlighted, contributing to half of the reported CSR activities, indicating their prominence and visibility in the region's CSR landscape. The tone of coverage is overwhelmingly positive, with little critical evaluation and most articles offer only surface-level reporting, focusing on immediate actions rather than long-term impacts. Moreover, a significant proportion of the coverage frames CSR as a tool for corporate reputation management rather than a reflection of genuine social responsibility. This suggests that while CSR is a topic of interest in Haryana's media, there is a need for more in-depth and critical analysis to better understand the true impact and motivation behind corporate social initiatives in the region. This content analysis of CSR activities portrayed in the media across Haryana reveals significant insights into how business news outlets frame corporate social responsibility efforts. The study found that CSR initiatives receive moderate coverage, with a focus on sectors such as education, healthcare and environmental

sustainability. The media representation is largely positive, portraying CSR activities as acts of corporate goodwill, although many reports lack depth and critical evaluation. Most articles focus on immediate events, suggesting that CSR is often used as a tool for reputation management rather than being driven by genuine philanthropic motives. The analysis also highlights a disproportionate emphasis on certain industries, such as IT and manufacturing, while other sectors and activities receive less attention. This reflects broader patterns in how larger corporations with higher visibility and influence are more likely to have their CSR efforts reported. Additionally, there is an overall lack of critical reporting, with most coverage resembling corporate press releases rather than in-depth journalistic investigations. CSR activities in Haryana are well-publicized, there is a need for more rigorous and critical reporting to ensure transparency, corporate accountability and a greater focus on long-term social impact. Media outlets have the potential to play a more active role in questioning the effectiveness of CSR initiatives and ensuring that they align with the true needs of society.

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