

Investigating the impact of corporate social responsibility on organizational success and performance

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Abstract Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a crucial element of business strategy that influences how companies are perceived both internally and externally. Its impact on an organizational performance and long-term feasibility extends beyond financial results to include factors such as customer loyalty, employee morale, and brand equity. Research examines the relationship between CSR practices and significant business outcomes, particularly focus on the significance of CSR initiatives in generating organizational success. Research identifies various aspects of CSR, including environmental stewardship, community engagement, sustainability practices, as well as social responsibility, and aims to determine how these practices impact the material and immaterial aspects of organizational performance. To test the connections between CSR initiatives, corporate image, and organizational performance, the research uses 320 valid responses through a primary survey and multiple regression, correlation, and mediation analysis. The findings indicate that a strong positive correlation between corporate image, organizational performance, and CSR initiatives. Particularly, Corporate image is significantly impacted by CSR practices, and improves overall organizational performance. The results also indicate that companies with well-developed CSR initiatives are tend to achieve more customer loyalty, improved financial outcomes, higher employee commitment, and a stronger brand positioning. Moreover, the research demonstrates that corporate image mediates the relationship between CSR and organizational outcomes, suggesting that CSR not only enhances a company's reputation but also generates tangible business benefits. These findings highlight that a dedication to social responsibility can provide company with a competitive edge in the marketplace and emphasize the importance of integrating CSR into business strategy. In conclusion, CSR serves a significant driver of long-term organizational success, beneficial to the business and its stakeholders, and a crucial component of sustainable business practices.

Keywords: corporate social responsibility (CSR), organizational performance, CSR initiatives, corporation image

1. Introduction

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has become a primary framework guiding the response and engagement of governments and corporations with society (Sun et al., 2023). CSR encompasses a company's efforts to handle social, environmental, and ethical issues beyond financial gains. It includes all types of activities that involve minimizing the environmental impact, supporting charitable causes, promoting ethical governance, and enhancing employee well-being (Nugroho et al., 2024). Moreover, CSR significantly influences a company's overall performance and shapes its public perception (Le, 2023). Companies that proactively engage in CSR are often held in high regard by customers, employees, and other stakeholders. In this context, tangible benefits such as increased customer loyalty, enhanced employee engagement, improved brand recognition, and improved financial performance serve as valuable rewards (Shafiq & Khan, 2024). Corporate image plays a crucial role in linking CSR efforts to organizational success. However, CSR is widely recognized for its benefits, and its impact is not always direct. Instead, it enhances a company's reputation and therefore leads to improved business outcomes (Bashir, 2024). Thus, understanding this relationship would allow companies to integrate CSR into their strategy more effectively. However, an understanding of how CSR directly impacts different aspects of a company's success, including financial performance, brand strength, employee satisfaction, and customer loyalty, is lacking (Fosu et al., 2024). More importantly, the extent to which a company's reputation or corporate image is shaped by its CSR efforts and whether this reputation influences overall performance (Ledi & Ameza-Xemalordzo, 2023). It is intended to examine the relationship

between CSR initiatives and key business outcomes, as well as clarify how CSR contributes to the tangible and intangible aspects of organizational success. Understanding these relationships (Alkhodary, 2023) enables businesses to strategically integrate CSR into operations for advanced long-term consequences.

The relationships among CSR and e-government during the COVID-19 era were examined previously (Avotra et al., 2021). The research explored mediating factors such as communication and knowledge technology, institutional quality, required corporate social responsibility, and corruption. It involves 305 managers from four sectors and employs a deductive methodology and stakeholder theory. Three out of the four mediating roles were fully mediated, indicating that e-government negatively impacts CSR. The connections among CSR, sustainable performance, and green human resource management (HRM) were examined previously (Malik et al., 2021), along with a focus on the mediating effect of environmental citizenship behavior within organizations. Research has shown that corporate citizenship behavior has a major impact on performance that is sustainable, emphasizing the importance of green HRM practices in enhancing environmental, social, and economic results. The connection between organizational performance and CSR in multinational companies has been examined (Singh & Misra, 2021). It investigated the moderating role of a company's reputation. Two stages of analysis were used to examine data from 340 top executives. The findings demonstrated that CSR positively influences company efficiency with respect to external stakeholders; however, the impact varies between well-known, reputable companies and those with less reputable identities. Ghardallou (2022) investigated the impact of a company's sustainability and financial success, with a particular emphasis on the role of CEO traits in moderating the connection between CSR and economic performance. Thirty-four publicly listed Saudi companies participated in the research, revealing that companies implementing CSR initiatives generally achieve superior financial outcomes. The correlation between CSR and corporate success was positively impacted by CEO duration and educational background, especially for those with degrees in research or technology. Bahta et al. (2021) examined the impact of CSR on SMEs in a developing nation. Modeling structural equations with partial least squares was employed, and a questionnaire was distributed to the managers and owners of 402 Eritrean businesses. The findings indicate that while innovation capability has a positive influence on SMEs' business success, CSR has a positive effect on financial efficiency and creative capability. Zhu et al. (2022) explored the relationship between CSR and sustainable supply chain management (SSCM) practices, along with the effects on business performance. It examines how large-scale analytical skills mediate the association between dynamic capability theory and stakeholder theory. The results enhance stakeholder theory research and the implementation of SSCM. In the context of developing nations, Islam et al. (2021) investigated the connection between consumer loyalty and CSR. It examines how these elements affect client loyalty via stakeholder theory and a resource-based perspective. The findings indicated a positive correlation between CSR programs and factors such as reputation, customer happiness, and trust, which highlights the crucial role of CSR initiatives in the firm sector. The research examined the relationship between CSR and employee conduct outside of companies. Employee behavior was shown to be strongly influenced by OGC, whereas there was no significant association between CSR actions and behavior among workers. Pan et al. (2022) emphasized the importance of encouraging socially and ecologically conscious conduct in businesses to create a sustainable environment.

Aim of the Research: To examine the associations between CSR and organizational performance, particularly with respect to how CSR initiatives impact corporate image and business outcomes.

1.1. Hypothesis development

The following hypotheses were developed to assess the impact of CSR on organizational success and performance.

H1: Sustainable practices (SPs) → positively influence corporate image (CI).

The reputation gained by companies that adopt sustainability practices enhances their corporate image.

H2: Community engagement (CE) → positively influences corporate image (CI).

Stakeholder involvement and active participation help strengthen the public opinion of a company as socially responsible, and people oriented.

H3: Social responsibility (SR) → positively influences corporate image (CI).

A company that engages in ethical practices for societal well-being enhances its reputation, leading to a positive corporate image.

H4: Environmental stewardship (ES) → positively influences corporate image (CI).

Companies that practice environmental sustainability demonstrate responsible environmental activity, which positively affects their corporate image.

H5a: Corporate image (CI) → positively influences financial performance (FP).

A positive and strong CI boosts consumer confidence, leading to greater revenue, increased profitability, and improved financial performance.

H5b: Corporate image (CI) → positively influences employee engagement (EE).

Strong positive CI encourages worker morale and commitment, thus increasing levels of engagement, satisfaction, and productivity within the organization.

H6a: Corporate image (CI) → positively influences Brand Equity (BE).

Strong CI increases brand recognition, loyalty, and perceived quality and increases total brand equity.

H6b: Corporate image (CI) → positively influences customer loyalty (CL).

A positive CI enhances trust and satisfaction, thus leading to increased customer loyalty and long-term retention in customers.

H7: CSR initiatives (SP, CE, SR, ES) → positively influence corporate image, → which in turn positively affects organizational performance (FP, EE, BE, and CL).

CSR activities enhance a firm's corporate image, which subsequently boosts organizational performance across financial, employee, brand, and customer dimensions.

2. Materials and Methods

The survey was conducted to evaluate the relationship between CSR activities and organizational outcomes. The participants, including managers, employees, and consumers, completed a standardized survey. It assesses three key areas: CSR initiatives, corporate image, and organizational outcomes. Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of the impact of CSR on organizational performance.

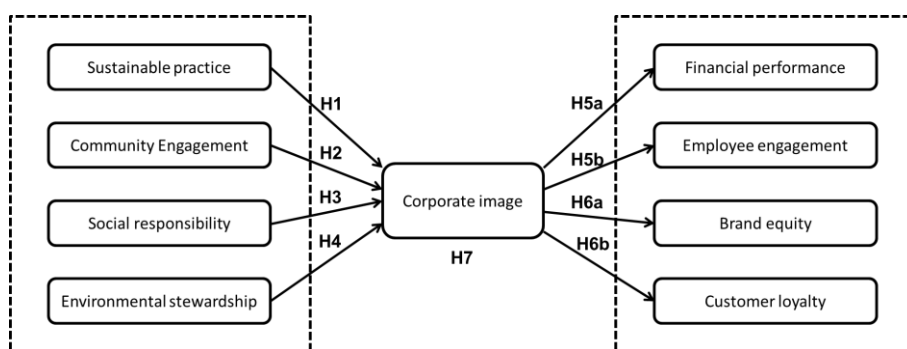


Figure 1 Conceptual framework of the impact of CSR on organizational performance.

2.1. Research design

This quantitative investigation examines the impact of CSR programs on company performance. The independent variables include key CSR initiatives such as SP, CE, SR, and ES. The dependent variables encompass organizational performance outcomes, such as FP, EE, BE, and CL. Corporate image is considered a mediating variable and is hypothesized to influence the association between CSR initiatives and organizational performance.

2.2. Data acquisition and procedure

A survey was conducted with 320 participants from businesses engaged in CSR initiatives. The demographic data of the participants are presented in Figure 2 and Table 1. This diverse sample provides a broad perspective on the impacts of CSR programs on customers and across various organizational levels.

2.3. Questionnaire design

The questionnaire is designed to gather respondents' perspectives on how employees, managers, and customers perceive the impact of CRS on an organization and its success.

Inclusion criteria:

- Organizations actively engaged in CSR initiatives.
- Respondents from various organizational roles (employee, manager, and customer)

Exclusion criteria:

- Organization without any CSR initiatives.
- Respondents with incomplete questionnaires or insufficient familiarity with the company's CSR initiatives.

3. Statistical analysis

To assess the relationship between CSR initiatives and organizational success, various statistical techniques, such as multiple regression, correlation, and mediation analysis, were applied via SPSS. These methods help determine the extent to



which CSR initiatives influence organizational outcomes. By analyzing these variables, businesses can better understand how CSR impacts their overall performance, both directly and indirectly. These insights are critical for organizations to link their CSR initiatives with corporate goals, ensuring long-term development and sustainability.

Table 1 Demographics of the participants.

Demographic Factor	Category	Frequency (n=320)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	180	56.30%
	Female	140	43.80%
Industry Sector	Manufacturing	100	31.30%
	Services	120	37.50%
	Retail	50	15.60%
	Others	50	15.60%
Age Group	18-24 years	60	18.80%
	25-34 years	120	37.50%
	35-44 years	80	25.00%
	45+ years	60	18.80%
Position in Organization	Manager/Executive	150	46.90%
	Employee	170	53.10%
Experience in CSR Initiatives	Less than 1 year	40	12.50%
	1-3 years	110	34.40%
	4-6 years	100	31.30%
	More than 6 years	70	21.90%

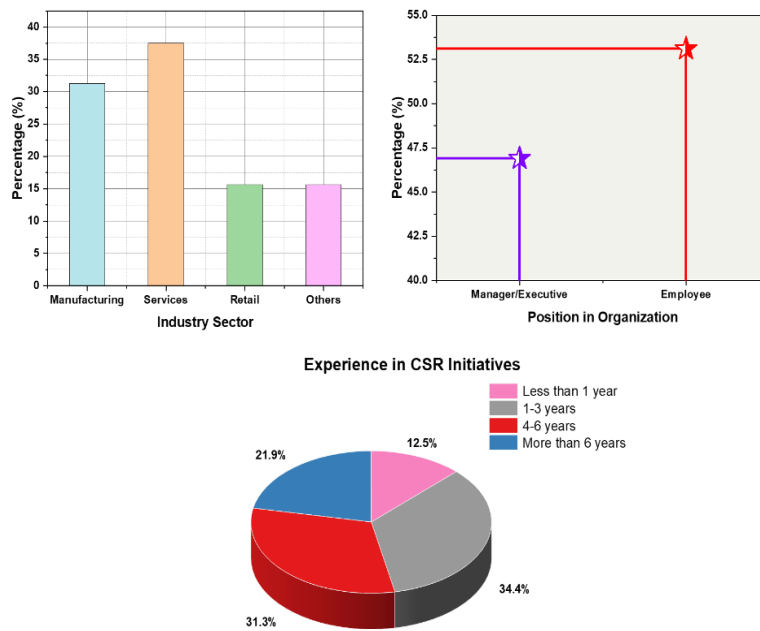


Figure 2 Demographics of the participants.

4. Results

4.1. Multiple regression analysis

Multiple regression analysis is used to examine the impact of various CSR elements on organizational performance and corporate image. This analysis provides insights into the strength and significance of these relationships. The multiple regression results of the effects of the CSR variables on organizational performance and corporate image are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 and Figure 3 present the outcomes of path analysis, indicating that all variables, such as SP ($\beta = 0.423, p = 0.001$), CE ($\beta = 0.295, p = 0.005$), SR ($\beta = 0.194, p = 0.028$), and ES ($\beta = 0.311, p = 0.002$), are positively associated with CI. Moreover, CI has a substantial effect on FP ($\beta = 0.561, p = 0.004$), EE ($\beta = 0.432, p = 0.003$), BE ($\beta = 0.491, p = 0.006$), and CL ($\beta = 0.468, p = 0.008$), which reflects that these relationships are statistically significant. Corporate image has a positive influence on financial performance, employee engagement, brand equity, and



customer loyalty, with these relationships being significantly strong. A significant association ($p - value < 0.05$) suggests that the relationship is unlikely to have occurred by chance, and a highly significant association ($p - value < 0.01$) indicates a stronger relationship with a very low probability of occurring randomly.

Table 2 Multiple regression results of the effects of CSR factors on corporate image and organizational performance.

Hypothesis	Path	β Value	R^2	f^2	p -value	Result
H1	SP → CI	0.423	0.18	0.25	0.001	Highly Significant
H2	CE → CI	0.295	0.13	0.2	0.005	Significant
H3	SR → CI	0.194	0.1	0.15	0.028	Significant
H4	ES → CI	0.311	0.14	0.22	0.002	Highly Significant
H5a	CI → FP	0.561	0.32	0.35	0.004	Highly Significant
H5b	CI → EE	0.432	0.18	0.3	0.003	Highly Significant
H6a	CI → BE	0.491	0.21	0.28	0.006	Significant
H6b	CI → CL	0.468	0.2	0.26	0.008	Significant

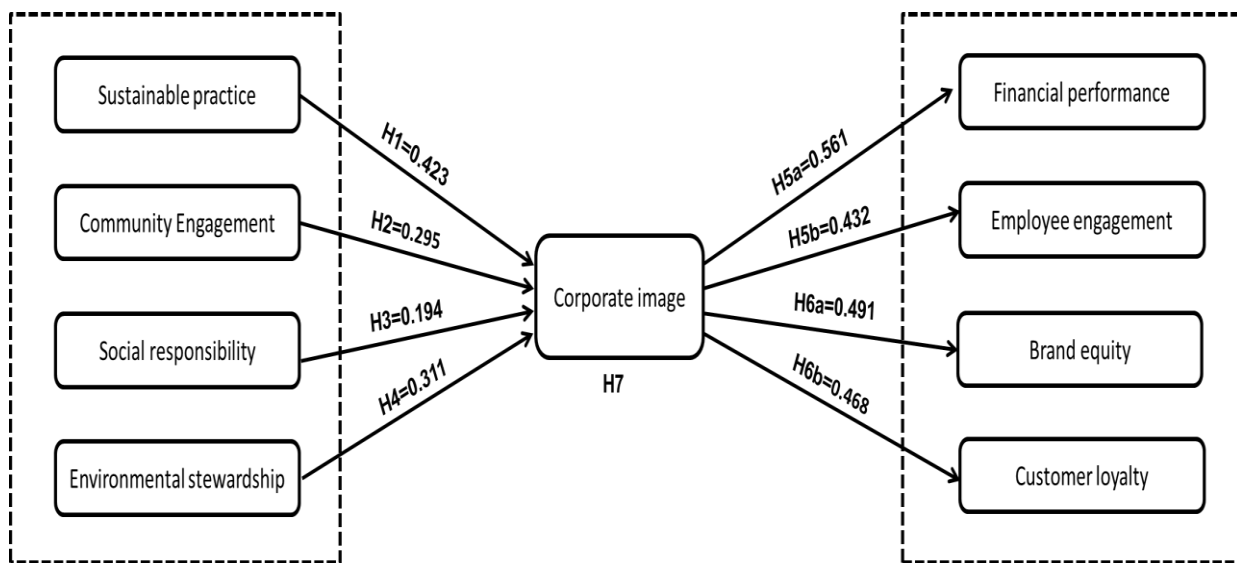


Figure 3 Outcome of multiple regression results of CSR factors.

4.2. Correlation analysis

It determines the direction and degree of the connections between an organization's performance and its CSR activities. This study provides insights into how CSR initiatives influence many critical performance measures.

Figure 4 and Table 3 illustrate that CSR practices are positively associated with various business outcomes. SP is highly positively correlated with BE (0.85), indicating that companies committed to sustainability tend to have a stronger brand image. Similarly, EE and CL are strongly related (0.84) and (0.86), indicating that engaged employees contribute to increased customer loyalty. This shows a moderate positive relationship between CE and financial performance (0.60), which means that companies engaged in community engagement often achieve positive financial outcomes. This finding demonstrates the strong linkage between CSR activities, particularly in SP and ES, with CL (0.84) and overall business success. This finding indicates that implementing these CSR initiatives can significantly enhance a company's reputation and performance.

Table 3 Correlation matrix of CRS practices and organizational outcomes.

Constructs	SP	CE	SR	ES	FP	BE	EE	CL	CI
SP	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CE	0.75	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SR	0.7	0.85	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
ES	0.8	0.72	0.78	1	-	-	-	-	-
FP	0.65	0.60	0.72	0.7	1	-	-	-	-
BE	0.85	0.8	0.78	0.79	0.7	1	-	-	-
EE	0.78	0.76	0.75	0.74	0.68	0.84	1	-	-
CL	0.82	0.84	0.77	0.81	0.71	0.84	0.86	1	-
CI	0.79	0.78	0.74	0.76	0.66	0.8	0.82	0.83	1

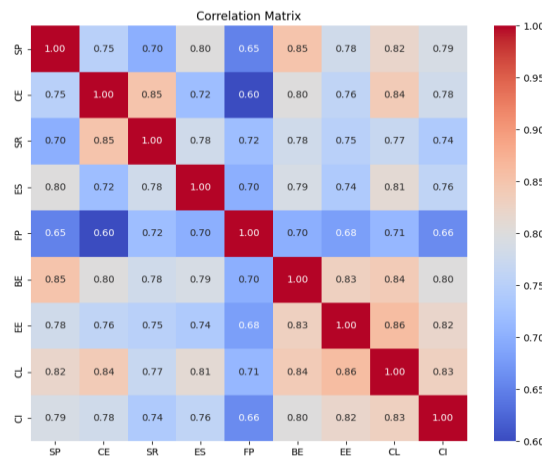


Figure 4 Outcomes of the correlation matrix of CRS practices and organizational outcomes.

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4.3. Mediation analysis

Mediation analysis is used to assess the indirect impact of CSR on corporate performance and success. By improving a company's image, CI serves as a mediator, wherein CSR activities indirectly influence outcomes such as financial performance, employee engagement, brand equity, and customer loyalty.

Table 4 presents the results of the mediation analysis, which determines the correlation between CSR and an organization's performance and success, with CI as the mediator. The outcome shows that CSR has a significant effect on CI ($\beta = 0.423, p=0.001$), which implies that CSR activities enhance CI. This enhanced CI has a positive effect on organizational outcomes: FP ($\beta = 0.561, p = 0.004$), BE ($\beta = 0.491, p = 0.006$), EE ($\beta = 0.432, p = 0.003$), and CL ($\beta = 0.468, p = 0.008$). These outcomes show that CSR activities positively influence organizational performance through the mediating role of CI. The direct effect of CSR on organizational performance ($\beta = 0.253, p = 0.015$) is detected; however, it is relatively weaker than the indirect impact mediated by CI. The direct and indirect findings indicate that CSR affects organizational success indirectly through improved CI and its derivatives: financial, branding, employee, and customer impacts.

Table 4 Mediation analysis of the impact of CSR on organizational success.

Path	β Value	p-Value	Effect Type
CSR initiative (SP, CE, SR, and ES) → Corporate Image (CI)	0.423	0.001	Indirect Effect
CI → Financial Performance (FP)	0.561	0.004	Indirect Effect
CI → Brand Equity (BE)	0.491	0.006	Indirect Effect
CI → Employee Engagement (EE)	0.432	0.003	Indirect Effect
CI → Customer Loyalty (CL)	0.468	0.008	Indirect Effect
CSR → Organizational Outcome (FP, BE, EE, and CL)	0.253	0.015	Direct Effect

CSR initiatives positively impact CI, which in turn improves key business outcomes, including FP, EE, BE, and CL. While CSR does have a direct effect on all these factors, the indirect impact through CI is greater, thereby suggesting the significant mediating effect of CI in the relationship between CSR initiatives and organizational success.

5. Discussion

Research reveals a significant P value of 0.000 for the correlation between e-government (EG) initiatives and mandatory corporate social responsibility (MCSR) practices. This result strongly supports stakeholder theory, which argues that a firm's CSR practices are shaped by its interactions with external stakeholders, and in turn, these practices influence organizational performance. The positive correlation between the EG and MCSR demonstrates that e-government initiatives can effectively enhance mandatory CSR practices, fostering stronger relationships with stakeholders and promoting long-term organizational success (Avotra et al., 2021).



The P value of 0.004 for the effect of green recruitment and selection (GR&S) on sustainable performance (SP) aligns with resource-based view (RBV) theory. The RBV posits that a firm's internal resources, such as human capital, are critical for achieving sustained performance and competitive advantage. Research findings suggest that by prioritizing green recruitment and selection practices, organizations can attract and retain talent that is committed to supporting a company's environmental and social objectives, ultimately enhancing its long-term sustainable performance (Malik et al., 2021).

Research has also obtained a P value of less than 0.05 for the positive correlation between CSR and SP, reinforcing the tenets of stakeholder theory. CSR practices, especially those aimed at employees, customers, and the community, contribute significantly to enhancing organizational performance. This positive correlation implies that organizations that actively engage in CSR activities create value not only for their stakeholders but also for themselves, thereby ensuring long-term sustainability and success in the competitive business environment (Singh & Misra, 2021).

Research proves that CSR significantly impacts CI, which in turn drives positive impacts on critical organizational outcomes. CSR significantly enhances CI with a positive value of ($\beta = 0.423$, $p = 0.001$). The enhanced images from CSR enhance FP ($\beta = 0.561$, $p = 0.004$), BE ($\beta = 0.491$, $p = 0.006$), EE ($\beta = 0.432$, $p = 0.003$), and CL ($\beta = 0.468$, $p = 0.008$), which indicates significant indirect impacts. While the direct impact of CSR on those results is also significant at ($\beta = 0.253$, $p = 0.015$), it is weaker than the indirect effect mediated through CI, indicating that the impact of CSR on organizational success is mainly indirect, as it operates through the enhancement of CI. From this perspective, these findings emphasize CSR activity as a factor in promoting an improvement in reputation for companies, which ultimately leads to progress in financial, branding, employee, and customer outcomes.

6. Conclusions

CSR is an important contributor to organizational performance through sustainability practices, community engagement, and social responsibility. A positive corporate reputation has a direct effect on major business results, such as financial performance, brand value, employee commitment, and customer loyalty. CSR is not merely a public relations tool but also a catalyst for real business success. Research indicates that the influence of CSR practices shapes the public perceptions of corporations, ultimately leading to improved financial performance. The incorporation of CSR practices into business activities is a strategic approach, as companies with good CSR systems enjoy a competitive edge, enhance their stakeholder image, and improve the long-term sustainability of business operations. Research highlights the value of sustained engagement with CSR practices, particularly in response to new consumer expectations as well as increasing regulatory pressure that demands socially accountable practices.

6.1. Limitations and future scope

One of the constraints of the research is its self-reported nature from surveys, with the possibility that this might distort responses. Another constraint of the research is the fact that the scope does not consider the CSR outcomes affected by industry-specific traits. Future research might use a longitudinal design to investigate the long-term effects of CSR on business performance. Furthermore, examining the impact of certain industry sectors on CSR effectiveness might provide important information regarding how CSR initiatives need to be adapted to various business sectors. Future research may further determine how the changing world environment and new technologies impact the integration and efficacy of CSR practices.

Ethical Considerations

This study is committed to upholding the highest ethical standards in its collection and use of primary data involving human participants. The data collection was independent of any institutional affiliations, ensuring that participants were selected without bias or socioeconomic influence.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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