

Impact of CSR Practice on the Performance of Small & Medium Scale Enterprises and Women Empowerment, A Bibliometric Analysis

Pratap Chandra Das

Research Scholar, Department of Commerce
The University of Burdwan, Burdwan, West Bengal
Email: bumba.pratap@gmail.com

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to conduct a bibliometric analysis on corporate social responsibility (CSR) in small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs). The Small and Medium Enterprises in India plays crucial role in industrial production, employment generation and overall socio-economic development of the nation. Being a large in number and small in size, their contribution towards societal, environmental and sustainable development has not been recognized either because the law does not mandate to SMEs to undertake CSR activities or if it has been undertaken not recognized. But the fact is that, CSR plays an important role in the business development as well as assures the sustainability of business. This study aims to collect and analyse the findings that already exist in the literature on CSR practices among SMEs. We will point out the specific challenges faced by SMEs in adopting CSR, as well as analyse the benefits they can enjoy through the implementation of CSR practices. The bibliometric analysis of existing literature review methods are the systematic steps to collect and analyse relevant literature on CSR among SMEs. The result of this research identifies importance of CSR practice for small and medium enterprise also highlight the theoretical and practical implications of such research for developing CSR strategies and guidelines for SMEs. This research addresses the actual need to understand the role of CSR practice in SMEs which is very much important for competitive advantage. Also the result of the research provides a valuable insight how to enhance the empowerment of the women, increase the gender equality and provide working safety in the working environment that will directly effect on sustainability development goals.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Small and Medium Scale Enterprise (SMEs), Bibliometric Analysis, Women Empowerment, Gender Equality, Sustainability Development Goal (SDG)

1. Introduction

In the context economic growth of our nation the contribution of small and medium sector is well recognised. According to the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as the local community and society at large (Kossovsky, 2013). While CSR is often associated with large corporation, but at present its relevance and implication for small and medium level enterprise are also interesting. CSR is a conscious and

vital effort to accumulate economic, environmental and social consideration into our daily business activities (Suminah et al., 2022). Small & medium scale enterprises play a very vital role to boost our economic growth and sustainable development of our community as well as country. So that importance of CSR practice in small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) must be addressed, as it is not just about complying with social and environmental norms but also have a impact on sustainable growth and positive contribution to our society.

Contributions of Small and Medium scale enterprises to the Indian Economy

The term SME is of relatively recent origin in the Indian context. SMEs were referred to as small scale industry or SSI. It was officially established in the year 1950. Since 1954, the Government of India has consciously promoted and developed SSIs through specific policies as a part of the overall industrial development strategy (Prasad, 2008). India has three broad categories of business establishments - state firms, Multinational Companies (MNCs) and family-managed Indian business. Issues of coping up and matching the governance patterns of the three are considerably unique and necessary to understand before their role in the process of economic development can be defined. Among the family-owned business a large segment is occupied by the small and medium scale enterprises (Tewari & Pathak, 2014). SMEs are increasingly playing a significant role in the economic and social development of the nation. As compared to corporate enterprises, SMEs contribute more extensively as they have a share of 40% in terms of volume, 80% in terms of employment, 60% in terms of exports and 92% in terms of number of enterprises. These figures are indicative of the economic significance of SME's (OECD). The contribution of SMEs to the economic development of India is significant. Their contribution in the total corporate sector is as follows: 40% of the total volume of production, 80% of employment, 60% of the exports and 92% in terms of enterprises. The SMEs contribute 7% of India's GDP. As per the Third All India Census of Small-Scale Industries conducted in 2004, the SMEs have increased from about 80,000 units in the 1940s to about 10.52 million units. In the sports goods and garments sector their contribution to exports is as high as 90% to 100%. They constitute 90% of the industrial units in the country and also contribute to about 35% of India's exports. (Pandey, 2007)

The Limit for Turnover and Investment in Plant and Machinery or Equipment of SMEs as notified, vide S.O. 1702(E). dtd.01-06-2020 are as under (Source: www.msme.com)

- i. A small enterprise, where the investment in Plant and Machinery or Equipment does not exceed 10 crore rupees and turnover does not exceed 50 crore rupees;
- ii. A medium enterprise, where the investment in Plant and Machinery or Equipment does not exceed 50 crore rupees and turnover does not exceed 250 crore rupees.

So, Small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) are not just a pillar of economic growth but also a source of innovation. The application of CSR practices in SMEs is relevant in an ever-changing business era and emphasizes the importance on sustainability and social responsibility. This study accumulates all the latest findings in the field of CSR applied in SMEs. This research is very important considering the crucial role of SMEs in the global economy.

CSR Definition and Understanding

Businesses in all the societies are encouraged to behave in a socially responsible manner. But the first challenge is in understanding the meaning of a socially responsible behaviour because there are huge gaps in CSR meaning in different contexts both from academic and corporate perspective. Some of these definitions focusses on philanthropy, some on environment, some on community engagement, some on incorporating social concerns in business operations, some on ethical practices, some on stakeholder engagement, and some on plain contribution to economic development and conserving and maximising business profits etc. All these varied meanings pose a great challenge for anyone to decipher the exact and operational meaning of the term ‘corporate social responsibility’ or CSR. In India, the Companies Act, 2013 requires that every company having net worth of rupees five hundred crore or more, or turnover of rupees one thousand crore or more or a net profit of rupees five crore or more during any financial year shall formulate a Corporate Social Responsibility Policy which shall indicate the activities to be undertaken by the company as specified in Schedule VII of the Act. The activities covered are eradicating extreme hunger and poverty; promotion of education; promoting gender equality and empowering women; reducing child mortality and improving maternal health; combating human immunodeficiency virus, acquired immune deficiency syndrome, malaria and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; employment enhancing vocational skills; social business projects; contribution to the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund or any other fund set up by the Central Government or the State Governments for socio-economic development and relief and funds for the welfare of the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, other backward classes, minorities and women; and such other matters as may be prescribed (Sushil, 2020).

Despite its growing importance, current research on CSR practice of SMEs is limited, often overlooking the unique challenges and opportunities faced by these enterprises compared to larger organizations. This research aims to fill the gap by providing deeper insights into CSR practices within small and medium scale enterprises. We will identify the specific challenges faced by SMEs in adopting CSR, as well as analyse the benefits they can achieve through the implementation of CSR practices. In addition, we will take a closer look at the theoretical and practical implications of this research to develop CSR strategies and guidance that suit the needs of small and medium scale enterprise (SMEs). The novelty of this study lies in its exclusive focus on small and medium scale enterprise (SMEs), which previously received less attention in CSR research. The research will also incorporate the latest and relevant findings in the CSR literature so as to provide a more comprehensive and contemporary view of the issue. This research is expected to provide valuable insights for business practitioners, decision makers, and other stakeholders interested in developing CSR in the context of SMEs. In addition, this research is expected to be the basis for further research in this field. The contribution of CSR to SMEs is key to creating positive impacts in various social, environmental, and economic aspects. Good CSR practices enhance the reputation of small and medium scale (SMEs) and help build a more sustainable society.

2. Database

2.1 Database selection

Academic articles and other relevant sources of information related to this analysis is collected from Scopus database.

2.2 Keyword Selection

In this present study the keyword that are used for finding out the articles are

“(“SMALL” AND “MEDIUM ENTERPRISES” OR “MSME”) AND (“CSR” OR “CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY” OR “WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP” OR “WOMAN EMPOWERMENT” OR “WELL BEING” OR “SDG”)”

2.3 Article search and selection

With the help of these above keywords, I found total 114 articles published till 2024. Then, I deliberately exclude some article which are not published in an open access journal. Further this present study includes research article which are published in English language and belonging to the subject areas of Business management, accounting, Finance, Economics and Social science and document types of Articles, Book chapter and Conference paper. As a result of applying all this filter on initial search result I extracted total 104 research articles which is completely related to my study.

3. Methodology use

The present study is focused on Trend analysis, Top ten authors analysis based on number of articles published by authors with citation per authors, Top ten countries analysis based on number of articles published by countries, Bibliometric keyword citation analysis and Content analysis. To construct the above-mentioned analysis, I use analysis tools of scopus database and VOSviewer software.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Trend Analysis

The below mentioned chart shows the trend in publication of research papers in the field of CSR practice in small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) during the previous years. The first research paper in this field was published in the year 2008. The development of research papers in this field was very slow during 2008 to 2022. During 2008 to 2022 maximum number of research paper published in one year is only 11 during both 2020 and 2021. From 2023 onwards the development in this research field is quite noticeable. During 2023 total numbers of research papers published in this field is 17, then the number increased to 30 in the year 2024. This increasing number of publications implies that the researchers are getting more and more interested in this particular research field and publishing their research works through Scopus. The increasing trend in publications in the field of CSR practice in SMEs is attributed not only towards the recognition of growing importance in this field but also increasing importance towards sustainable growth and positive contribution to our society.

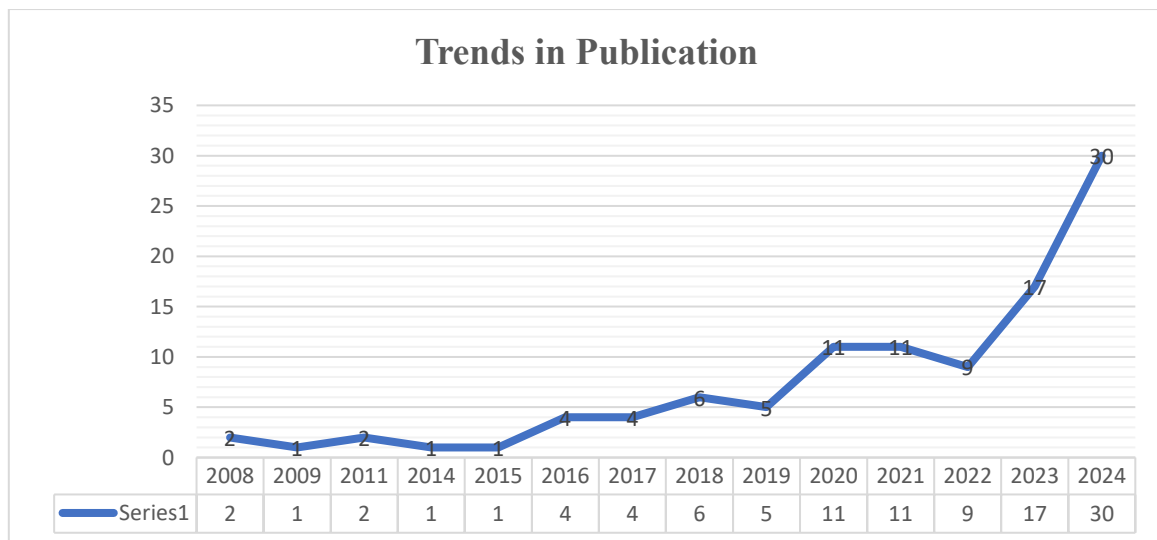


Figure 1: Trend in Publications

4.2 Top Authors' Analysis

The below mentioned chart shows top 10 authors in the field of CSR practise of small and medium scale Enterprises. Anggadwita and grisna, Ramadani and veland are considered as most influential authors as their research article cited 189 times and both published 2 documents (highest) in the research field of practice of CSR in small and medium scale enterprises.

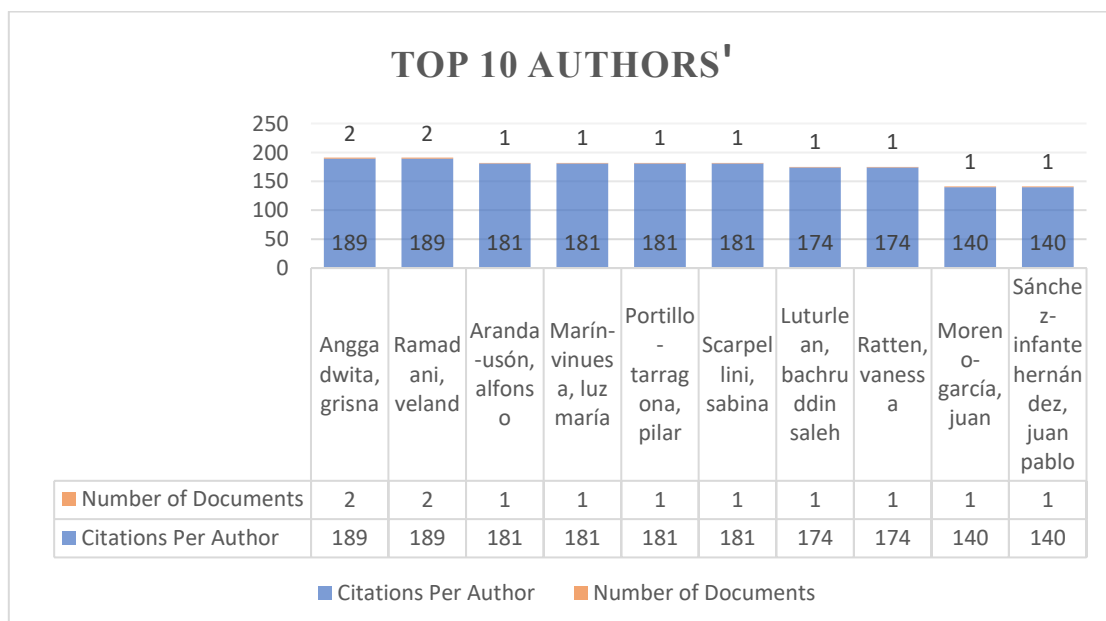


Figure 2: Top 10 Authors'

4.3 Top Countries Analysis

The below mentioned chart shows the top 10 countries according to the publication in the research field of CSR practice of small and medium scale organisation. it is very noticeable point for us that India is the highest research paper publishing country in this filed followed by

Indonesia. Total number of publications from India in this particular research area is 31. So that it is very clear for me that India is in under trend to work upon in this particular topic which is very urge moment for me

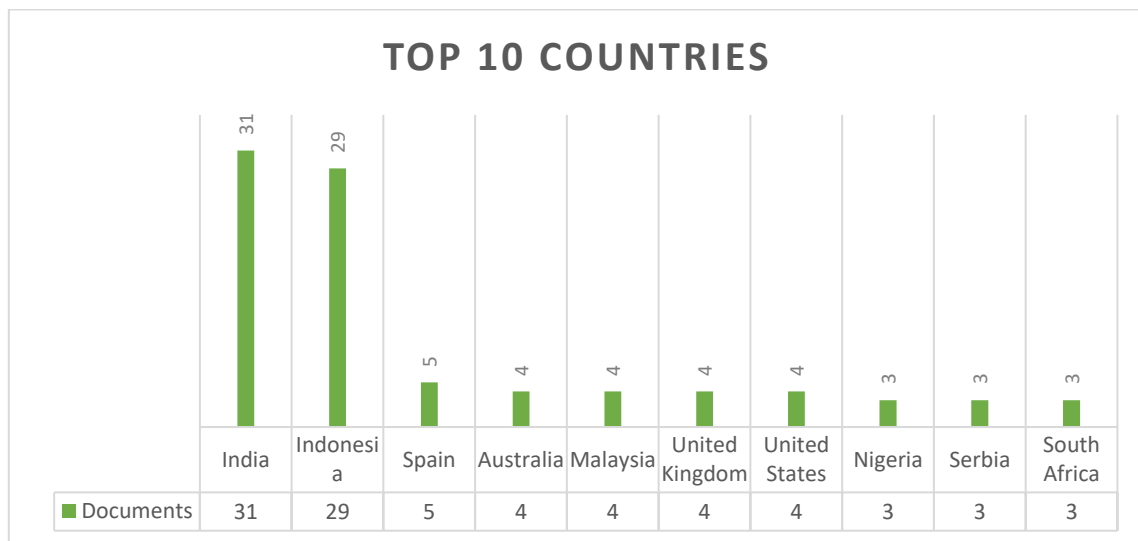


Figure 3: Top 10 Countries

4.4 Bibliometric Keyword Analysis:

This section below represents the analysis of the occurrence of all keywords. The occurrence analysis of all the keywords can be used to conceptualize the development and growth of research in the field of impact of CSR practice on the performance of small and medium scale enterprises. To arrive at a meaningful analysis a minimum threshold limit of three for the occurrence of a particular keyword is required and filtered. This filtration resulted in selection of 25 keywords out of 377 keywords, out of only top ten keywords according to number of occurrences are shown in the below table. The most occurred keywords are Msme, Corporate social responsibility, Entrepreneurship, Micro & Women entrepreneurship. The frequent occurrence of these keywords among studies reflects more analysis applied to the impact of CSR practise and CSR disclosure on the financial performance of SMEs.

KEYWORD	NO. Of Occurrence
Msmes	19
Corporate social responsibility	16
Entrepreneurship	10
Micro	9
Women entrepreneurship	9
India	7
Small	6
Corporate social responsibility (csr)	5

Figure 4: Top ten keywords

Based on the above networking I have found six major themes. accordingly, my content analysis is based on that themes which will be discussed below

CSR practice and its successful implementation in the enterprises can be influenced by several internal & external factor. internal factor consists of strong leadership and commitment from SMEs owner and manager to provide social and environmental value that will affect directly on the successful and effective implementation of CSR in the enterprises. Now different availability of resources will be required to successful implementation of CSR, such as human resources, technical resources and financial resources. Human capital such as managerial capability to plan, execute and effective implementation of a meaningful CSR practice with technological knowledge to drive competitive advantage is very much required. Financial resources is also a big factor for successful implementation of CSR practice. For small types of enterprises, it is obviously a big problem. (Nustini et al., 2024).

External factors consist Expectation from employees, suppliers, local public, customers as well as different regulatory authorities such as local government which can mostly influence the decision of SMEs to adopt CSR practice (Ciliberti, 2008). It is an important fact that different government regulations and policy on social and environmental responsibility can force SMEs to successful implementation of CSR practice. Also different industry association and business

association can provide guidelines, standards and approval for implementing CSR practice which will be monitoring by our society and through media coverage its corporate social responsibilities can influence business decisions of SMEs. I also notice that sometimes SMEs conduct different development activities, through which they can directly interact with local communities. which makes a clear picture in front of our society. these types of activities will directly give a positive impact to the brand image of the business (Biondi et al., 2000; Aguliar, 2019).

Moreover, if the employee of the organization understands how much positive values generated through a positive CSR practice, then they also actively involved with CSR initiatives. so that the business will get a great lead to the towards its achievement of goals and commitment to the workforce

4.5.2 Advantages and Disadvantages of CSR Practice and its impact on the brand image of SMEs

Practice of CSR can impact positively and negatively on the brand image of the enterprises. Positive impact can improve brand image SMEs in the eyes of consumers. Consistent practice of CSR that have meaningful and positive impact which can build good reputation for SMEs through the organisation can increase consumer confidence and make a difference form its competitors. Consumers who care about the social and environmental responsibility tends to support specially that types of organisations who have strong CSR practice that resulting in increased sales and consumer loyalty (Lii et al., 2013). CSR practices can improve the relationship with local communities, employees, suppliers and local government, all of which contribute to build a positive image in the society and helps to improve brand image in the industries also. CSR initiatives such as sustainable sourcing, supporting, supporting local communities, or promoting ethical labour practice can improve the perception of the brand. A positive reputation for social responsibility can differentiate an SMEs in crowded market. I also notice very interesting fact that a good enterprise who is known for their social responsibilities are often attract top talent who want to contribute to meaningful work, enhancing the overall workforce quality.

Negative impact includes inconsistent practice of CSR or only used it as a tool of marketing without real impact can result in impaired credibility and can create negative impact on the brand image. Implementation of CSR practice is also expensive which can adversely impact on the financial health of SMEs and also through CSR practice many organisations manipulates to divert the attention from the main problem that can harm the brand image (Kim et al., 2020). While initial CSR investments might seem like a cost, over time, they can lead to financial benefits such as cost saving (e.g. energy efficiency, waste reduction), better access to funding (especially from impact investors) or increased sales from ethically-minded consumers. Also, if CSR efforts are not strategically planned and executed, the costs may outweigh the benefits, leading stakeholders to view the brand inefficient or spending money without clear purpose. so that if a CSR activity does not align with the core business objectives, the brand image may suffer.

Moreover, the concluding statement in the above matter is, A good CSR practice helps SMEs focus on long-term objectives, integrating sustainable practice into their business models. These leads to improved resources management, cost savings, and a resilient brand image that can endure market fluctuations. Also, an important note that too many disparate CSR activities without clear focus to the brand mission can result in brand confusion or lack of coherence, leading customers to question the authenticity of the company's values. Failing to report CSR outcomes transparently may cause stakeholders to question to effectiveness to initiatives, thus affecting the company's public image. So, to ensure that CSR contributes positively to brand image, SMEs should focus on the authentic and transparent efforts that align with their business objectives with meaningful impact.

4.5.3 Involvement in social and environmental activities of the owners of SMEs

It is very important fact that a positive involvement with social and environmental activities of the owners of small and medium scale enterprises will leads to strong sustainability of the business. The owner's leadership, decision-making, and personal commitment can shape the direction of the company's CSR activities. There are different benefits through which owners of SMEs participate in social and environmental activities and contributes to the sustainability of the business (Famiola & Wulansari, 2020), such as (i) A positive involvement by the owner of the SMEs to the social and environmental activities will increase the image and reputation of the band in the eyes of the consumers as well as local community, which will help to differentiate them form competitors and build a trust. (ii) involvement in social and environmental activities can strengthen the relationship with employees, suppliers, and local communities, that will provide a valuable network for support and collaboration. (iii) Active involvement of the owners in social and environmental activities of the owner can open doors of new business opportunities such as partnership with different organisation of non-profit seeking and participation in government programs. (iv) A positive involvement of the owners of SMEs will improve the business image in the eyes of different regulatory authorities also such as local government, state government which will help to get different financial helps and subsidies from government (Pirsch et al., 2007). The owner can ensure that CSR not a random effort but is strategically integrated into the company's core mission and business strategy. Another also very interesting fact that most of the small and medium scale enterprises runs on a very small and tight budget, so the owner's decisions to allocate resources (human and financial) is very essential. So it is an important that owner personal believe and commitment to social responsibility often influence company's CSR philosophy. In this case owner's active role in formulating the policy for CSR practice will be noticeable. That policy which is prepared by the owner of SMEs that defines the company's approach towards social, environmental and ethical issues. This framework will help to make a proper CSR structured and continuous practices, which will give a sustainable existence to the SMEs business strategies. Sometimes owner of SMEs faced the problem of resources constraints in both financial and human. By directly involved in CSR, they can easily eliminate these limitations and ensuring that CSR activities are still carried out in a meaningful and impactful way. For small scale enterprises owner can make adopt different CSR project to business specific context and introduce different employee related program through which employees are allow to participate in

different CSR efforts, such as offering paid time off for volunteering, matching employee donations or supporting employee initiatives (Sushil, 2020).

Moreover, an owner who is personally involved in CSR initiatives can motivate employees to take part as well. Whether it's through volunteer opportunities, charitable donations, or creating internal sustainability practices. So the owner's commitment and involvement in transparency of CSR practice will help to avoid CSR being perceived as "greenwashing". They can ensure that CSR is genuinely impacting society and environment rather than just being a marketing tool. So, SMEs owners' responsibility towards social and environmental aspect provides infusion to the business of the enterprises, that will provide obviously a great lead to the owners through which the business will get its long-term sustainability.

4.5.4 Government's role which will encourage the successful and effective implementation of CSR practice in small and medium scale enterprises

Role of government is very vital to encourage and implement a good CSR practice in every sector. through policy making, providing direct monetary benefits, and regulations; government will provide as much as encourage to CSR practice. I will discuss four major ways through which government will provide the support to CSR practice in enterprises. firstly, monetary assistance: the government will provide tax incentives or tax rebate that will support a positive CSR practice in SMEs and also in some cases government will provide a unique recognition through different certifications and awards. Secondly, Direct partnership: the government may create different partnership between different SMEs and research institutions, educational institutions and different NPO. Sometimes different government department or government organisation also create partnership with SMEs to provide direct assistance to smoothly implementation of CSR practice in the enterprise that will generate real value in our society (Gamerschlag et al., 2011). Government can promote collaboration between the public sector and small and medium scale enterprises to tackle broader social issues, such as education, health, or environmental sustainability. By creating platforms for this partnership, governments can enhance the impact of CSR practice and ensure that SMEs contribute to national development goals. Thirdly, regulations and policy creations: the government will provide different guidelines through their policy making activities which will provide definitely help to those enterprises who are willing start their CSR practice for our society (Wang et al., 2020). in some cases, through direct regulations government will force to start CSR practice in our society. Government can advocate for a national and regional culture of CSR by raising awareness of its benefits for economic growth, social welfare, and environmental protection. Public policy can have use to encourage all business, including small and medium scale enterprises to engage in socially responsible behaviour. Fourthly, provisions of resources and continuously monitoring: the government can provide different training program and educational support i.e. how to implement a good CSR practice in your organisation and what is the benefits of that, which will really help to understand the underlying meaning of CSR practice (Nustini et al., 2024). Side by side the government will keep monitoring the report of CSR continuously to check their transparency accountability to improve our society. Many large corporations may require to publish detailed CSR reports; SMEs often lack the resources to do so. government can help by introducing simplified, tiered reporting systems that make it

easier for smaller businesses to disclose their CSR activities. This enhances transparency without burdening SMEs with complex compliance requirements.

Government can encourage to make ethical purchasing decisions, creating a market for small and medium scale enterprises that are committed to responsible practices. This may involve creating programs that certify or levels business as “socially responsible”, which can give SMEs a competitive advantage.

So, government will play a vital role in the field how to develop the concepts of to contribute in our society in the form of socially and environmentally by different corporate sector. Government can protect SMEs form exploitation by ensuring that large corporations or other business with which they partner for CSR are held to the same ethical standards, thus levelling the playing field. Moreover, government’s role in the successful implementation of CSR practice in small scale and medium scale enterprises for whom budget is very tight, is very much significant. By providing financial incentives, regulatory support, training opportunities, and different partnership program, government genuinely help small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) to overcome the barriers of CSR adoption and maximize their positive impact on society and the environment. So, the without the involvement of government the CSR practice can’t lead to more sustainable and responsible business practices across the SMEs sectors, which in turn to contributes largely to the sustainable development goals.

4.5.5 Effect of CSR practise on women empowerment

In the simplest word women empowerment means where a women can make their own decisions for their personal development as well as shine as equal in society through the creations of harassment and threat free environment. In a specific sense, women empowerment refers to increasing their power in position structure of our society. Even though women are highly qualified, educated and competent but they still have to depend on their family decision to take up any career before marriage as well as after marriage. The word women empowerment essentially means that the women have the power or capacity to direct their day- to- day lives in the social, political and economic terms -a power which enables them to move from the periphery to the centre stage. Since CSR activities deals with the responsibility towards our society, so talking without women empowerment in working place is completely irrelevant. So society’s development without the development of women workforce is completely meaningless (Kalva & Kumar, 2013). I have mentioned in earlier that small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) has huge contribution to boost our economic growth. Empowerment can be seen as multi-pronged concept which involves a self-realization and an awareness about one’s potentialities and capabilities, rights and opportunities about various aspects of life. The general term women empowerment means to provide them access to all the freedoms and opportunities. And, in specific sense, women empowerment refers to the enhancement of the power and position of a women in the society (Bhuyan, 2006). In a developed economy we always believe on gender equality. Through a positive CSR practice the gender inequality of our country can be decreased. The gap between financial independent and actual empowerment of a women which is collected from the report of gender equality & women’s empowerment in India is among married women who work and are paid in cash, more than 80% decide how their earnings will be spent, either alone or together with their husbands; however, one in six

have no say in how their earnings are spent (Kishor & Gupta, 2009). CSR programs will focus on skill development and education such as leadership training, technological skill and entrepreneurship program that will enhance the ability to participate in higher-value and more attracting role which helps the women to gain confidence and access to better career advancement opportunities. CSR practice which focuses on creating safe and harassment-free work environment that will helps a woman to feel valued and supported. So that when SMEs ensure that women can work without fear of discrimination or harassment, they are more likely to stay and thrive in their roles. CSR practice will ensure equal pay for equal work that will provide adequate emoluments to women. SMEs can support women entrepreneurs through mentorship funding, and networking opportunities that can help to build a bridge for filling a gap of women looking to start their own business. Now one very important aspect of a positive side of CSR practice in SMEs is development of community through different community development programs, such as building training school, healthcare facilities, and different financial literacy related program. So, when these initiatives are taken specially to target to the women communities, so they can empower women by improving their quality of life and access to essential services. However CSR program also address the issue like healthcare, maternal health etc., which will directly impact on women's wellbeing, allowing them to be more productive and engaged in their work as well as improving their personal lives. By adopting eco-friendly practices, such as reducing waste through renewable energy small and medium scale organizations can contribute to the creations of healthier working environment for women, especially in underserved areas where women are disproportionately affected by the environmental hazards.

So, overall A small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) integrate a positive CSR practice which is purely women focused that can provide greater opportunities, resources and the support to the women communities to build them strong in socially, economically and personally that will lead to build a strong women entrepreneur. Additionally, by focusing on women health, safety, and social well-being SMEs can largely contribute to build a more equitable and healthy society.

4.5.6 Practice of CSR and its impact on the goals of sustainability development

On 25th September 2015, seventeen sustainable development goals were adopted by 193 countries in the world that contains 169 targets and aims in developing many more targets to achieve by the year 2030 United Nations Sustainable Development. The goals call for a collaborative action from the Governments, corporate and civil society to achieve hunger, health care, no poverty well-being, education and fitness for equality between men and women, sanitation, energy, sustain able cities, clean water, communities, climate action, prosperity as well as environment protection constitutes a sustainably developing agenda. The corporate social responsibility practices of small and medium scale enterprise play a very vital role in contributing to the achievement of Sustainability development Goals (SDGs). In respect of SDG 1, i.e. No poverty; Small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) create significant sources of employment specially in our country by providing stable and decent work opportunities. Most of the times SMEs creating job opportunities for marginalized group such as women or people with disabilities, thus directly contributing to poverty alleviation. Sometimes SMEs

promote edification that includes employing the enhancement of vocation skills among children, elderly women and persons with disabilities through different livelihood enhancement project and special education program. So particularly in this way SMEs can lift individuals and families out of poverty. In respect of SDG 3, i.e. good health and well-being; various small and medium scale enterprises taking care of the matter of hygiene maintenance of working environment. SMEs takes different initiatives which can have directly impact on improving healthcare facilities such as providing health insurance, organizing health camps, promoting hygiene and encouraging healthy work environment. Sometimes focus on employee well-being, mental health support, fitness programs which leads to improvement and betterment of the communities. Small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) can educate communities on critical health topics, invest in rural clinics, and sponsor mobile medical services. Responsible waste management by SMEs further protects public health. These actions can significantly improve rural healthcare access and well-being, empowering communities for a healthier future (Shailendra, 2024). In respect of SDG 5, i.e. Gender equality; through a positive CSR practice SMEs prioritize gender equality. Different initiatives such as women participation in work or offering training and leadership programs for women directly impact SDG 5. The empowerment of women at the individual level helps to make a base for creating a social image in the society and in our country. Promoting woman empowerment and their contribution in decision making power i.e. in managerial level, are the key strategies for sustainable development (Singhal, 2014). Through inclusive hiring practice SMEs invites women to participates decisions making activities and ensuring equal pay and equal opportunities for growth within the organization can break gender barriers and promote equality. In respect of SDG 8, i.e. Decent work and economic growth; With over 110 million people employed across nearly 60 million establishments (Ministry of MSME, 2018), the sector offers substantial employment and decent work opportunities to a significant portion of the population. By enhancing labour productivity and reducing the unemployment rate, small and medium scale enterprises contribute largely to curbing rural to-urban migration among the impoverished (Shailendra, 2024).

Overall small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) play an important multifaceted role which address various side of sustainability development goals set by united nations. Through different positive CSR practice SMEs address poverty alleviations, increasing living standard of communities, gender equalities, clean energy and responsible consumption. So this sector is one of the sectors which carry a huge potential to affect the progress of most of these goals. The diversity and flexibility in operational capabilities of this sector i.e. SMEs will make them an important player in this endeavour. It will certainly help in generating more employment, reducing poverty, reducing regional imbalance, promoting equality etc (Verma & Nema, 2019).

6. Conclusion

Implementation of positive practice of Corporate social responsibility plays a very crucial role on performance of small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs). After thoroughly literature review and in dept analysis of various article its observed that to encourage sustainability and social responsibility among SMEs, implementation a positive CSR practices is the only path which plays a very crucial role.

The Implementation of CSR practices, if done well, can provide significant long-term benefits to SMEs and their surrounding communities. However, it is important to understand the business context and consider the impact of decisions made to achieve social, environmental, and economic goals.

In a global context that is becoming increasingly aware of social and environmental responsibility, SMEs have the opportunity to become agents of positive change in society. The research found that there is a considerable range of assistance provided to SMEs, including equipment support, and training assistance. Within this scope, some forms of assistance are effective, while others are not, with effective findings such as marketing, training, and mentoring. It was also discovered that sustainability performance in this domain is measured through social dimensions, environmental dimensions, and ultimately through business dimensions.

Research on the Implementation of CSR practices in small and medium enterprise (SMEs) has several limitations that need to be acknowledged, including the limited availability of data on CSR practices in SMEs, which can affect the depth of analysis and generalization of results. Data is sometimes challenging to obtain, especially if SMEs still need formal reporting on CSR practices. Each SMEs has unique characteristics, and the Implementation of CSR practices can be heavily influenced by geographic context, industry, and business size. Therefore, it is difficult to make broad generalizations, and limitations in the relevant literature on CSR practices in SMEs may limit an in-depth understanding of this topic. The limited availability of literature may make the analysis more limited. Despite these limitations, research on CSR practices in SMEs has essential value in providing insights into how SMEs can contribute to social and environmental responsibility more broadly and how they can overcome barriers and optimize the positive impact of these practices. Given the dynamic nature of today's business environment, it is recommended that SMEs integrate CSR practices into their operations to enhance their sustainability and social impact. This research underscores the need for continued exploration in this area, particularly in developing CSR strategies and guidelines tailored to the unique needs of SMEs.

This can provide deeper insight into the differences and similarities in CSR implementation among different sectors. Examining the impact of CSR in more detail, in terms of both economic, social, and environmental factors, can help identify the concrete benefits obtained by SMEs and related stakeholders. Research on how technology and innovation can be used in CSR implementation in SMEs, such as the use of green technology or digital based platforms to engage consumers, is an exciting area of research. More importantly to fulfil the goal of sustainability development goal 5 i.e. gender equality CSR practice plays a very crucial role. In present scenario, women empowerment is an important benchmark of developed economy. I saw through CSR practice many small and medium scale organisation positively empowered an women given them a healthy living standard, which will not only fulfil the goal no. 5 of Sustainability development but also the goal no. 3 of Sustainability development.

While CSR offers many benefits, there are also challenges for SMEs in implementing these practices, these are i) Limited Resources: SMEs often have fewer resources compared to large corporations, making it difficult to implement extensive CSR programs. ii) Balancing Costs:

SMEs may struggle to balance the short-term costs of implementing CSR practices with the long-term benefits, especially if they face financial pressures. iii) Lack of Knowledge and Expertise: Smaller businesses may lack the knowledge or expertise to design and implement effective CSR strategies. Specially in India this problem is very common.

So, in the end, incorporating CSR into SME operations has the potential to drive improvements in brand reputation, employee satisfaction, operational efficiency, market opportunities, and long-term sustainability. However, SMEs must carefully consider the resources and strategies they can apply, given the challenges they face in comparison to larger organizations. Ultimately, CSR can contribute to an SME's competitiveness, profitability, and ability to adapt to changing market and regulatory environments.

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