

## DIPLOMA THESIS ASSIGNMENT

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Economics Policy and Administration  
Business Administration

Thesis title

**Comparing corporate social responsibility environment between EU and India**

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### Objectives of thesis

The thesis aims to study theoretical background of corporate social responsibility (CSR) along with theoretical frameworks in the first part. In the second part, CSR environmental aspects of European Union and India will be studied with reference to the theoretical background. The author will assign quantitative rating to each market for each aspect studied. The study will conclude with adding up scores for each market and reporting on key findings.

### Methodology

The study will be desk research, depending mainly on published literature and statistics. There will be no primary data collection, but broad-based literature analysis. The thesis will mainly use descriptive and comparative methods.

## The proposed extent of the thesis

60 – 80 pages

## Keywords

corporate social responsibility, CSR, Europe, USA, India, CSR environment

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## Recommended information sources

- Blumrodt, J., Bryson, D., & Flanagan, J. (2012). European football teams' CSR engagement impacts on customer-based brand equity. *The Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 29(7), 482–493. <https://doi.org/10.1108/07363761211274992>
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- LaGore, W., Mahoney, L., & Thorne, L. (2020). An implicit-explicit examination of differences in CSR practices between the USA and Europe. *Society and Business Review*, ahead-of-print(ahead-of-print), 165–187. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SBR-10-2019-0129>
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## **Declaration**

I declare that I have worked on my master's thesis titled "Comparing corporate social responsibility environment between EU and India" by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the master's thesis, I declare that the thesis does not break any copyrights.

In Prague on 29 November 2021

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## **Acknowledgement**

I would like to thank prof. Ing. Mansoor Maitah, Ph.D. et Ph.D. for his advice and support during my work on this thesis.

# **Comparing corporate social responsibility environment between EU and India**

## **Abstract**

The report sheds light on the contrast and comparison of the Corporate Social Responsibility activities of Indian and The European Union. The CSR activities of the two countries have been compared and analyzed in various aspects. The involvement of the CSR activities in the social improvement of the countries has been discussed. This report also discusses the accountability of the CSR reporting of India and European Union countries. The rules and regulations of the countries in the aspect of CSR activities have been discussed in this report. The gaps and unethical approaches of the CSR activities of the two countries have been elaborately discussed along with the results of the CSR activities on the countries. The report found out that the overall score of the European Union is 27 and India is 21; this indicates that the overall CSR contribution of the companies of the European Union is better than the Indian companies.

**Keywords:** CSR, legal framework, carbon impact, EU, India.



# **Srovnání prostředí společenské odpovědnosti firem mezi EU a Indií**

## **Abstrakt**

Zpráva vrhá světlo na kontrast a srovnání aktivit Corporate Social Responsibility v Indii a Evropské unii. CSR aktivity obou zemí byly porovnány a analyzovány z různých hledisek. Diskutovalo se o zapojení CSR aktivit do sociálního zlepšení zemí. Tato zpráva také pojednává o odpovědnosti za podávání zpráv o CSR Indie a zemí Evropské unie. Tato zpráva se zabývá pravidly a předpisy jednotlivých zemí v oblasti CSR aktivit. Mezery a neetické přístupy CSR aktivit obou zemí byly podrobně diskutovány spolu s výsledky CSR aktivit v těchto zemích. Zpráva zjistila, že celkové skóre Evropské unie je 27 a Indie 21; to naznačuje, že celkový přínos CSR společností z Evropské unie je lepší než indických společností.

**Klíčová slova:** CSR, právní rámec, uhlíkový dopad, EU, Indie.

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## List of abbreviations

CSR	-	Corporate social responsibility
EU	-	European Union
INR	-	Indian rupees

- Rs. - Indian rupees
- TBA - Triple bottom approach
- 3Ps - People, prosperity, and planet
- SME - Small and medium enterprise
- SGD - Sustainable global development

# **1 Introduction**

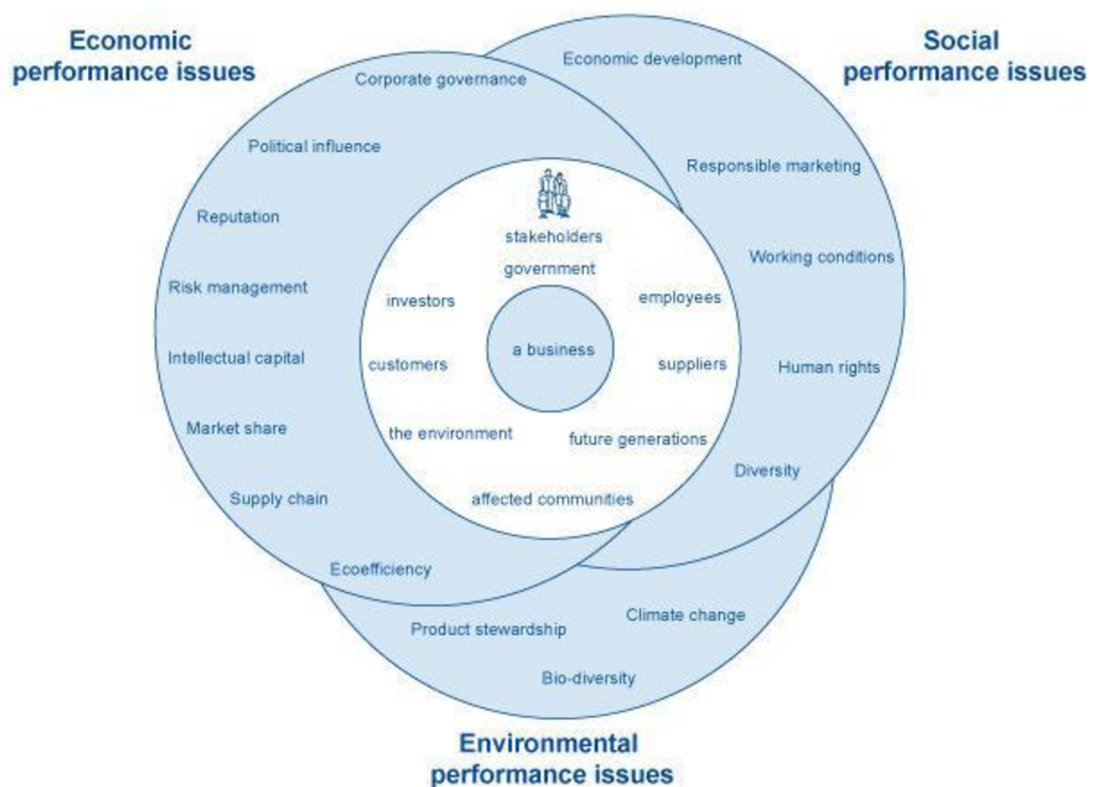
## **1.1 Background of the research**

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) refers to the business model wherein businesses become more socially accountable by integrating social and environmental issues in the way their business operates and interacts with the stakeholders (Smith & Barstow, 2011). The company improves its position for itself, the stakeholders and the public's opinion. Also called corporate citizenship, it is intended at making the company more conscious about the way it impacts the society, environment, and the economy. This is also called the triple bottom approach (TBA), wherein the company, instead of focusing solely on increasing profit, pay attention to the 3Ps – people, prosperity, and planet (Miller, 2020). While doing so, the company also pays attention to the expectations of the stakeholders of the company and meets their expectations. The concept of CSR goes beyond philanthropic missions that organizations undertake. Even though these missions and charities can help in improving society, CSR is not confined to these measures alone. Every organization, based on its capacity, makes a certain contribution to society in terms of providing employment opportunities, etc., while ensuring that they are economically viable to undertake such missions.

For Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), it is especially important to ensure that they take their capacity into account while fulfilling their CSR. The triple bottom approach, in this case, has been specially approved by United Nations Industrial Development Organisations (UNIDO) for SMEs in developing nations so that they do not lose competitiveness in the process of meeting the set standards for environmental and social concerns. TBA is used by organizations worldwide as a framework for measuring their performance on economic, environmental, and social fronts throughout the year. This assures the stakeholders and shareholders that the company is being safe and that they are investing in the right organization. The goals of sustainable global development (SGD) can be fulfilled using the framework so that they can focus on profit-making while eliminating social and environmental issues, which in turn can create a profitable cycle for the company. As per the directive, following the TBA approach can help an organization optimize the usage of resources, give back to the community, improve their reputation and attract more

investors and stakeholders in the process who would eventually lead the company to more sustainable development and growing practice in the long run. In order to be sustainable, the organization needs to be making a good profit, and in order to continue making a good profit, it should follow CSR practices and take good care of the social, economic, and environmental issues that it faces or is responsible for in some way or the other.

**IMAGE 1 CSR FRAMEWORK**



**SOURCE: UNIDO, 2021**

A negative impact on the environment and society not just impacts profits but also makes the organization less attractive to investors, customers, suppliers, and employees (Impact Garden, 2020). The company then faces difficulty convincing stakeholders to trust in the business plans of the company or invest in any manner, thus ruining their reputation in the process. CSR practices can help the organization develop stronger bonds with the employees, which helps them retain talent in the long run. Organizations that have lost reputation while ignoring their social and environmental issues have been known to face

issues of higher employee turnover rate as they worry about job security and reducing the value of the organization.

The CSR scenarios in India and the EU are somehow different; in the EU, the importance of CSR has been realized since the 1990s and is considered a key part of sustainable development strategy. In the year 2011, the CSR concept has evaluated in the EU with the addition of new elements to establish a value-based system for CSR (Martinuzzi et al., 2011). Since 2001, the EU has strongly promoted the significance of CSR, and the policy regarding CSR in the EU also states that "it is a way to sustainable development". On the contrary, in India, the evaluation of CSR tools is placed at four stages. In the first stage, philanthropy and charity were the key drivers of the CSR concept, and at the first stage, from 1850 onwards, the concept of CSR started to change. The second phase was started during the independence movement, and at this stage, trust was established based on the trusteeship concept of Gandhi, and the businesses started trusts for colleges, schools and other scientific institutions. The third phase was conducted in 1960-1980, and at this stage, the private sector came into context, where there were many examples of corporate malpractices by the private sector (Ghanghas, 2018).

Overall, the background of this research is based on the growing importance to analyze the CSR environment that is prevailing in several regions as CSR activities tremendously impacts society as well as the environment. In addition to that, rapid globalization and digitalization have also raised concerns among the public and governments in various parts of the world.

## **1.2 Rationale**

In the context of the modern-day business environment, it has become essential for business organizations to indulge in corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities. The CSR activities ensure societal, cultural and environmental protections. Thus, it is important to conduct research on the CSR environment for the purpose of gaining knowledge about the impact of CSR activities. The broad rationale related to the new set of ethics required for corporate decision-making tends to uphold and construct the social responsibility of a company that arises from the benefits that they receive. The CSR environment of India holds global significance as India has the second-largest population in the world, and the market

of India is attracting several global companies for investment (Shira, 2018). Thus, with the rapid digitalization and industrialization in India, the attention has shifted towards the CSR activities that are being carried out in the country. In recent years, several business organizations operating across India has adopted CSR strategies as although such strategies have led to additional expenditure, this has been working effectively as a form of marketing concept that is working for a better cause along with gaining the interest of the masses. However, despite all the CSR measures, India has some of the world's most polluted cities, and this is a major area of concern for the country's government. The Indian government has taken up various measures to counter the pollution challenges in the country, but the measures have not proven to be effective.

The study of CSR has become extremely important, especially in the context of India, where the population is dense, and this makes a massive segment of the population vulnerable to various societal and environmental threats (Hajare, 2020). The concept of CSR successfully demonstrates that a business takes an interest in various social and environmental issues rather than solely focusing on the factors that impact the profit margins. In addition to that, CSR activities also focus on sustainability, which has become the top-most priority of several companies in the contemporary marketplace. In the country setting of India, it has become incredibly important for companies to operate in a socially and environmentally responsible way. Despite the fact that every social and environmental practice is not legally binding, it is still the best possible way to achieve sustainability. There are several benefits of CSR activities in India, and based on the potential benefits, the companies operating in the country desire to adopt and implement CSR activities. However, to gain a proper understanding of the effectiveness of CSR activities in India, it will be important to compare and contrast the country's CSR environment with another region so that the lacking aspects can be identified and improved.

On the other hand, the CSR environment in the European Union (EU) is focused on reducing business risks along with improving reputation and providing opportunities for cost savings (European Parliament, 2020). However, it is still important to recognize the impact of CSR activities in the EU so that all the possibilities for further improvement can be identified and accordingly implemented. The European Union mainly consists of developed countries, and the population of the EU countries is significantly less as compared to India. However, some



of the major cities in the European Union are facing severe environmental issues, and this calls for a proper analysis of the CSR environment that exists in the European Union region. In addition that, the CSR environment also needs to be updated on a regular basis depending upon the ultimate needs as the needs of the environment and society keep on changing. The global economic crisis that has been caused by the 2008 economic recession and the recent Covid-19 pandemic has created some serious social problems along with economic problems in several countries of the European Union. Therefore, by analyzing the region's CSR environment, proper strategies can be developed to mitigate the social issues, which to a certain extent are also related to the economic issues. One of the most prominent features of the CSR environment in the European Union is that it strongly pushes for mandatory social and environmental reporting. It is, thus, essential to compare and contrast such mandatory push for companies operating in the European Union to the CSR environment in India, where there is no mandatory push regarding the same.

Overall, comparison and contrast of the CSR environment between India and the European Union can prove to be immensely beneficial in terms of recommending improvements in CSR activities for both India and the European Union. The most effective part of this comparison will be based on the identification of the factors that are contributing to CSR issues and ultimately hampering the society and environment.

### **1.3 Overview of the research**

This research will consider a brief literature review on the first part based on global CSR activities by including the triple-bottom theory as this will generate a clear understanding of the perceived concept of CSR activities. It will be important to gain a clear concept of the global CSR activities so that the issues and the benefits of certain CSR activities can be identified. In addition to that literature review section of this research will also include circular economy along with reasons behind implementing CSR activities. In the context of any research, literature review holds tremendous significance because it allows gaining an in-depth understanding of the existing literature related to the topic (Snyder, 2019). The second part of this research will describe the research methodology, which will give a clear indication about the approach used to gather information about the CSR environment of India and the European Union. The third section of this research paper will conduct a data

analysis by specifically emphasizing India and the European Union, and this section will identify the major differences in the CSR environment between India and the European Union. In addition to that, ratings will also be given to each CSR activities that are carried out in India and the European Union. The fourth section of this research paper will recommend the relevant strategies to improve the CVSR activities in India and the European Union that is acting as major concerns in the respective CSR environments. The last section of this research paper will be a conclusion part where all the major findings and recommendations from this report will be highlighted along with highlighting the scope of future studies regarding the CSR environment in India and the European Union.

## **2 Objectives and Methodology**

### **2.1 Objectives**

The aim of this research is to compare and contrast the CSR environments that exist in India and the European Union so that proper strategies can be recommended for improving the CSR practices in both regions. In addition to that, this research will also identify all the potential issues in the CSR environment of India and the European Union, which can play a decisive role in terms of suggesting the recommendations.

The objectives of this research are as follows:

- To analyze the existing CSR environment in India.
- To analyze the existing CSR environment in the European Union
- To compare and contrast the CSR environment between the European Union and India.
- To recommend strategies for improving CSR activities to the European Union and India.

### **2.2 Methodology**

Research methodology denotes the vast philosophical groundwork to the chosen research methods for a particular topic. The methodology used in research allows the researcher to connect the methods to literature that has been mentioned earlier (Mehta, 2019). As per research onion, it suggested that the strategies for methodologies include multiple aspects such as action research, interviews, surveys, etc. The strategies that the researcher chooses for the research depends on the data needed for the success of research and to achieve the aim of the research.

#### **2.2.1 Research philosophy**

In general, research philosophy shows the derivation and the achievements of knowledge. Also, it can be said that research philosophy is an opinion concerning the way that that data has been gathered for the analysis of comparing and contrasting the CSR environment in the European Union and India. Research philosophy consists of four types such as positivism,

interpretivism, realism, and pragmatism. The entire research for this particular research topic is based on the method of interpretivism that will provide a researcher a good analysis of the given topic, which involves human explanations (Žukauskas et al., 2018). The interpretivism method is based on one's understanding and provides a naturalistic approach for the researcher to collect data. In research philosophy, interpretivism methods come with a secondary data approach, which has been carried out in this research. The research philosophy that has been chosen for this particular research is thus aligned with the concept of interpretivism philosophy, where the core foundation of knowledge, reality is built by humans.

This particular research aims to reflect on the comparison and the contrast of CSR Environment in the European Union and India; it means the CSR environment of different countries will be compared, where it can be seen that the individual involved in maintaining the environment of the country. In that context, the knowledge, skills that depend on human beings as per interpretivism philosophy can be seen as the individual involvement of maintaining the CSR environment in both of these countries because the research is based on the interpretivism philosophy and has aimed at involving the interaction of the humans hence to locate the research questions (Priya Chetty, 2016). Along with it, the reason for choosing interpretivism philosophy is because it provides a researcher a flexible structure for addressing the particular research questions. Under this flexible structure, the researcher will be able to gather data that mainly focuses on behaviors and the experiences of humans instead of just generalizing the data.

### **2.2.2 Research Approach**

The research approach is defined as a process that is used in research that gives detailed information on the procedure that has been selected by the researcher and also defines how the data will be collected along with its analysis. The research approach, in general, is classified into three distinctive approaches, deductive, inductive, and abductive. The applicability of the hypothesis to the research is the most distinctive aspect of deductive and inductive approaches. Where deductive approaches challenge the weight of assumptions in hand, on the other inductive contribute towards the arrival of new generalizations as well as theories. On the other hand abductive approach begins with puzzles where the research

process is committed for an explanation (Bhandari, 2020). For the analysis of comparing and contrasting of the CSR environment in the European Union and the India inductive research approach has been used because the approach does not engage expression of hypothesis. The inductive approach directly starts with the research question, moreover towards the aims and the research objectives that have been identified and need to be attained at the time of research. The research aims to collect quantitative data as a result and hence chooses the inductive approaches for the research.

Furthermore, the research approach consists of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed approaches, and among which quantitative approach has been used for this particular research. The entire research is based on the quantitative approach since it provides a researcher to emphasize statics of collected data. Quantitative approach focuses on presenting quantitative results while conducting research in the CSR environment of the European Union and India quantitative approach will provide a systematic investigation on how both different countries have enhanced and maintained their CSR environment within their country. In the present research, the quantitative results will be provided in terms of scores and the countries (EU and India) will be score based on their performance on CSR. 6 criteria are selected, based on which scores will be provided for each country on each criteria and the total score for the countries will provide clear results about, which country is better in CSR. Based on the total score for each country, it can be decided, whether EU is working better in CSR or India is working better on CSR.

### **2.2.3 Research Design**

Research design is defined as a framework used in the research method. On the other, it is a technique that has been used by a researcher. Research design assists the researcher to grind on the research method that appears to be appropriate to the chosen research topic and allows setting up the research to get success. The role of research design in the research method is to make sure that data collected by the researcher is able enough to address the research issue effectively as clearly as possible. The research design that has been used to analyze the CSR environment of the European Union and India is desk research. Desk research is generally focused on collecting data that has been already provided in the other existing resources. Desk research is also known as secondary research, in which the data are collected from

secondary sources such as journal articles, news articles, government sites, company reports. The present research considered journals articles, government websites and news articles as key sources for the desk research. There are seven criteria based on which the two countries, EU and India, will be given scores out of 5 based on their performance of CSR related to those criteria. Each criterion will be given a score out of 5 and the comparison of scores between two countries on specific criteria will reflect on which country is better performed on that criteria. The table below shows the six criteria that will measure the performance of two countries regarding CSR.

**TABLE 1 RATING CRITERIA**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>EU score out of 5</b>	<b>India Score out of 5</b>
Average Percentage of profits spent on CSR		
Total expenditure on CSR (to indicate progress in CSR activities)		
Involvement in social improvement (education, employment opportunity)		
Involvement in controlling environmental impact (carbon footprint)		
Accountability in CSR reporting		
Strictness of regulators		

Gap in actual activities and CSR concern (unethical practices)		
Total Score		

**SOURCE: MADE BY AUTHOR**

The table above indicates, based on which criteria the two markets will be compared. The criteria are selected based on key factors involved with CSR. The first criteria are Average Percentage of profits spent on CSR, which indicates the amount of profit of EU and Indian companies are spent on CSR. The CSR expenditure may be different from one company to other, but there is a national average that regulates the companies to fulfil atleast the minimal criteria. The two markets will be compared based on the national average. The second criteria are about the total amount of CSR spending by each country in latest year. Second criteria indicate the progress in CSR activities by each country in terms of total amount spend on CSR. The third criteria will measure the involvement of two markets in social improvement related activities and this criterion will measure the performance of two countries based on two factors education and employment opportunity. The fourth criteria will be based on controlling the environmental impact, which will be mainly measure based on the CSR activities of two markets to control carbon impact.

Carbon impact is a rising global concern and the businesses are also involving in sustainable and green measures to reduce the carbon impact. The fifth criteria is accountability in CSR reporting that indicates the transparency and accountability of CSR activities in both markets. The sixth criteria is strictness of regulators, which indicates the legal framework and its application and control in CSR activities. The seventh and last criteria is Gap in actual activities and CSR concern, which will be presented in terms of amount of unethical practices conducted by businesses in two markets and the control of government on the unethical practices. The gap between the actual business practices and CSR activities will be considered. The criteria will be scored individually in the analysis part and each criteria and the score related to the criteria will be supported with evidence based on two markets. The total score of two markets and their overall comparison will be presented lastly in the analysis part.

#### **2.2.4 Analysis of data**

The analysis of the collected data is based on thematic analysis, as the analysis and related findings is presented based on themes that are developed on the specified criteria. Analysis of each part also includes some quantitative measures in terms of score allocated to each nation based on the performance of specific criteria related to CSR.



## 3 Literature Review

### 3.1 Concept and history

Any enterprise committed to making its sustenance in the market for the long run cannot just rely on profit maximization. There are other things too that need to be taken care of, known as Corporate Social Responsibility for the organization. CSR is a reminder to the Enterprises that they are obliged to pursue long-term corporate social goals for the world's people.

As per Latapí Agudelo et al. (2019), corporate behaviour and social expectations tend to link in which the organizations consider Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as the key success of their prospects and missions. The paper aims to trace back the history of Corporate Social Responsibility and finds that it was back in 1930 when companies worldwide started taking social responsibilities seriously, keeping their profit maximization goals aside and becoming a bit concerned for society.

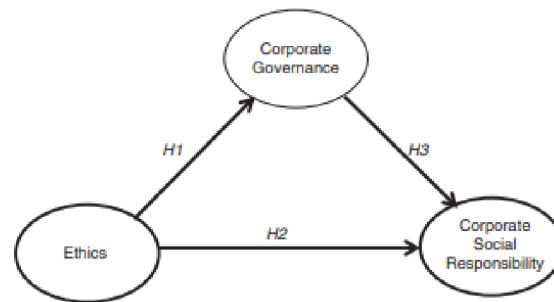
As per Tilt (2016), Research academics should focus upon Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) more along with the right context on which the research will take place. While framing the CSR policies, all the economic aspects have to be considered, making it vital for the companies to properly analyze the CSR concept. Even the social hegemony has to be considered and then proceed further.

As per Newman et al. (2020), Corporate Social Responsibilities in a competitive business environment, if done enthusiastically, increase the efficiency of the business, which in return makes goals for them more defined and unidirectional. Firms rely upon society for the inputs of production, and it is their responsibility to award them back with something which adds value to their work culture and goals for the long run. The research also finds out that companies that have failed to fulfill their Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) because they were busy expanding their physical assets have, in the long run, showing a decline in the total revenues. The research also adds that if the company has a clear vision and able approach, even then, if it fails to fulfill certain societal obligations, the inability towards that can alone become the reason for the downfall in the future.

Over the years, CSR has become an important subject of debate and thus the theory and practices associated with it have witnessed several new approaches and developments. There are three major theories of CSR and they are the stakeholder theory, business ethics theory, and shareholder value theory. The stakeholder theory started to gain prominence in the 1990s as a form of a direct challenge and alternative to the shareholder value theory. This theory argues that the number of stakeholder pressure groups has immensely developed since the 1960s and it has been observed that stakeholders create a significant impact on the business operation. According to Nikolova and Arsić (2017), the roots of CSR can be traced back to 1700 BC in Mesopotamia where the King introduced a rule that if any farmers, innkeepers, or builders' negligence cause death of others then they will be sentenced to death. In the modern-day business environment, the stakeholder theory holds a key in terms of ensuring the success of CSR as without the engagement, skills, knowledge, and loyalty of the stakeholders it is not possible for an organization to achieve its business goals and objectives. One of the main characteristics of CSR is that it holds the business accountable for any claim from the stakeholders.

### **3.1.1 Business ethics theory**

According to Goel and Ramanathan (2014), the business ethics theory of CSR affirms that it is the responsibility of business organizations to look after the concerns of larger groups of stakeholders. The business ethics theory considers CSR as ethical and philanthropic responsibilities rather than considering it as economic and legal responsibilities. The concept of CSR is heavily influenced by business ethics as the entire foundation of business ethics is concerned with social, employee, suppliers, customers, and competitors' obligations. In addition to that, business ethics theory as part of CSR activities helps in ensuring that the customers' interests become an integral part of the company's values.

**IMAGE 2 BUSINESS ETHICS THEORY OF CSR**

**SOURCE: EL GAMMAL, EL-KASSAR, & MESSARRA, 2017**

According to O'Connell and Ward (2020), shareholders provide the necessary funds to organizations for investment and the organizations invest the funds in the form of assets. Thus, the assets that are purchased with the funds provided by shareholders become the property of shareholders. Under the shareholder value theory, an organization is viewed as a body of shareholders with the board of the company functioning for the shareholders. In addition to that, the primary objective of shareholder theory is to maximize the value for shareholders.

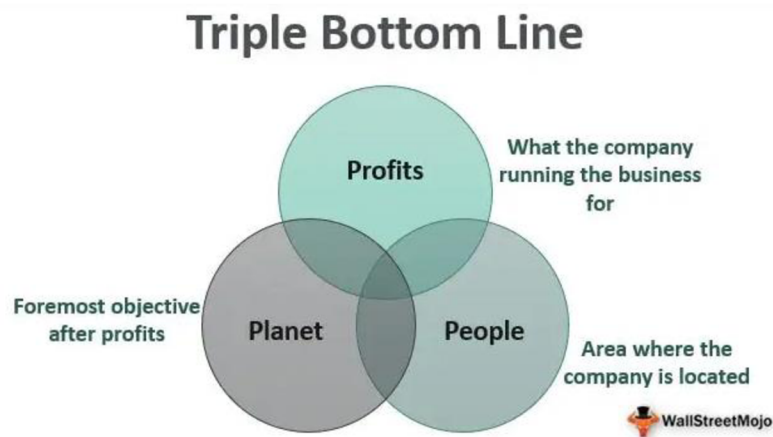
In recent years, business enterprises have developed an idea of possessing social responsibilities and this idea is beyond the concept of generating just profits. The actual expansion of literature related to CSR occurred during the 1960s by emphasizing finding out the actual meaning of corporate social responsibility. The universal approval of CSR's idea was done in the 1990s and in the 2000s it became an important strategic issue. In the present scenario, SCR has become one of the most core areas of government policies and in major economic powerhouses such as the United States and the United Kingdom, around 70% of the companies report about the CSR initiatives taken by them. According to Newman et al. (2020), there are varying interpretations about the improvements caused by CSR in a firm's performance. Thus, one of the most effective ways to look at the improvements caused by CSR is by analyzing the position of a firm in the competitive environment. It has been observed that a complex set of market imperfections and social preferences tends to influence CSR activities. However, the evidence regarding the effects of CSR activities on the performance of a firm can be mixed with labour performance. It has been observed that environmentally and socially responsible firms possess an advantage in terms of hiring

skilled and motivated employees, which leads to higher employee productivity. Employees working for CSR firms tend to display higher levels of success and dedication at work along with accepting lower wages. Over the years, several studies have tried to pin down the indicators of CSR but no common definition was established. The most common social expectation from firms as a part of corporate social responsibility is that the firms must achieve their economic objectives within the legal framework. The CSR activities performed at the firm level tends to be lower in the setting of a competitive environment and this proves that the relationship between market competitiveness and CSR activities at the firm level is nonlinear.

### **3.1.2 Triple bottom line**

The employees or workers in modern-day workplaces value corporate social tremendously and this indicates that the concept of corporate social responsibility has truly transformed the way businesses operate. According to Carroll (2021), the 1960s proved to be the turning point that established a relationship between society and business based on massive social movements. The various social contracts represent a set of reciprocal expectations and understandings that successfully characterizes the relationship between major social organizations. One of the most prominent aspects of CSR is that it is perceived differently across different countries, so it is important for global organizations to implement CSR strategies according to geographical and cultural demands. The concept of sustainability is deeply rooted in CSR and it has become the need of the hour to implement CSR activities so that the future of our planet remains safe. The commitment of companies to engage in CSR activities is based on the triple bottom theory that posits firms to measure their environmental and social impact.

IMAGE 3 TRIPLE BOTTOM THEORY FRAMEWORK



SOURCE: SHARMA, 2021

Alhammadi (2018), states that CSR can only be accomplished by reducing the ecological footprint and thus the other societal concerns are ignored. Overall, firms operating in today's business environment try to implement CSR in several areas of their business for the purpose of adding reputational value. Some literature based on the concept of CSR views CSR as a form of strategic investment but the common findings of all studies are that it leads to various benefits for firms.

### 3.2 Stakeholders involved

In today's world, CSR has become an essential device to sort out the problems that exist in the triple bottom line by exploiting different resources. According to Srivastava, Gupta, and Singh (2017), stakeholder-relations suggest two main motivations of organizational CSR activities, which are the moral perspective approach and the instrumental approach. The moral perspective approach puts forward the idea that all groups or persons with legitimate interests participate in an enterprise to obtain benefits based on certain sets of interests. On the other hand, the instrumental approach suggests that companies rely on stakeholders for their continuous support as their resources and support hold tremendous significance.

#### 3.2.1 Stakeholder theory

According to Randon (2012), CSR is becoming increasingly important in developing countries as the stakeholders are directly impacted by the business activities of the company.

The stakeholder theory implies that the interests of the stakeholders determine the way by which an organization behaves. It has been observed that the stakeholders generally identify with the firms and accordingly increase or decrease the number of resources to be put.

**IMAGE 4 THE STAKEHOLDER THEORY OF CSR**



**SOURCE: NAIK, 2020**

According to Wang (2018), stakeholders have a majority of representation in terms of a company's decision-making and it has also been observed that different stakeholders have different interests in terms of influencing the decision-making. Thus, the involvement of stakeholders in terms of CSR activities is massive as the stakeholders primarily comprise the customers, employees, government, society, and supply chain operators. Over the years, it has been observed that the business activities of a firm tend to affect the environment or society and this has led to the rise in stakeholders' involvement in addressing the issues related to business activities. In addition to that, the quality of stakeholder management practice also plays a decisive role in terms of determining the relevant CSR activities. In the modern-day business environment, firms actively engage in achieving the best potential outcome based on implementing relevant CSR initiatives. However, according to Khuong, Truong an, and Thanh Hang (2021), stakeholder play a vital role in the development and survival of a company and several stakeholders tends to gradually increase their effects on organizational performance. It is thus, important to understand the approaches that can be effective in terms of monitoring stakeholders such as environmental scanning, stakeholder

orientation, etc. In recent years, the majority of the managers and leaders as stakeholders have started focusing on enhancing and keeping one important organizational factor for the purpose of achieving a competitive advantage. Corporate reputation is one important factor that has been gaining prominence among a group of stakeholders due to the rising CSR activities.

Contemporary business organizations as a part of stakeholder management pay significant attention to the environmental impacts that are being caused by the business practices. According to Tanggamani, Abu Bakar, and Othman (2017), stakeholder relationships generate a clear understanding of the CSR activities being implemented by a firm and this reflects the desire of companies to emphasize stakeholder management. The involvement of stakeholders has always been crucial in terms of shaping the ethical and moral responsibility of business enterprises as businesses are an integral part of the communities in which they operate. Several studies conducted on stakeholder management and CSR activities have suggested that good management realizes that it is impossible for businesses to succeed without continuous good relations with the stakeholders. The stakeholder theory has been used as an effective tool for the purpose of identifying stakeholders upon whom an organization is accountable. Thus, the aim of stakeholder theory is to develop a CSR framework based on using stakeholders as a group of people who are interested in the business activities of the company. The involvement of the government as a stakeholder is aligned with ensuring that business enterprises do not violate environmental laws and regulations through their business activities. It has been observed that the majority of the carbon emission, soil, air, and water pollution is caused by business organizations and thus the involvement of governments as stakeholders is based on ensuring that the organizations become environmentally responsible. In addition to that, several business organizations have also contributed to the extinction of certain indigenous communities and this is an important area where the government as stakeholders intervenes to ensure that the lands, interests, and culture of indigenous communities are conserved as a part of corporate social responsibility.

### **3.2.2 Employees as Stakeholders**

The employees as stakeholders in any company play an important role in terms of determining the success of a company. However, the employees over the years have been

exploited by various organizations and this has led to serious consequences of employee turnover and legal lawsuits for several major global organizations. However, according to Hameed et al. (2016), employees evaluate the perceived respect from organizations as an effective CSR and this makes them more dedicated to delivering better results by being more productive. One of the major concerns associated with the involvement of employees as stakeholders is that employees possess varying work orientations. Thus, an employee that possesses a high level of calling orientation is likely to achieve greater purpose due to the external pressure of CSR activities. Overall, employees as stakeholders are also responsible for ensuring that the CSR activities are properly implemented and the company's ethical responsibilities are fulfilled. The internal and external CSR both hold tremendous significance in terms of ensuring a company's sustainability and employees as stakeholders get affected by both the CSR activities. Therefore, it has become important for business organizations to ensure that the employees are not exploited by any means as part of internal CSR.

### **3.2.3 Customers as stakeholders**

The customers as stakeholders are heavily invested in terms of determining the overall existence of a company. The modern-day business trend has shifted towards customers demanding more sustainable products and services. Thus, it has become important for a business to implement CSR activities to ensure that the interests of the customers are gained and remain intact. According to Bridoux, Stofberg, and Hartog(2016), customers are ready to sacrifice on the minimum product quality standards if the products are manufactured through sustainable means. In addition to that, it has also been observed that customers are even willing to pay premium pricing for the products if a company manufactures products through sustainable means as a part of CSR activity. Thus, customers as stakeholders have the ability to decide the sales of an organization in both positive and negative ways. Overall, CSR activities can effectively align the interests of customers as stakeholders by strengthening customer relationships, which can prove to be immensely beneficial. However, there will still be a certain section of consumers who do not mind using products that have been manufactured through unsustainable means. It has been observed that with the passage of time an increasing number of people are becoming aware of the environmental and societal concerns, which has made it mandatory for business enterprises to consider the



interests of customers as major stakeholders. Therefore, the CSR activities rely heavily upon customer involvement as the customers indicate the environmental and societal responsibilities that need to be focused upon by the companies.

#### **3.2.4 Shareholders as stakeholders**

The shareholders as stakeholders are involved heavily in every decision-making aspect of a company and thus they also decide the relevant CSR activities. According to Sahasranamam, Arya, & Sud (2019), CSR activities prove to be immensely beneficial for the shareholders as they get more returns along with the sustainability. In the context of the modern-day business environment, it has become important for the shareholders to ensure that the companies regularly update their CSR activities in the annual report. However, one of the major concerns is the relevancy of the CSR activities as certain CSR activities that have been implemented might not be relevant for a particular geographic area of operation. Therefore, it has become important to implement diverse CSR activities depending upon the area of business operation.

### **3.3 CSR legal framework in EU and India**

Corporate social responsibility is a particular business approach that contributes to the sustainable development of organizations and their stakeholders by providing economic, social, and environmental benefits. It is a diversified concept that has many practices, modes, and definitions. There are many elements of CSR which constitute the economic, ethical, philanthropic, and environmental responsibilities of various organizations. The legal aspects of CSR are categorized under the ethical elements of CSR. The legal model of CSR is governed by Carroll's foundation article based on the legal aspects of various countries that the organizations operate. As per Anderson (2019) traditionally it has been considered a voluntary initiative by the organizations, but it carries some legal concerns related to the operations and implementations. Legal frameworks are the main controlling factors of corporate social responsibility in the organization. The world has witnessed a rise in the legal mandates provided to companies that adopt corporate social responsibility. Body of laws specified to the operational country targets the organizations that practice corporate social responsibility to maintain the social and environmental sustainability. The CSR pyramid developed by Carroll is a particular framework that explains the particular reasons for

undertaking social responsibilities. The framework explains three responsibilities that organizations should undertake, namely ethical, legal, and philanthropic responsibilities.

### **3.3.1 Legal CSR framework of India**

India became the first country to make CSR (corporate social responsibility) mandatory after an amendment was passed related to the Companies Act, 2013 in the year 2014. Businesses in India can successfully invest in various profitable areas such as hunger, poverty, gender equality, and education as a part of CSR compliance. In addition to that, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs in India, after the outbreak of Covid-19, notified that any form of expenditure made by corporate organizations to mitigate the pandemic would be considered valid CSR activities. Corporate organizations that have made expenditures towards CSR activities are not eligible for tax deductions as per the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. According to Premlata & Agarwal (2013), the Companies Act of 2013 replaced legislation nearly 60 years old and governed the regulation of corporate functioning in India. This amendment made it mandatory for profitable organizations operating a sizeable business to spend a minimum of 2 percent of their three-year average profit on CSR activities. The public sector companies in India with an annual profit of less than Rs 1 billion has been mandated to contribute to 3% of their annual income on CSR activities. The main objective of the established CSR environment in India is based on contributing to one sector of the society, and the relevant sector of contribution is chosen by the company based upon their benefits. There are also benefits for corporate organizations in India based on implementing CSR activities as they can differentiate themselves from their competitors by indulging in CSR activities.

According to Patel (2020), after the implementation of mandatory CSR provision in the year 2014, the annual corporate CSR spending in India increased by around 47 percent. As per recent data, the education sector attained the maximum funding of approximately followed by healthcare, poverty, and healthcare at approximately 25%, environmental sustainability at approximately 12%, and rural development receiving around 11 percent. As per Shyam (2016), the concept of CSR has been embedded in India since the country's independence, and this is evident from the philanthropic approach of companies such as TATA and BIRLA that have been practicing such activities before the concept of CSR gained popularity.

Overall, in modern-day India, corporate organizations have started to witness the opportunity to solve problems based on CSR activities. Therefore, the private sector corporate organizations in India strongly favour the practice of CSR activities as a form of providing significant economic opportunities for the disadvantaged sections of the population. The legal framework varies according to all the countries' legislation and requirements in which the organizations operate. In India, there are some particular legal requirements for the companies involved. On an executive level, there are some requirements of the board of directors, like there should be a minimum of three directors in Indian companies. At least one director should be independent, and then only a concrete CSR committee can be legally formed in India.

Corporate social responsibility under section 135 of the company's Act of 2013 is the primary governing body that manages the legislation and legal requirements of Indian companies undertaking CSR. Unlisted public or private companies in India can have a CSR committee without an independent director if one is not required. There are some important legal mandates and requirements of Indian companies undertaking CSR based on the Company Act of 2013. According to Guha (2020) CSR was once considered the role of governments and public administration. However, as the times gradually evolved, they also became the responsibility of various big companies that dominate the Indian market. Earlier, the business management bodies were only responsible for the loss of the stakeholder's interests in any project, but nowadays, they are responsible for the social loss and all the associated people with the projects.

The company Act of 2013 has provided a definite policy direction to the directors of various companies involved in corporate social responsibility. To comply with the provisions of the particular Act, about 6000 Indian companies are required to undertake CSR projects with some major companies amounting to Rs. 200 billion. Previously CSR was incorporated as an HR operation or function managed by the HR director of an organization. However, after the initialization of the Company Act of 2013, CSR was incorporated as a core integrated operation in various departments of an organization. According to Khandelwal & Bakshi (2014) Legal regulations and social pressure has forced Indian companies to undertake CSR professionally on a deep level. There are primarily two legal documents that provide the legal framework for the CSR activities for Indian organizations. Clause 135 of the

Companies Act of 2013 and the company rules of 2014, the corporate social responsibility policy, are the two integral legal frameworks that govern CSR in India.

Under clause 135 (1) of the Company Act of 2013, the Companies having a net asset of Rs. 5 billion or more and an overall turnover of Rs. 10 billion INR should spend an average of 2% of the net profits consecutively three years on the CSR activities. Clause 135 (2) states that the report of the company board should disclose the composition of the CSR committee. Clause 135(3) states that schedule VII mentions the activity list of companies undertaking CSR activities in their policies should specify the activities that need to be formulated and recommended to the company board. There are a specific set of responsibilities undertaken by the companies associated with CSR activities. As per Tamvada (2020) the list consists of functions like abolishing poverty and hunger, promoting learning, women empowerment, and gender parity, decreasing child mortality, and enhancing maternal health. Apart from these aims and objectives, there are other activities like controlling endemics like HIV and AIDS, malaria, dengue, and other diseases and ensuring environmental sustainability. Promoting and enhancing vocational skills and developing social business projects are the main concerns of the CSR that Indian organizations practice.

The CSR board should also suggest the expenditure amount that needs to be invested on the various actions undertaken by the organizations. This requirement is mentioned under clause 135(1) of the Company Act of 2013. Clause 135(4) of the Company Act also mentions the approval of CSR policies for a particular company and discloses the contents of the Policy Report on the company website and annual reports for providing a clear overview of the details to the stakeholders. The board also ensures the proper undertaking of the CSR activities and monitor the application and implementation of the policies and activities. The CSR policy rules of 2014 were first initiated on 1 April 2014, and it helps in defining the CSR activities as projects related to activities related to Schedule VII. According to Yesudhas (2014) this clause forces the organizations to form a CSR group and fulfil the requirements of the Act. An important feature of the Company rules of 2014 enables more than two organizations to work together and carry out CSR programs and activities. The report provided by the organization also includes the annual reports of the Indian companies, including the CSR activities. An annexure regarding the CSR report shall be included in the balance of foreign companies operating in India.

### 3.3.2 Legal CSR framework of the European Union

As per Ayselin Yildiz (2014), Organization that is part of the European Union have to abide by the Corporate Social Responsibility norms. The European Union 27 countries have with age started following the CSR policies and framework to better function in the long run. The report reveals that they have understood that no organization can function in the long run ignoring CSR and only maximizing profits. The companies that are a part of the European Union are taking advantage of CSR as it also helps to improve the functioning of the organizations by attracting potential stakeholders. Their report reveals that a company can only function if it wins the trust of the stakeholders and management who are part of both internal and external.

European Union plan with the CSR includes:

- To reward companies that takes CSR policies seriously.
- To encourage all the EU countries to produce eco-friendly products and services.
- To initiate discussions with countries so that all can agree on one mutual plan to practice CSR effectively.
- To frame common working methods so that CSR can be followed without any confusion.

As per Arraiano & Daniela Hategan (2019), the growing Corporate Social Responsibility in the European Union results from European Directive 2014/95/EU, which came into existence in the year 2017. This is a voluntary initiative to mandate some basic CSR responsibilities in the countries that are the European Union members. The report reveals that the countries which are involved with the EU have taken all the political and legal considerations into account and then proceeded further carrying with the Corporate Social Responsibility. The research reveals that companies located in the countries of the EU have closely observed the importance of social responsibilities and now plan everything without even being asked to. This results from the realization that has come for the long-term sustenance and to exist in the long run. The EU emphasizes CSR activities in the organizations operating in various European countries that are members of the European Union. The EU also incorporates good practices by integrating CSR into various dimensions like education, training, and research practices. The business organizations, along with other

institutions related to education and training, provide an integrated, wholesome approach to CSR practices in the EU nations.

The European Union adopted provisions for implementing CSR activities in various organizations on 15 April 2014 that required companies to disclose organizational information related to the environment, labour, human rights, and social implementations. Non-financial reporting is mandatory legislation that the European commission incorporated in 2013 for maintaining corporate transparency. As per Karagianni (2021) this policy required the larger European organizations to disclose information and data related to social and environmental matters and issues related to corruption. The legal framework has been outlined based on a few requirements aligned with the business conduction of various European organizations. The firms across the strong EU nations like Spain, Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, and Portugal have been advised to work collectively for common goals and objectives to increase sustainability in the EU.

The firms and organizations are fostered to provide the best possible solutions related to CSR activities. According to Ramachandran (2016) the provision of incentives for the uptake of CSR or RBC by setting benchmark requirements is also included in the legal mandates and framework of the EU-related CSR practice. The creation of awareness related to the development and implementation of CSR practices and the provision of necessary training is also a mandate for the EU organizations. The legal body of the EU has provided a combination of voluntary and mandatory actions on the practice of CSR in various organizations. The EU has adopted necessary and appropriate legislations from the United Nations 30 Agenda for Sustainable development and its associated goals and objectives As per Latapí Agudelo et al. (2019). the pandemic of Covid 19 has caused a significant emergence of sustainable business initiatives in various EU member countries. The primary elements of the legal framework are maintained by the non-financial reporting of many companies related to transparency obligations. Large public companies with employee strength of above 500 needs to include non-financial statements in their annual reports. The NFR directives provided by the EU legislation council require the companies to disclose business models and policies. According to Mishra (2021) the outcome is related to the principle of risk management and key performance indicators relevant to business context and matters related to environment, society, and employee human rights.

Matters related to corruption and bribery is also relevant to the NFR directives that provide a clear overview of the legislative framework of the CSR responsibilities of the EU. EU mandated the European Commission to produce a nonbinding set of guidelines for producing the statements like disclosure of diversity and non-financial information. Directive 2014, however, does not provide a standard legal framework and rather provides mandate-based guidelines and tools for implementation by the companies. Public consultation in the year 2020 on revising NFR directives brought out the ways to strengthen the provisions. As per Leyens (2018) the materiality assessment of the various provisions was standardized under the global reporting initiative that covered the four main aspects of non-financial reporting matters like environment, social and employee issues, corruption, bribery, and human rights. These aspects that cover the principles should be based on legibility and transparency of the actions and conciseness and clarity in the communication with the stakeholders. Anticipation and innovation can assure better risk management strategies that can help select mitigation methods for the challenges concerned. The EU also enforces consistency in communication and action to improve the reputation of organizational CSR and improve credibility among the civil society and investors concerned.

Prominent examples of CSR implementation of EU countries are the adoption of the Child Labour Due diligence Act in 2019, which was applied to prevent and address the child labour issues in the organizations of the Netherlands. In 2017 France also adopted an act related to the vigilance duty of parent companies and their contracting companies. This legislative approach provides a significant obligation for French companies to develop and implement proper measures to identify and prevent human rights violations and the fundamental rights of human beings. Therefore, it is largely evident from the reviewed literature that there are basic structural differences in the legal frameworks related to CSR implementation in India and the EU countries As per Noti et al. (2020). The primary differences are the coverage of business and non-business institutions. The requirements and provisions are almost similar in both EU and India, but the EU countries implement CSR practices and activities in all types of organizations, including business, education, training, and compliance-based industries. However, in India, most business organizations and NGOs are responsible for developing CSR activities and practices. India has also been practising business ethics in the form of CSR activities since a long time As per Peels et al. (2016) various philanthropic activities can be noticed in the studies related to various business organizations since the last

century, whereas the European Union started CSR activities after the year 1950 when new laws and legislations related to business ethics were newly constructed.

### **3.4 Economics of CSR**

According to Stahel (2016), the 'circular economy' would transform merchandise which is at the last stages of their service life into resources for others, re-circulating in the manufacturing environment and hence reducing waste. As it substitutes manufacture with adequacy: reusing what is possible, recycling what cannot be reused, repairing what is out of order, and reproducing what cannot be repaired, it would alter economic reason. In research of 7 European nations, it was discovered that changing to a circular economy would minimize emissions of greenhouse gas by up to 70% of every country and raise its labor force by about 4%. In a report to the European Commission by Walter R. Stahel and Geneviève Reday-Mulvey, the perception of replacing manpower with energy was first described 40 years ago. The early 1970s saw a rise in the price of energy and a large amount of unemployment. The circular economy business models are divided into two groups. First, those that promotes reuse of goods and services and expands the life of its service by means of repair, reproduction, updates, and rebuilding, and those that transform used goods into fresh resources by recycling the supplies. This model of the circular economy includes people of all types of skills and ages.

The study of Stoyanova (2019) has discussed the strategies which are/were used by different companies in recent years in order to substitute the linear economy with the one which transforms waste materials into new resources by means of reuse and recycling. The movement of sustainable progress needs the theory of circular economy. This requisite of a circular economy for overall development became one of the topmost priorities of the European Union. In order for an enterprise to compete in a circular economy, employing a Corporate Social Responsibility strategic approach is becoming all the time more important. This strategic approach brings benefits to the enterprise in terms of risk managing, access to capital, cutting back on costs, relations with customers, human resources managing, and capacity of creativity and innovation. The global economy is currently producing about 300 million tons of plastic every year. Therefore, in order to reduce this figure of plastic usage, applying strategies to shift to a circular economy has become very vital. The circular



economy will help in minimizing the waste produced and the input resources on a large scale by means of recycling, reusing, reproducing, and renovating. Industries can use theories in the circular economy as a prevailing instrument to drive further the initiatives of CSR.

### **3.4.1 Responsibility based on economics of CSR**

According to Khan et al. (2015), the literature on Corporate Social Responsibility is rapidly increasing, and there is no common agreement on a uniform explanation of Corporate Social Responsibility from an economic point of view. From the past discussions, it can be said that CSR has primarily focused on the business or economic-centric outlook of CSR. These studies show to a certain extent, full of loopholes results as regards if or not there is a connecting link between corporate social performance and monetary performance. For that reason, the exclusively economic approach to Corporate Social Responsibility does not succeed in taking into consideration the variants in CSR marketing practices. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has come into view as a new and significant perception for many business firms from inside the Western developed economies. CSR benefits the business and the economy by giving the firm a good reputation, reducing the usage of energy, building the loyalty of customers, and minimizing the chances of risk. Consideration of the principles of Corporate Social Responsibility by the business firms in the long term leads to sustainable economic practices, which further help in the process of economic growth and development.

According to Nie et al. (2019), Corporate Social Responsibility has attracted the thorough attention of economists in the current years, and there are many remarkable evaluation papers about the same. The main early research about CSR, the concept, the research, and the application of the CSR community has been well researched and discussed in the review papers. Corporate Social Responsibility was defined as the ongoing obligation by businesses to behave in an ethical manner and contribute to the economic progress at the same time as enhancing the quality of life of the labor force and their families as well as of the domestic group of people and society at large by The World Business Council for Sustainable Development. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a significant economic trend with expansive propositions for businesses, human resources, customers, investors, governments, and Non-Government Organizations. The efforts for promoting and encouraging CSR and

employing its managing ethics are very important to the economy. More and more, companies are implementing the management principles of CSR, realizing its benefits to the success of the firm and contributing to improved connections between the business organization, the society, and the natural environment.

According to Lin et al. (2017), along with greater responsiveness to the social responsibility of corporations, increasing awareness of customers to the excellence of life instead of the lower economic benefits have been observed too, which have increased the ethical considerations in the economy and in behaviors of business. Putting together the long-term economic, ecological and communal features in their industry strategies at the same time as keeping up with the global competition and brand name will lead to sustainability and development in the economy. Meeting the demands of shareholders for the purpose of better returns on finance, long-term economic growth, open contact, and apparent economic bookkeeping will help in the high level of competition in the global economy. Promoting trustworthiness by investing in the management of customer relationship and innovation of product and service that drives focus on the technologies and devices, which employs economic, ecological, and social resources in a proficient, useful, and economical way over the long-term will further help in facing the industrial challenges globally. All these strategies strengthen the operation of business and economy will have an encouraging and long term impact on the local people and economies of both the developed and developing countries of the world.

### **3.4.2 CSR from a non-economic perspective**

As per Visser (2016), Corporate Social Responsibility does not at all time make economic sense. This is because the short-term markets still award industries that materialize their costs to society. CSR does not get to the root of a firm's systemic unsuitability but makes it a capitalist global economy bossed with growth. Many business firms find it difficult to give a good reason for any type of communal giving, but this approach of firms is immoral. If the business is avoiding charity completely or going through with it with the wrong intentions, it is high time that the business gets a fresh new perspective. When it is performed in the right way, corporate social responsibility is always a win-win for the business, the economy, and its community. Being charitable with the resources of the business, like its financial

resource, time, and skills positions the business firm in a better place in order to attract deliberate associates, human resources, and customers. Making a program of focused and deliberate giving makes good sense to the business. The impact of this activity is long-term and far-reaching and will contribute to the success of the organization.

According to Crifo & Forget (2012), social activists and citizens can potentially demand integration of all the negative corporate externalities. One of the major determinants of CSR activities from the economics perspective is responding to various forms of social pressure. In addition to that, the competition that exists in the product market represents consequences of CSR, and various determinants of CSR have been analyzed for understanding entry barriers, production costs, and market opening. However, certain studies have demonstrated that a related determinant of CSR activities is associated with increasing entry barriers and the cost of the competitors. It has been observed that CSR tends to complement necessary regulations during government failures that might possess multiple origins. Over the years, firms have been able to identify the customers who are willing to pay more for ethical products and services. Therefore, CSR activities significantly relate to product differentiation, and under the context of modern-day economics, CSR has been used as a form of major product differentiation strategy. Lastly, the study of Crifo & Forget (2012) has also indicated that CSR is directly related to market competition as the trend of modern-day customers is shifting towards purchasing sustainable products even if it means compromising with product quality.

### **3.5 Activities under CSR**

As per Ozkazanc-Pan (2018), gender equality is one of the most important activities of CSR, which defines the role of CSR on gender mainstreaming, equality in the workplace, and societal-level gender equality. CSR's initiatives focus on providing factor workers with some sets of rights which are like a duplicate of those which can be seen in the developed nations, just like safe working conditions. Initiatives are being taken for providing equal rights to women and now have developed into ethical claims about empowering women and their economic and social well-being. CSR activities have the potential to considerably leave an impact on the livelihood and operational conditions of the feminine workers in the global economy. It reflects the rules and regulations that are regulated to intend the behaviors of

the female factory workers. There has been an increment in work in respect to gender, and the postcolonial feminist framework and ethical engagement present the main play of gender relations in epistemic declares and material experiences. CSR also plays a role in contemporary organizational efforts that rebirth gendered neocolonial relations and also is a politically motivated social action undertaker.

According to Gereffi & Lee(2014), CSR is a multifaceted notion that refers to the responsibilities that enterprises have for impacting society. It comprises the efforts which the firms seek in their business, like integrating social, ethical, environmental, human rights, and consumer concerns. CSR helps in setting the goals of maximizing the benefit of the shared value for many stakeholders, owners, shareholders, and society, along with the reduction of the negative effect of business practices. CSR promotes an effective way of improving labor conditions, but the CSR compliance model alone cannot fully address the labor issues taking place globally. Moreover, CSR compliance does not permit dealers and workers in emerging countries of the world to offer meaningful input. The global buyers made an explicit commitment to CSR regarding the improvement of the conduct of workers and abode by the worldwide buyers' communal code and conduct which also corresponds to the compliance paradigm. CSR being private governance, may swap public domination and decline other governance like labor organizations and unions but the CSR regimes, just like the corporate code of conduct, have the highest chance to accomplish something when mixed with the encouraging market environment, the willingness of the government, multi-stakeholders conditions and the capability to act. CSR activities mainly focus on the improvement of the working conditions for the laborers.

Żychlewicz(2015) stated that firms disclose their CSR activities in order to gain more positive support from their stakeholders, and the activities help in improving the corporate image of the firm. Like Gereffi & Lee (2014), Ehsan et al. (2018) also believe that CSR is a multidimensional concept. CSR activities are done exclusively by the firms for the well-being of the society helps in gaining competitive and increased goodwill. CSR activities build corporate image and get the company more involved in ecological issues. CSR practices are essential parameters for the sustainable growth of the business and for the creation of their value. Showing care and interest in the natural environment and taking responsibility for the impact that a company leaves on nature is one of the major CSR

activities followed. The intervention of BP companies during the time of crisis is also considered a CSR activity due to their ability to build the company image and gain the trust of clients and investors. Social campaigns help in shaping the firm and shaping the corporate image in the eyes of the world. Some of the different areas of CSR activities include animal rights, employee code, corporate ethics, human rights, and more.

### **3.5.1 Importance of CSR activities**

According to Shirodkar et al. (2016), all the CSR activities are collectively known as Political CSR (PCSR) because of their purpose to influence community policy-making procedures and get involved in law making. In emerging economies like India, CSR mainly refers to the regular commitments made by organizations for behaving ethically and contributing to the economic development of the country. MNCs implement CSR activities in the form of philanthropic donations for the purpose of gaining political elites along with increasing their role in governance on a national and global scale. The government of India has mandated for all the companies to pay out 2 percent of their net profit on social expansion as a measure to implement CSR activity and increase CSR spending. CSR activity is proven to be effective for improving the stakeholder's relations and maintaining public relations. The CSR activities carried out like eradicating hunger and poverty and providing free education with the help of the nation in improving the overall standard of living of the world and turning developing nations into developed nations. MNCs, NGOs, and governments together are influenced by CSR activities for their personal development as well as the globe. There is a great need to incorporate CSR activities into the communal arena for especially in the emerging economies.

Yoo & Lee (2018), also like Shirodkar et al. (2016), believes that CSR activities are undertaken by firms to enhance their corporate image. CSR activities determine the CSR success implemented by the organizations. The companies now use CSR as a tool for public relations and CSR activities, in addition, helping them to focus on their responsibility and ethics towards society. The concept that the relationship between CSR activities and the performance of the corporate is directly proportional is not always true. Sometimes it shows inconsistent results. CSR activities that are connected to important issues for individuals like good society and well-being, proper working conditions, donations, and charity, encourage

the relationship between the self and the organization. Similarly, if the personal relevance of CSR activity is high, then automatically, the level of consumer support increases. The interest in CSR activities is continuously growing worldwide due to the positive impacts it provides to the implementers. CSR consistency is derived from the various CSR activities carried out on a regular basis by the company and the degree of consumer support that it receives.

As stated by Zelazna et al.(2020), CSR activity towards the natural environment refers to the understanding and conducting of business activities that are in strict compliance with the law and make profits along with taking voluntary actions of the environment, which will help in the business operations. Carrying out social responsibility has a higher rate of impact on stakeholders, and they tend to connect more with the organizations. CSR is essential for the regular development of the economy and the well-being of society. CSR activities encourage social responsibility and provide a sense of belonging for all. It also helps with the concept of sustainability and fast development and expansion. The European Commission launched EMAS, which is to be used by the companies to reduce their environmental footprints, inspired by the CSR activities. CSR activities have been in constant growth for decades in terms of ecological, social, and economic benefits. It gives out the concept of voluntary contribution and actions taken by the firms of social and ecological aspects of business for stakeholders as well as the customers. CSR activities globally have left a huge impact and several guidelines for organizations to work for.

According to Singal (2021), the activities of CSR are defined and guided by beliefs, mission, and legacy despite certain growing concerns regarding the credibility of CSR. The mechanisms of CSR activities tend to follow social strategies that create an impact on the monitoring, practices, and actions of CSR activities. The literature-based on CSR activities has been derived from various firm-level outcomes, such as improvements in operational performance. Over the years, it has been observed that monitoring and governance are two key mechanisms of CSR activities as it helps in reducing potential conflicts. In addition to that, the implementation of CSR activities encounters several barriers. However, the activities generally gather more support due to the ethical concept that lies with the implementation of CSR activities. Over the years, several researchers have put up different perceptions regarding the best potential activities under CSR, such as social improvement,

environmental improvement, etc. This approach of the literature indicates that the objective of activities under CSR is based on improving the world through ethical responsibilities performed by business organizations. Therefore, CSR activities become extremely effective when it is implemented in conjunction with specialist partners.

### **3.6 Knowledge gap**

The study of the existing literature demonstrates that while the subject of CSR is widely studied, there is a lack of studies comparing CSR environments of two countries, and there is no study comparing the CSR environment of EU and India. The existing literature presented does not provide clear ideas about the comparison of the CSR of two markets (EU and India) and the literature also lacks in reflecting on the fact about which nation's CSR is better. To address the knowledge gap, seven criteria are selected, based on which the CSR of two nations will be compared and presented about which nation is comparatively better in CSR than other nation.

## 4 Practical part

The performance and progress of EU and India in CSR are presented based on the data presented for each criteria. Based on the analysis of the data presented for each criteria, the score for two nations based on the specific criteria will be provided. The points will be given to the nation on specific criteria based on their performance and progress on specific criteria, and 1-5 points signifies as 1 (poor), 2 (sufficient), 3 (good), 4 (very good), 5 (excellent). The data related to Germany and Czech is mainly presented in the practical part as an overall representation of EU.

### 4.1 Average Percentage of profits spent on CSR

In India, the average amount of CSR percentage needs to contribute by companies is 2%. The companies in India, with a net worth of INR 5 billion or more or with net profit of INR 50 million or more needs to spend 2% of their profits on CSR activities (Shira, 2020). The mandatory CSR provision was started in 2014 and the CSR spending are increasing day by day. The CSR expenditure in India in 2018 is 47% higher compared to 2014-15 (Shira, 2020). The countries in EU such as Germany, Czech and Denmark have better performance in CSR based on the rating provided by CSR HUB (CSR HUB, 2020). The scores of CSRHUB reflect that India is provided with as rating of 50, whereas the above-mentioned countries in EU are provided the rating as 55, 55 and 53 respectively. In Germany, the CSR performance is based on corporate self-commitment. In Germany, recent development related to CSR includes a more proactive approach (Vesper-Gräske, 2021). There are some strong initiatives undertaken by EU to support the CSR activities in the European countries. The co-regulation process, visibility of CSR activities, improvement in company disclosure and emphasizing on the sub-national and national CSR policies are mainly considered by EU as a part of progress in CSR activities (Gurská, 2013).

Criteria	EU score out of 5	India Score out of 5
Average Percentage of profits spent on CSR	4	3

The score to India and EU are given based on the data presented to support the involvement of EU and India in CSR activities and its progress. Analysing the rating of CSR on India,



and EU countries, it is clear that the performance of CSR in EU is more efficient compared to India. The score provided to EU is 4 out of 5, which means the expenditure of profits on CSR is very good, whereas the score provided to India is 3 out of 5, which indicates the expenditure on CSR is good. Based on the criteria, it can be said that the EU scores more in spending on CSR activities from companies' profits.

## 4.2 Total expenditure on CSR

This criteria indicates the expenditure on CSR in India and EU, which mainly indicates the progress of India and EU in terms of involvement in CSR activities. The contribution of Indian companies in CSR is good as it is likely to spend 1 trillion on CSR projects. In the year 2021, the total expenditure on CSR activities has crossed Rs. 220 billion. Energy, financial services and manufacturing companies take crucial part in this contribution and have contributed 60% of the total CSR spending. The top 10 states in India are accounted for 96% of the CSR spending in 2020 (Mampatta, 2021). The small and medium enterprises in Czech emphasize more on the opportunity to improve sustainability in their business practices (Metzker & Streimikis, 2020). Mostly the companies in Czech are involved in involvement in charitable donation (73%), care for employees (60%) and education and development in (63%). Germany is another country in EU that has positively contributed in CSR activities and it is a member of European Sustainable and Responsible Investment Forum. In Germany, the CSR is used by companies as a part of their commercial success and competitive advantage, so their involvement and expenditure in CSR activities is more integrated.

Criteria	EU score out of 5	India Score out of 5
Total expenditure on CSR (to indicate progress in CSR activities)	3.5	3

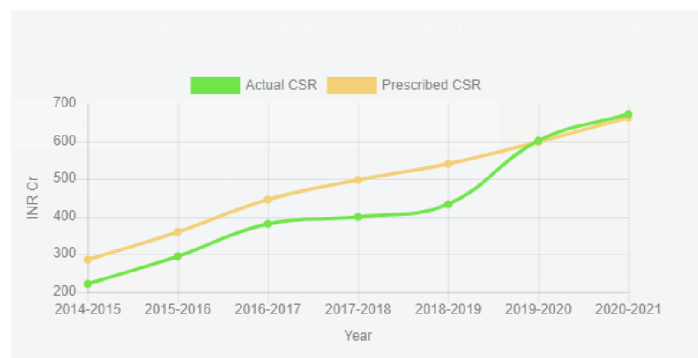
Based on the above table, it can be said that EU is provide 3.5 score, which means its score in the specific criteria is between good and very good. On the other hand, India is given a score of 3, which means it is good in expenditure on the CSR activities. Although the

expenditure on CSR activities in India are increasing day by day, but the involvement of EU companies in CSR activities is comparatively more significant than India.

### 4.3 Involvement in social improvement (education, employment opportunity)

In the modern-day business environment, CSR activities contribute heavily by lowering operating costs, increasing customer loyalty and sales. In the context of India, CSR activities contribute immensely towards social improvement. In terms of education, there are several companies in India improving the country's education. The Reliance tops the list of companies that contributes towards funding education through CSR activities. The initiative of Reliance Industries invests around Rs 5.26 billion, and it positively impacts around 0.2 million children. In addition to that, the Reliance Foundation Schools are committed to providing an enriching and enjoyable educational experience for the children. Infosys, Wipro, Tata Steel also contribute heavily towards education in India as a form of CSR activities. In terms of providing employment opportunities, the CSR activities in India attract foreign investors, which results in the generation of more jobs in the country. Tata Consultancy Services in India has been consistently contributing towards social improvement in the form of CSR activities where providing opportunities for employment has been enormous.

**IMAGE 5 CSR PERFORMANCE OF INDIAN COMPANIES**



**SOURCE: CSR BOX, 2021**

**TABLE 2 CSR INVESTMENT BY TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES**

CSR Financial Details (INR Cr.)			
Year	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019
Actual CSR	674.00 Cr	602.00 Cr	434.00 Cr
Prescribed CSR	663.00 Cr	600.00 Cr	542.00 Cr

**SOURCE: CSR BOX, 2021**

Overall, the social improvement in India based on education and employment opportunities through CSR activities have been effective to a certain extent, but the population of the country is huge, so more efforts are definitely required from several other companies operating in India as well. Social improvement is the need of the hour for India as there are massive economic differences between the people residing in urban areas and rural areas, which are causing the rural population to be deprived of proper education and employment opportunities.

On the other hand, the CSR activities of the European Union thrive on integrating CSR into education, research, and training. In several European Union countries, the CSR contributions towards education are based on community-led projects in the home countries as well the countries where the businesses are operated. Greece has one of the lowest-ranked education systems among the European Union countries, so the companies operating in Greece contribute immensely towards improving the country's education system. Public Power Corporation (PPC) is one of the largest power generation and trading companies in Greece, which has aligned its CSR activities towards social improvements, such as improving education and creating more jobs. Greece has been facing an unstable political environment due to social issues such as employment opportunities, but major companies such as PPC in the European Union thrive on delivering social improvement based on providing job opportunities and enhancing the country's education system. Overall, unemployment is a major social and economic problem in the European Union, and the CSR activities, on average, have proven to be immensely beneficial by contributing towards social improvement.

Criteria	EU score out of 5	India Score out of 5
Involvement in social improvement (education, employment opportunity)	4	2

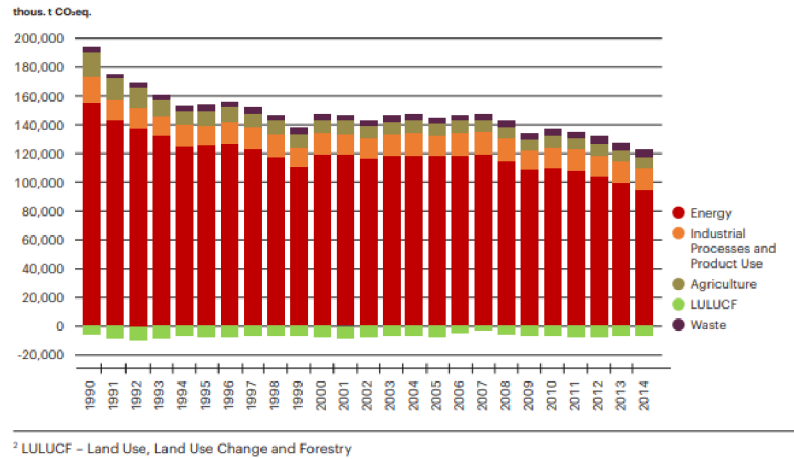
In terms of CSR activities involved in social improvement, the European Union scores high than India as the overall education system in the European Union is significantly better than India. In addition to that, the population requires more companies to indulge in CSR activities for social improvement.

#### **4.4 Involvement in controlling environmental impact (carbon footprint)**

Environmental CSR initiatives play a significant role in terms of addressing climate change issues. Recently, some of the largest companies in India have announced net-zero carbon footprint goals by switching to sustainable investments. Private lender HDFC Bank Pvt. Ltd has set a target for 2031-2032 being carbon neutral, whereas Tata Consultancy Services has set a target of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. In addition to that, several other companies such as Infosys Ltd, Wipro Ltd, JSW Energy Limited, etc., have also announced similar plans. However, the number of businesses operating in India is huge, and it needs to be the combined responsibility of all the businesses operating in India, including the small business enterprises, to counter the environmental impact. The suppliers based in India are at risk of losing \$274 billion of exports in case of failure to reduce carbon emissions. Infosys has immensely improved its CSR activities by significantly reducing its energy consumption based on the use of renewable energy, and this has established a benchmark for other companies operating in the country. According to Narain (2021), India will be able to meet around 50 percent of its energy requirements from renewable energy by the year 2030. In addition, India is the first country in the world to mandate CSDR activities based on section 135 of the Companies Act 2013, where all the companies operating in the country that has a net worth of Rs 5 billion or more must contribute to CSR activities.

On the other hand, in the Czech Republic, a member of the European Union has set up various policies to reduce carbon emissions to counter the challenges of climate change. According to the sustainability report of the Czech Republic (2017), there has been a significant reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 36.7% in the country.

**TABLE 3 INDUSTRY TRENDS IN CARBON EMISSION FOR THE CZECH REPUBLIC OVER THE YEARS**



**SOURCE: SUSTAINABILITY REPORT, 2017**

Some of the key proposals of the European Union in terms of reducing carbon footprint as a part of CSR activities include tighter limitations for emission in cars, taxes on aviation fuel, and offering of a 10-year tax holiday for alternatives of low-carbon. In addition to that, the greenhouse gas emissions in the European Union have decreased by 31% between the years 1990 and 2020. The CSR activities of countries in the region of the European Union are mainly focused on reducing carbon footprint as the major challenge in this region is to tackle climate change. Overall, the European Union is considered to be the leading economy that has tackled carbon emissions, and the sustainability report of the European Union proves this fact. The European Green Deal implemented by the European Union has made it mandatory for the companies operating in this region to include environmental responsibility as a form of CSDR activity on the quest of becoming the first "carbon-neutral-bloc" by 2050 (Ray, 2019).

Criteria	EU score out of 5	India Score out of 5
Involvement in controlling environmental impact (carbon footprint)	4	3

The European Union scores high than India in the context of reducing carbon footprint because the results in carbon emission reduction have been extremely positive for the

European Union whereas, India is still facing challenges to counter the issue of carbon emission.

#### **4.5 Accountability in CSR reporting**

The accountability in CSR reporting is the responsibility of companies in a country regarding the performance in the non-financial area such as social responsibilities and welfare of the community. In the EU, the formal reporting of CSR was introduced by the Commission of European Communities. This introduction allowed the companies the integration of environmental and social concerns in their business process. The CSR report is done through the Commercial Register in the Czech Republic, and the companies are committed to their CSR activities (Pelikánová, 2019). Along with that, the consumers in the country also pay attention to CSR and are highly influenced by it. In the Czech Republic, the ten largest companies are involved in issuing the public report, including all the financial and non-financial activities of the company. The 10% of the annual report of the companies operating in the Czech Republic consists of information regarding their CSR activities.

Furthermore, in the other countries of the EU, such as Germany, an average of approximately 2,255 companies apply CSR reporting (Vukic, 2015). This shows that companies in the EU are committed to reporting their CSR activities, and it involves their consumers. Therefore, it can be said that the accountability of CSR report in the countries belonging to the EU is high, and most of the companies in these countries are involved in CSR reporting.

In the case of India, 41% of the companies are involved in the inclusion of CSR projects in their annual reports. In India, the regulation regarding CSR has encouraged companies to legislate their obligations relating to CSR formally. The CSR regulations have enabled the companies to develop CSR foundations, and 18% of the companies are involved in this activity. However, the approach to the reporting of CSR in India has its limitation because, in India, there is no mandatory law that states the charitable status of CSR activities (Tamvada, 2020). This creates a significant gap in the accountability of the CSR reporting in India, and many Indian companies cannot fulfill their accountability responsibility. In 2018, approximately 272 Indian companies were given notice due to non-compliance with the CSR regulations. Companies like DLF Assets, Vodafone, and Adani were notified of non-compliance (Wankhede, 2019).

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>EU score out of 5</b>	<b>India score out of 5</b>
Accountability in CSR reporting	4.5	3

The scores of the EU and India are given according to the figures and percentages presented by the data. The score of the EU has been set high because compared to the Indian companies, the companies in the EU are not involved in the non-compliance of the CSR regulation. On the contrary, the EU companies are engaged in voluntary CSR activities in the annual reports.

#### **4.6 Strictness of regulators**

In every nation, the regulatory framework for CSR is essential to bring companies to implement more responsible policies and to make sure that businesses are rewarded for their responsible behavior and analytically penalized for negligent business practices (Johnston et al., 2019). Concerning the regulatory framework for CSR in India, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs aims to take severe action against firms that breach the provisions of the 2013 Companies Act considering the CSR compliances. The CSR framework imposed in S 135 of the Companies Act 2013 is based on the rule that profit-making businesses should take the initiative to contribute a given amount to environmental and social causes such as getting rid of poverty and hunger, promoting gender equality and education as well as health care (Ropes et al., 2020).

On the other hand, the European Commission has formally defined CSR as a nation whereby firms incorporate environmental and social concerns in their business practices and in their interface with the stakeholder on a charitable basis (Brussels, 2011). In Germany, a new due diligence plan has been imposed concerning CSR wherein policies monitoring for the implemented law have been applied. Research has found that good monitoring is the process of German monitoring reports that companies based in Germany are meeting their responsibilities of due diligence in line with the National Plan for Human Rights and Business (EU Company law, 2020). However, in the Czech Republic, new requirements based on the strict regulatory framework have been imposed by the EU directive. The regulatory framework is based on public interest entities with approximately 500 employees and with more than 1.5 billion turnovers. Hence, it has been found that the European

Commission and the Court of Justice of the EU have imposed a vision of the internal pro-integration wherein the business practices of companies within the nation will be monitored in case of rules violations. Here, it has been found that every detail of the business operations will be reported as CSR information with positive factors for proper competition and even competition (MacGregor Pelikánová, 2019).

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>EU score out of 5</b>	<b>India score of 5</b>
Strictness of regulators	3	4

Moreover, comparing the EU nations such as Germany and Czech with India, it is common that both the nations are concerned about the CSR activities and their initiatives towards the nation and the environment. Based on the collected information, it can be said that India has been holding strict regulatory framework and seems to show great initiative to unite the world by not only expanding its business practices ethically but helping to fight against poverty and hunger as well as promoting education and health to the underprivileged ones.

#### **4.7 The gap in actual activities and CSR concern (unethical practices)**

In India, the CSR activities of the company can be stated as fruitful, but it has not accomplished its objectives completely. One of the key reasons for the failure of CSR in India is the ineffective enforcement of the provisions. One of the main reasons is the lack of credible projects that the companies can support under their CSR responsibilities. According to the KPMG report, one of the main reasons for the CSR failures is geographical bias. Most of the companies prefer to execute their projects and distribute funds in the locations nearby to where they are based. This leads to the industrialization of the regions that are already developing or developed. It has been found out in reports that ONGC, IT giants like TCS, Infosys, and other big companies like HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank have not met the terms with the 2% rule of the CSR Law (Rai, 2020). Media DNA money has stated that more than 19,000 companies spent Rs 138.28 billion during FY16, but in the subsequent year, 6286 companies spent only Rs 47.19 billion (Rai, 2020). Reports claim that not a single penny has been spent by 9,200 eligible firms in FY16, and in FY17, the number of companies became 346 (Rai, 2020).



The European Union consists of many countries. The CSR aspects have been discussed by considering the countries altogether. CSR activities have been a challenge for the Czech Republic. The legal environment, the creativity of the organization, and the non-profit sector affect the CSR activities of the firms in the Czech Republic. Few big companies in the country can ignore Corporate Social Responsibility after the dismissal of the Economic Intelligence Unit (Metzker & Streimikis, 2020). The European Union countries have been involved in ethical practices of CSR with their CSR activities being involved in education, health, environment, and training. The companies of the European countries understand the impacts of CSR activities on society: thus, the companies restrict themselves and avoid unethical CSR practices (Youmatter, 2019). The EU companies have invested in CSR activities regarding sustainability, the environment, and other ethical aspects. The companies include environmental concerns in their internal management systems to reduce the consumption of resources. The companies are focusing on handling waste or using energy more effectively. The companies have developed frameworks to be included in the Corporate Social Responsibility activities. The European Union companies have implemented programs to reduce corporate paper consumption, using digital tools in an environmentally friendly way, encouraging business travel in non-polluting transportation, and many more (Arraiano, 2019).

Criteria	EU	India
<b>The gap in actual activities and CSR concern (unethical practices)</b>	4	3

#### 4.8 Overall score of EU and India

Criteria	EU score out of 5	India Score out of 5
Average Percentage of profits spent on CSR	4	3

Total expenditure on CSR (to indicate progress in CSR activities)	3.5	3
Involvement in social improvement (education, employment opportunity)	4	2
Involvement in controlling environmental impact (carbon footprint)	4	3
Accountability in CSR reporting	4.5	3
Strictness of regulators	3	4
Gap in actual activities and CSR concern (unethical practices)	4	3
<b>Total Score</b>	<b>27/35</b>	<b>21/35</b>

Based on overall analysis of scores between two countries, it can be said that the total score of EU is more than India. Comparison of each criteria indicates that the individual scores in each criteria is more in EU compared to India, which also reflects that the EU is better progressing in CSR activities compared to India. The scores allocated for India, indicates that the CSR involvement in India is not as poor, but overall in a good position. The 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> criteria are most important in CSR framework and EU scores more in those criteria.

## **5 Results and Discussion**

### **5.1 Results**

The unethical approaches of CSR activities in India affect the social and environmental aspects of the country. It is CSR that helps society and the environment to be treated the way they should be treated. CSR activities help the environment and community to be treated with respect. The CSR activities in India need improvement, and various regions need to be covered through the activities. There are numerous companies that do not fulfill their CSR responsibilities, which affects the country's social and organizational aspects. Practical CSR activities can help society to reduce various issues such as health, education of the needy, and the European Countries effectively participate in the CSR activities. The companies that do not perform CSR activities do not participate in the eradication of the issues of the needy or environmental issues.

The score in the CSR reporting of EU is higher than the score of EU because there in EU, majority of companies are involved in the reporting of their CSR activities. It has been evident that approximately 2,255 of the companies are engaged in the presentation of their CSR report in the EU. This shows that the company is determined towards the report of their CSR activities. 10% of the financial statements are dedicated to the disclosure of the CSR reports. On the other hand, 41% of the companies are involved in the accountability of their CSR reports. However, the score of India is lower than that of the EU because, in India, there are several large companies that did not comply with the CSR regulations due to which they were served with notice. This shows that the Indian companies have not been able to fulfill their CSR activities with efficiency.

The regulatory framework for CSR in EU nations such as Germany and Czech are strict enough wherein they follow all the rules and regulations. After the overall analysis, it has been found that though the EU nations emphasize more on following all the policies, whether it is a new diligence plan or any national plan concerning ethical business practices, the rules of India need to be rewarded. This is because the Ministry of Corporate Affairs has been focusing on eliminating hunger and poverty, promoting education and health care to underprivileged children. Here, it can be said that the strict regulatory framework for CSR

in India not only has a concern about the national issue but believes in supporting the society and environment in an international context. India was able to score higher in the area of strict regulators because the policies regarding the implication of CSR in the business process are strict in India compared to the EU. In India, the CSR implication is monitored by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, and any company that does not oblige by the regulation is strictly penalized. This clearly makes it evident that India has strict regulators in the area of dealing with the CSR activities of different countries. The CSR activities of the Indian companies are closely monitored by the respective authorities. The regulators are motivated by the objective that a company that is involved in the profit-making business should also be interested in the welfare of society and the environment. The regulators are concerned about the activities of the Indian companies that adversely affect the environment and society.

As per the analysis of the average percentage of profits spent on CSR, it has been identified that the EU has paid more expensive than India. Analysis has found that companies in India that contribute to CSR are only 2% in figure. In contrast, the EU nations such as Germany, Czech, and Denmark have a better performance which is double the percentage compared to India. Considering the rating that has been done by the CSRHUB, wherein it has found EU nations have been scored with more than 55 and India has been scored as 50. Thus, it can be said that the EU nation holds a strong position as compared to the CSR practices of the Indian companies. It seems that the EU nations have been following every policy and regulation that have been applied or adopted, and on the other hand, Indian companies have breached several implemented law.

The Indian companies have contributed towards the improvement of education and employment of the Indian citizens; thus, the conditions of education and jobs seem to be improving in the country. Various companies in India contribute to developing multiple programs for providing education to needy children, and the CSR programs create an opportunity for employment in the country. The companies of the European Union affect the educational, health, and employment rates of the nations. The companies effectively contribute towards the development of related programs through CSR activities. The European countries that are low on the educational rate have benefitted from the company's CSR activities related to education.

The findings of the second criteria indicates that the involvement in CSR activities in the case of EU is stronger compared to India. India is currently in a progressive state in terms of its expenditure on CSR activities, whereas the CSR expenditure of EU is already in a potential stage. The 4<sup>th</sup> criterion indicates that EU is more involved in the controlling the environmental impact and carbon footprint is well controlled by the companies in EU, whereas the companies in India are still lacking the fact. Based on the overall analysis of the scores provided to EU and India, resulted as EU is more potential in terms of CSR framework, whereas India is still in a progressing phase.

## **5.2 Discussion**

### **5.2.1 CSR environment in India**

As per the analysis of annual reports of India, it has been found that about 41% of Indian companies are engaged in CSR projects. The regulation related to CSR has motivated the companies to enact laws for their challenges regarding CSR. About 18% of Indian companies have implemented the CSR regulation to enhance their CSR foundations (Tamvada, 2020). Although the companies involved in the CSR approach, there is a certain limitation since, in India, there is no compulsory law that claims the benevolent status of CSR activities. As mentioned above, according to Patel (2020), after mandatory CSR provision has been implemented in the year 2014 has increased Indian CSR investment by 47%. The concept of CSR has been ingrained in India just after the country's independence, for which the real examples can be seen in companies like TATA and BIRLA, where they have taken initiatives before CSR has become popular.

Corporate organizations in India have already started to determine the opportunity thus to solve issues depending upon the CSR activities. Thus, these organizations do favor the practice regarding CSR activities in terms of providing certain economic opportunities to the deprived sections of populations. The legal framework of the organization depends on the country in which the organization is operating. In the case of India, the companies need to adopt a few legal frameworks that have been taken by the country (Shira, 2020). As per the requirements of CSR activities in this modern era has been supported to decrease operating costs, increase the numbers of loyal customers, etc. The CSR activities in India have helped immensely in the country's social improvement in several sectors such as education,

business, etc. Moreover, regarding the opportunity of employment, the CSR activity of India helps to attract international investors where it brings more opportunities for jobs across the country. For example, Tata Consultancy Service of India has been regularly contributing to social improvements and has provided employment opportunities in the form of CSR activity. In this way, the first objectives of the dissertation have been fulfilled accordingly.

### **5.2.2 CSR environment in the European Union**

The CSR environment in the European countries is favorable for the companies to perform CSR activities. The European Union countries like Germany, the Czech Republic, Norway, and others consist of companies that perform various kinds of CSR activities. The legal and political circumstances of the countries are also in support of the Corporate Social Responsibilities activities. The educational factors of the countries also provide the companies with the opportunities to perform CSR activities in the area. The CSR activities of the companies of the European Union help needy children to get access to education and other basic needs of life. The companies of the European Union countries also focus on performing CSR activities to help in improving the health factors of the countries. The companies provide various health assistance as a part of their CSR activities. The companies develop various health awareness programs to make the citizens aware of the health conditions. European Union companies also provide training to various individuals on various domains to help them enhance their skills in professional life. The employees of the companies in Germany are provided with personal training and development programs to help them improve their professional skills and do better in their personal life.

It has been stated in various reports that the companies in the European Union perform their Corporate Social Responsibilities with complete effectiveness. Every company in the country contributes to the development of the country with the related Corporate Social Responsibilities. The employment rate of the various countries of the EU also provides opportunities to the companies to perform CSR activities. CSR activities of the companies help in generating employment for people and help the country's economy to boost. A new diligence plan has been developed in Germany related to the CSR activities, and policies to monitor the laws have also been implemented.

### **5.2.3 Compare and contrast the CSR environment between the European Union and India**

CSR Environment of every nation intends to minimize any damaging impacts on the environment from the business practices. It can be said that the key role for major corporations to impact water use footprint, climate change, and effectiveness of energy use, which leads to opportunities for the generation of revenue, cost savings and can even affect the overall strength of the nation as well as the company by positive environmental reputation. Commonly, the CSR policy of the EU intends to align European and international approaches to CSR. The strategy of the EU emphasizes the significance of enhancing CSR visibility and disseminating ethical business practices by the incorporation of CSR into research, education, and training. It has been found that the companies of EU nations integrate environmental and social concerns in their business practices and in their dealings with stakeholders. On the other hand, CSR Environment of India is based on the new rules of section 135, Companies Act 2013, to make certain profitability and turnover to spend 2% of their normal net turnover for the past three years on CSR.

The CSR environment of EU is significantly different from the CSR environment of India and this can be said through the analysis of different data and figures. In India, the CSR regulations are strict but still there are several countries that is indulged in the violation of rules regarding the CSR practices (Tamvada, 2020). This shows that many companies in India are not fulfilling their CSR activities and this has created a wide gap in the CSR activities of India. On the other hand, companies in the EU are highly indulged in the carrying out of their CSR activities in their business process. The CSR activities in the EU are done voluntarily by majority of the company for the betterment of their society. Furthermore, the contrast between the CSR environment of the EU and India can be seen in the social improvement as well. India scores less in this area because despite the social improvement through the CSR has been immense in India; there are still a lot of gaps in the development. However, on the other hand, the social improvement in EU has been able to thrive and the CSR has been integrated in the areas of education and other developmental activities.

## 6 Conclusion

In the end, it can be concluded that the role of the CSR environment in today's global context is tremendous. The analysis of the scoring comparing between India and the European Union in terms of delivering CSR activities has demonstrated except for one criterion of the strictness of regulators, the European Union's CSR activities outscore India's CSR activities in all the other criteria. The reason behind India scoring higher than the European Union in terms of regulation strictness is that the Indian Government has passed a law that makes it mandatory for companies with a net worth of Rs 5 billion or more to indulge in CSR activities. In addition that, the total score of the European Union is 27.5, and the total score of India is 21, which indicates that the European Union's CSDR environment is more efficient and effective than India. It has been observed that a significant amount of CSR investment in India goes towards improving the country's education system, whereas; in the European Union, the education system does not require significant investment except come countries such as Greece. IN terms of reducing environmental footprint, the European Union has been more effective in this form of CSR activities, and the role of the smaller business enterprises played a decisive role in this regard. It has been observed that the companies operating in the region of the European Union generally include their CSR report as a part of their non-financial activities, which is not the case in India's CSR environment. The market of India is one of the most favorable places for Foreign Direct Investment, but the lack of CSD activities can significantly hamper the country's economy as well by making investors hesitate to invest in the Indian companies.

It has thus become important for India to ensure that even the smaller businesses try to implement certain CSR activities so that the CSR score of the country improves. The future will call for more sustainable approaches, and thus it is high time for the Indian Government to ensure that social and environmental improvement takes center stage in the Indian market. The European Union has successfully set an example for other regions in the world to demonstrate CSR activities effectively, which can be replicated by other regions as well for achieving improvement. Overall, the CSR score of the European Union reflects that the region is on the right track of performing CSR activities, and the future goals of the European Union can be easily achieved. On the other hand, the future goals of India's CSR environment will require the implementation of significant measures for achieving sustainable goals.



## **6.1 Limitation**

The proposed report is entirely based on secondary data; therefore, one of the major limitations of the research paper is that the matters that have been discussed throughout the context may slightly vary from the original context. Furthermore, the secondary data that has been accumulated and evaluated are general and not specific to the companies of India, and the EU, due to a lack of available and reliable sources of data. Because of these limitations, all the data and the information that has been discussed may not be accurate; however, the research paper has aimed to justify all the information and data that were used for the completion of this research paper.

## **6.2 Research Scope**

Though CSR is one of the most debated and researched topics in the recent era, there is a lack of reliable and relevant sources of data. The importance of CSR has been consistently growing towards being the commitment by the business in order to behave ethically while contributing toward the development of the economy, along with the quality improvement of the workforce and society as a whole. However, there is a lack of previous research studies on this topic, which signifies that there is a great potential for the research scope of CSR in the future.

## 7 Recommendations

As per the overall analysis, it has been identified that CSR plays a vital role in contemporary business, and therefore, the country India, in comparison to the EU, needs to improve its CSR. Hence, in order to improve CSR, the following considerations are recommended:

***CSR integration-*** In order to improve CSR, one of the essential factors is to integrate CSR from top to bottom while analyzing the CSR standards, whether the vision statement of CSR radiates to the desk of each employee or not. Examining the vision statement of CSR will help to identify whether its elements are doing socially good or not.

***Formalizing environmental and social justice-*** The integration of CSR within the corporate culture of the business is a formal process. Therefore, addressing both social justice and climate change is an integral part of this process. Many of the indicators have indicated that the success of the effort of the political climate change depends upon the influence of the private sector, as businesses are diverse these days (London, 2016). They are diverse in terms of equalizing gender, their preferences, and family issues. Therefore, formalizing environmental and social justice will eventually help in the development of CSR, particularly in India.

***Ensuring engagement at all levels of the organization-*** One of the crucial parts of CSR is to ensure that the strategy is consistent while making up the organizations and satisfying the various levels of stakeholders. Therefore, in order to improve CSR, it is essential to ensure that all the actions of the organization should match the beliefs of the employees. In aid to do so, the organization must ensure the engagement of the stakeholder of all levels within the organization. Furthermore, the determinants of the CSR performance needs to be categorized into hard and soft elements that will focus on the work process, technology, plans and strategy, values and belief, etc. (Testa et al., 2018).

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