

CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN INDIA: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Atul Pratap Singh¹ and A. K. Singh²

Abstract: *The external environment of business has undergone revolutionary changes which generated far-reaching impact on organizational performance and their management strategies. With globalization and liberalization of economy, issues like the changing desires and attitudes of customers, the requirement of government agencies, rapidly advancing technology, increasing cost of production, increased awareness towards environmental protection and sustainable development, rapidly changing political scenario, have emerged as issues of importance which corporate sector cannot ignore. Thus, it was advocated by the management experts that business organizations must devote resources to socially desirable objectives besides making profits to maintain the confidence and support of its stakeholders and creditors. Corporate social responsibility can generate values and create opportunities for corporate houses for enhancing their business performance and building strongly relations with the stakeholders and community. There have been revolutionary changes in corporate social responsibility at the global level and India is no exception of it. The philanthropic and welfare of labour by corporate sector has shifted towards mandatory provisions of social responsibility against the business profit. The outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic has also changed the development priority and focus of social investment by corporate houses. Against this backdrop, present paper purports to examine the CSR in India during the recent past with special focus on corporate social investment during COVID-19 pandemic.*

Keywords: *Corporate Social Responsibility, COVID-19 Pandemic, Performance of CSR, CSR during COVID-19 Pandemic*

INTRODUCTION

The theme of corporate social responsibility assumes pivotal significance in today's changing business environment. Contribution to sustainability in the economic development is one of the major commitments of a business. Historically, the concept of corporate social responsibility is very old. However, in India it has undergone a long journey from philanthropy to public-private people partnerships. The social investment and initiatives by some of the corporate houses in India are beyond the corporate governance as a large chunk of deprived, vulnerable, poor and backward population and areas are being benefited by them directly and indirectly. While corporate governance is about promoting corporate fairness, transparency and accountability, the social investment by corporate houses have improved its overall brand image and business performance.

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Corporate social responsibility has gained much importance in the changed business environment in India. A large number of big corporate houses have set up their Trust and Development Foundations for initiating CSR activities. Even some of the Corporate Houses embarked upon corporate social responsibility initiatives and at the later stage, they developed a full-fledged institute/organization committed towards social development. There has been a progressive increase in social investment by the Corporate Houses in the country. Large MNCs like - Tata Group, ITC, Ranbaxy, Infosys, Microsoft, Dr. Reddy's Laboratory, etc. have endeavoured to create a better social order by investing hugely in social development. However, Tata Group has emerged to be the pioneer in the field as it has comparatively larger social investment. A number of institutions and social development organizations are being supported by Tata Group in the field.

EVOLUTION OF CSR

Gulati (2005) is of the view that the social aspects of sustainability has closely linked with the impact of organization's activity on society, including employees, customers, community, and supply chain and business partners. Social performance supports the organization's ability to deliver high quality environmental and economic performance. CSR has focused hot spots for developmental issues at different times across India. The major priority areas of CSR initiatives have been environment conservation, health, education, livelihood development and women empowerment. The government is also encouraging CSR initiatives as it has already enacted national policy on CSR while the networking of NGOs and other stakeholding agencies gives much impetus to CSR activities. The term of corporate social performance was first introduced by Sethi (1975), elaborated by Carroll (1979), and developed by Wartick & Cochran (1985). Sethi (1975) has provided the concept of corporate social performance in his three-level models have focused on social commitment, social responsibility and social awareness (Cochran, 2007). During the past few years it was observed that the business organisations have shifted their focus from conventional philanthropical and charitable activities to a wider arena, particularly all those aspects which affect the business environment directly or indirectly, e.g. internal and external stakeholders, environment, concern for disadvantaged groups in the society etc. This has been driven both externally by increased public and governmental expectations and internally by corporate inclination (Mohan, 2001).

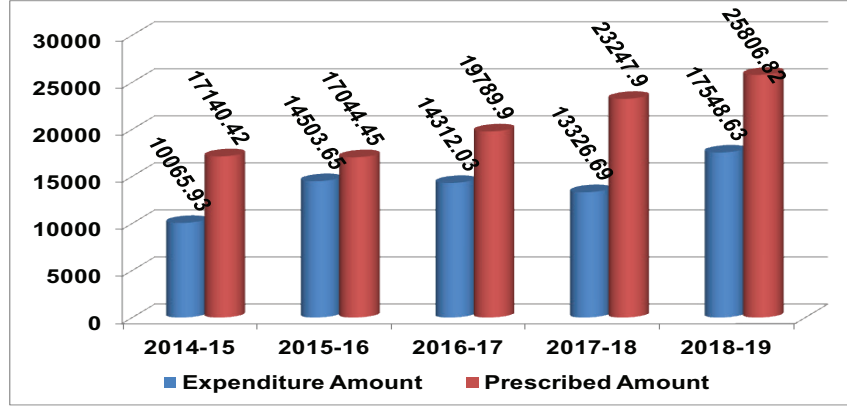
CSR is a relatively recent phenomenon. However, owners and managers of firms were engaged in such activities which are now called as CSR almost from the beginning of the industrial revolution. The activities today regarded as societal concerns were integral to production during the late 18th century; thus, the owners found that they had to provide for the efficient transport of raw materials and products besides labour welfare measures. Moreover, they found problems of workers such as lack of discipline, laziness, drunkenness, punctuality, and difficult to manage them (Pollard, 1965). Several reports have documented the rich tradition of social engagement/charity/philanthropy by corporate sector (Sood & Arora, 2006). The earliest industrialists of the 19th Century

initiated the philanthropic practices via trusts, and endowed institutions controlled by business families. The concept had been expanded from the charitable activities to the idea of social responsibility of business in order to become profitable, just, humane, efficient and dynamic (Sood & Arora, 2006). In the 1970's and 1980's, with India's poor ranking on social and economic indicators, the government persuaded the industry to consider the social responsibility (Sundar, 2000). The economic changes in during the 1980s witnessed a large increase in corporate activity. This also led to the tough competition to corporates. With the economic liberalization and privatization of the Indian economy during 1990's, industry associations in India focused on social investment. By 2000, many Indian companies had become global players while MNC's set up their subsidiaries in India. Corporate Social Responsibility became an integral part of business philosophy with introduction of New Company Act in 2013 and imposing as a statutory obligation of social investment by corporates under Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013. Section 135 of the Act, Schedule VII and Companies (CSR) Policy Rules, 2014, provide a robust framework for companies to partner in contributing to the country's development challenges through its managerial skills, technology and innovation (MCA, 2018). Besides providing an overall guidance framework for the corporates to carry out their CSR initiatives, it also provides them enough autonomy and flexibility in designing and implementing CSR programmes. As per the Act, companies with a net worth of Rs 500 crore or more, or a turnover of Rs 1000 crore or more, or a net profit of Rs 5 crore or more in the immediately preceding financial year are required to spend 2 percent of their average net profit of the preceding three years on CSR.

PERFORMANCE OF CSR

According to the Report of the High-Level Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility 2018, the number of reporting companies that carry CSR obligation has steadily increased in 2014-15 to 2016-17 and then declined in the year 2017-18. The total CSR expenditure by these companies increased substantially by 44 per cent from 2014-16 and thereafter marginally declined in 2016-17. It has also been observed that the average spend by a government enterprise on CSR varied between Rs. 8-10 crore per company between 2014-15 to 2017-18 whereas the average spend by a private company steadily increased from Rs. 72 Lakh per company in 2014-15 to Rs. 95 Lakh per company in the year 2017-18. It has further dipped by 6.9 percent in the year 2017-18. The number of reporting companies which carry CSR obligation has steadily increased from 10,418 in the year 2014-15 to 13,182 in the year 2016-17 and then declined to 11,584 in the year 2017-18. The average spend by a government company is hovering between Rs 8-10 crore per company between 2014-15 to 2017-18 whereas the average spend by a private company has steadily increased from Rs 72 lakhs per company in 2014-15 to Rs 95 lakhs per company in the year 2017-18 (Chart-1).

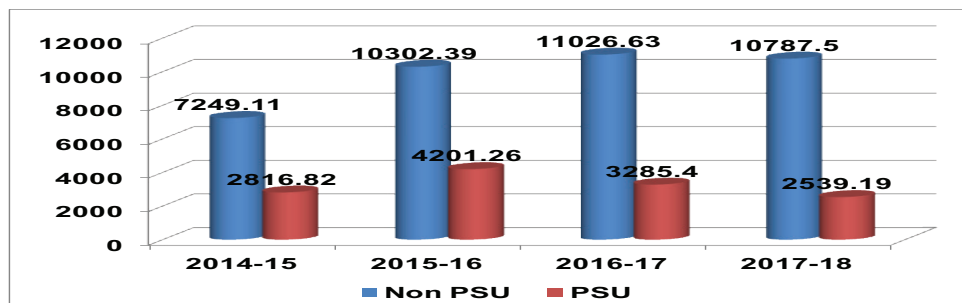
Chart-1: CSR Expenditure in India (Rs. In Crore)



Source: Report of The High Level Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India, 2019.

The most of the CSR expenditure has been done through an implementing agency. Even though the percentage of projects implemented through trust/society/Section 8 companies set up by the company has been quite low, the CSR expenditure made via this mode has been high. While a substantial proportion of companies spend their CSR funds directly, NGOs are becoming the most popular channel for others. This upward trend can be attributed to implementing agencies being a more suitable model for the companies to execute CSR projects, due to their presence in the target areas, local connections and knowledge based experience in executing social projects which a company may typically lack in. It is observed that maximum projects are implemented directly by the Company (28 percent in the year 2014-15 to 40 percent in 2017-18) followed by implementation through other implementing agency (19 percent in the year 2014-15 to 29 percent in 2017-18). The projects implemented by trust/society/section 8 companies set up by the company itself is lower than the above two modes (4 percent in 2014-15 to 5 percent in 2017-18). The least used mode is trust/society/section 8 companies set up by Central or State Government or entities established under Special Act of Parliament/State legislature. However, if CSR expenditure made through different modes of implementation is taken into account, it may be observed that most of the CSR expenditure has been done through an implementing agency. Out of the total expenditure incurred on Schedule VII areas, the projects related to education and health have received maximum CSR funds almost every year post 2014-15 followed by projects falling in the domain of rural development. Details about the year-wise CSR expenditure in areas or subjects mentioned in Schedule VII of the Act can be seen (Chart-2).

Chart-2: Sector-wise CSR Expenditure in India (Rs. In Crore)



Source: Report of The High Level Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India, 2019.

Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Delhi received 40 per cent of the total CSR expenditure from 2014-15 to 2017-18, even though they account for 11 per cent of the total number of aspirational districts. A state-wise analysis of CSR expenditure reveals that there are some states where the concentration of CSR-led activities is the highest and increasing over the years. There has been significant increase in CSR expenditure in Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnatka, Kerala, Maharastra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal during the period of 2014-15 to 2017-18, however, significant decline in expenditure was recorded in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Jammu and Kashmir, and Jharkhand during the corresponding period (Table-1).

Table-1: CSR Expenditure Across States (Rs. In Crore)

State	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Andhra Pradesh	414.28	1,294.28	753.53	265.70
Assam	134.78	164.60	269.92	83.89
Bihar	36.69	111.32	100.77	41.33
Chhattisgarh	161.30	241.16	84.94	65.49
Delhi	237.44	493.29	520.37	522.80
Goa	27.11	30.15	35.87	51.50
Gujarat	313.45	551.43	870.64	764.27
Haryana	187.41	375.62	379.67	254.15
Himachal Pradesh	10.95	52.29	24.03	60.53
Jammu and Kashmir	43.71	107.81	42.74	14.17
Jharkhand	79.56	117.04	95.69	45.87
Karnataka	403.47	784.66	886.18	940.26
Kerala	68.23	148.12	135.47	145.37
Madhya Pradesh	141.88	185.40	286.60	144.71
Maharashtra	1,445.92	2,052.23	2,487.38	2,482.75

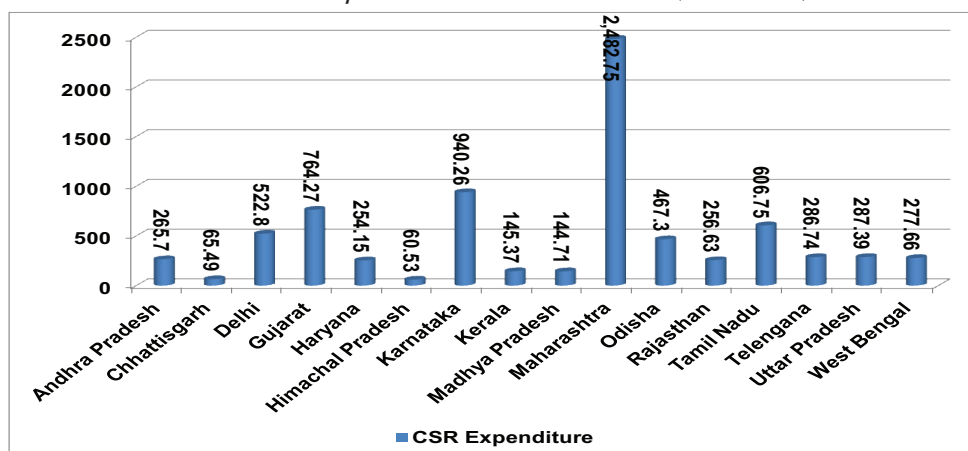
Odisha	252.18	624.05	316.71	467.30
Punjab	55.61	69.93	75.83	86.40
Rajasthan	299.76	501.45	327.15	256.63
Tamil Nadu	539.64	633.24	550.94	606.75
Telangana	101.96	265.40	259.77	286.74
Uttar Pradesh	148.90	423.72	324.54	287.39
Uttarakhand	74.79	73.17	101.52	81.81
West Bengal	194.86	415.42	289.90	277.66
PAN India*	4,614.89	4,741.95	4,988.17	5,009.16

*PAN India includes CSR projects in two or more states but has not reported the expenditure on the projects separately.

Source: Report of The High Level Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India, 2019.

The states like Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Delhi have received approximately 40 % of the total expenditure on CSR for the years 2014-15 to 2017-18. Out of the total expenditure incurred on Schedule VII areas, the projects related to education and health have received maximum CSR funds (Chart-3).

Chart-3: CSR Expenditure Across States in India (Rs. In Crore)



Source: Report of The High Level Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India, 2019.

There has been significant growth in CSR expenditure under education, environment protection, health care, livelihood development, rural development, poverty alleviation, sanitation, including drinking water, women empowerment, animal welfare and welfare of widows of armed personnel while decline in expenditure was reported under agr forestry, Clean Ganga Fund, Prime Minister National Relief Fund and gender equality during the period of 2014-15 to 2017-18 (Table-2).

Table-2: CSR Expenditure Across Various Development Sectors (Rs. In Crore)

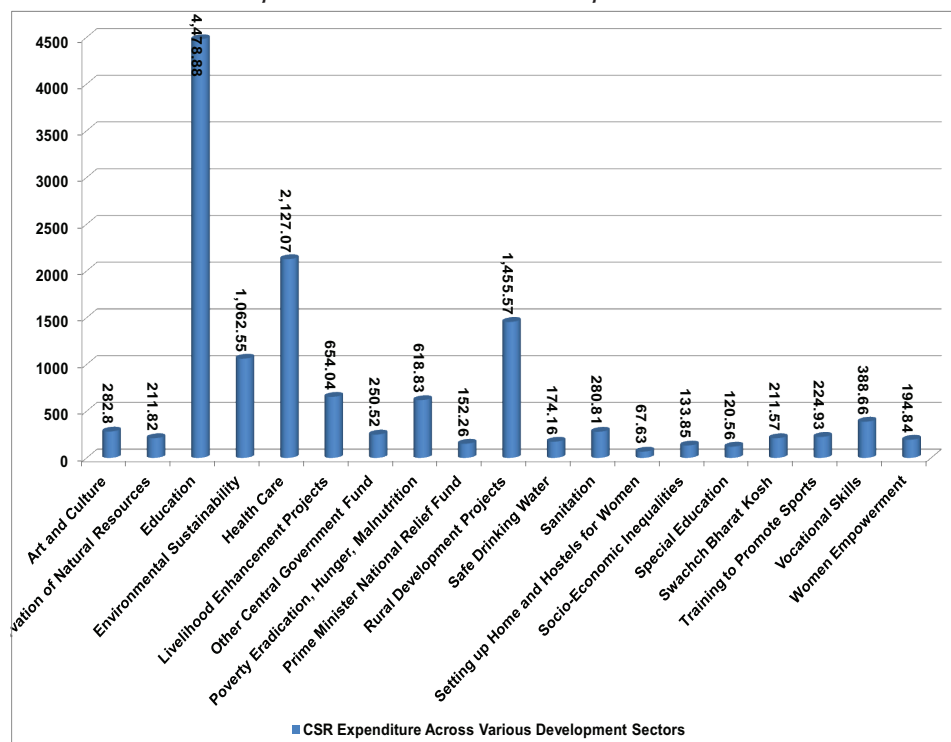
Sector	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Agro Forestry	18.12	57.85	43.45	12.18
Animal Welfare	17.29	66.67	78.60	57.75
Armed Forces, Veterans, War Widows/ Dependents	4.76	11.14	37.86	26.77
Art and Culture	117.37	119.17	305.56	282.80
Clean Ganga Fund	5.47	32.82	24.37	4.44
Conservation of Natural Resources	44.60	49.85	119.09	211.82
Education	2,589.42	4,052.15	4,491.74	4,478.88
Environmental Sustainability	773.99	796.69	1,076.43	1,062.55
Gender Equality	55.21	73.85	72.60	20.17
Health Care	1,847.74	2,563.73	2,481.94	2,127.07
Livelihood Enhancement Projects	280.17	393.38	515.47	654.04
NEC/Not Mentioned	1,338.40	1,051.16	388.96	0.76
Other Central Government Fund	277.10	334.35	418.29	250.52
Poverty Eradication	274.70	1,252.08	606.35	618.83
P.M. National Relief Fund	228.18	218.04	158.80	152.26
Rural Development Projects	1,059.35	1,375.83	1,552.10	1,455.57
Safe Drinking Water	103.95	180.16	147.19	174.16
Sanitation	299.54	631.73	421.51	280.81
Senior Citizen Welfare	8.94	21.87	26.91	31.34
Home and Hostels for Women	8.74	29.28	61.97	67.63
Setting up Orphanage	5.12	16.90	16.80	36.57
Slum Area Development	101.14	14.10	51.49	30.80
Socio-Economic Inequalities	39.04	77.97	148.01	133.85
Special Education	41.43	125.84	164.83	120.56
Swachh Bharat Kosh	113.86	325.52	184.06	211.57
Technology Incubators	4.74	26.34	23.09	14.55
Training to Promote Sports	57.62	138.84	179.50	224.93
Vocational Skills	277.07	344.39	373.43	388.66
Women Empowerment	72.87	121.94	141.61	194.84
Total	10,065.93	14,503.65	14,312.03	13,326.69

Source: Report of The High Level Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India, 2019.

The cumulative figure from 2014-15 to 2017-18 for total expenditure incurred on projects related to education is Rs.15,612.20crores , followed by Rs. 9,020.47 crores spent on projects related to healthcare (Chart-4) . Besides Schedule VII activities, CSR funds can be also contributed to PM National Relief Fund, Swachh Bharat Kosh, Clean

Ganga Fund and any other fund set up by the Government of India for socio-economic development. The contributions to these funds have been in a small proportion (approx. 5.6 percent) of the total CSR expenditures for the years 2014-15 to 2017-18. Foreign companies comprise a significant part of the CSR expenditure in India. According to KPMG's, India's CSR Reporting Survey 2017, which analyses and brings together findings from CSR reporting of the top hundred listed companies as per market capital as on 31 March 2017, companies have spent Rs. 7215.9 crores which is 41 per cent higher as compared to 2014-15(Choudhary et al., 2020).

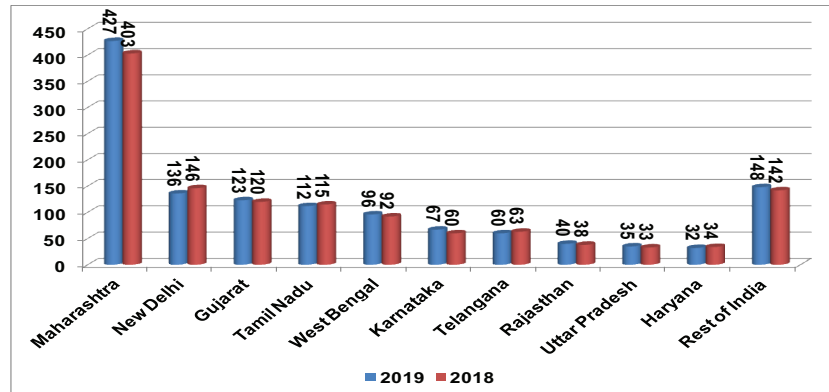
Chart-4: CSR Expenditure Across Various Development Sectors (Rs. In Crore)



Source: Report of The High Level Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India, 2019.

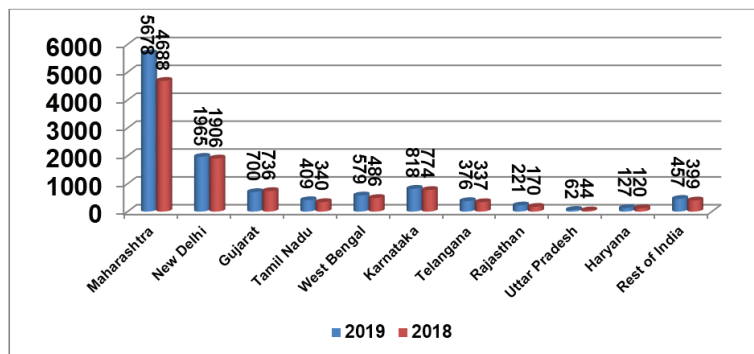
As per Report of CRISIL (2020), there has been significant increase in number of companies reporting CSR and incurring expenditure during the period of 2018-2019. However, the number of companies reported CSR has declined in Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and Haryana while expenditure in Gujarat has fallen down in the corresponding period. The other states witnessed increase in number of companies and their expenditure on CSR during the period (Chart-5 and Chart-6).

Chart-5: State-wise Number of CSR Companies in India



Source: CRISIL, 2020.

Chart-6: State-wise CSR Expenditure in India (Amount in Rs. Crrore)



Source: CRISIL, 2020.

As per CRISIL report (2020) there has been significant increase in CSR spending less than 2 percent against profit of the companies reporting CSR during 2015 to 2019. The CSR spending less than 2 percent against profit was recorded 54 percent in 2015 which increased to 64 percent in 2019. However, number of companies and overall CSR amount has significantly increased over the period (Table-3).

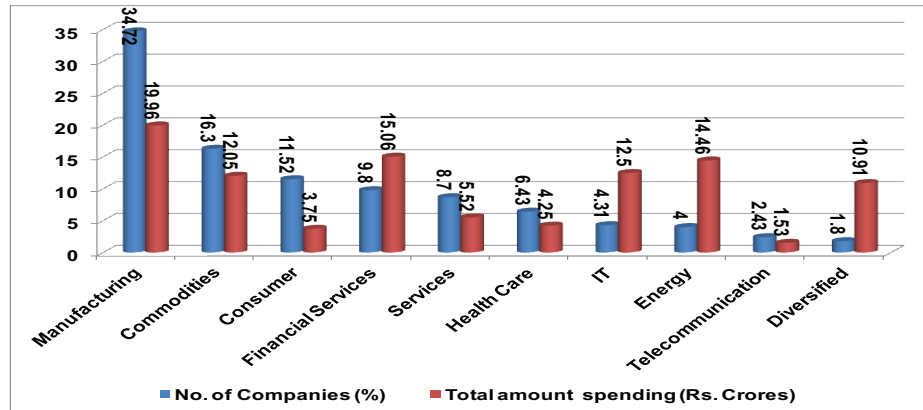
Table-3: CSR Spending in India

Year	No. of Companies	CRS Spending (Rs. Crore)	CSR Spending less than 2% against profit
2015	1000	6839	54
2016	1158	8349	56
2017	1186	8913	57
2018	1246	9999	62
2019	1276	11392	64

Source: CRISIL, 2020.

Sector wise CSR expenditure was reported high for manufacturing, financial services, energy, IT, commodities and diversified industries while number of companies reporting CSR expenditure significant during the year 2019 were related with manufacturing, commodities, consumer, financial services and services (Chart-7).

Chart-7: Sector-wise Share of CSR Spending in India during 2019



Source: CRISIL, 2020.

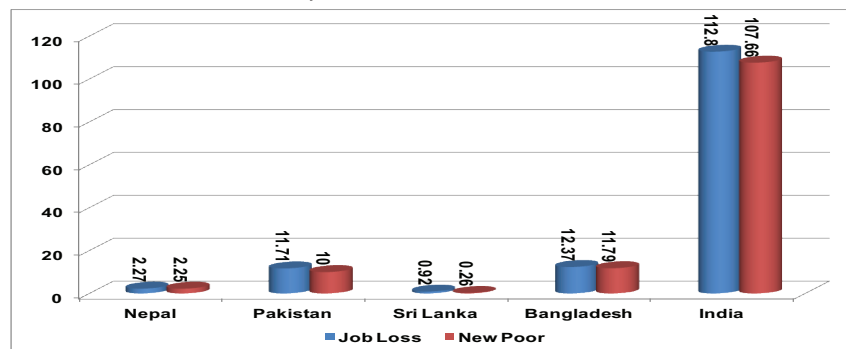
CSR DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic has been considered as the most crucial global health calamity of the century and the greatest challenge that the humankind faced since the Second World War. It has rapidly spread around the globe, posing enormous health, economic, environmental and social challenges to the entire human population. The coronavirus outbreak is severely disrupting the global economy. Almost all the nations are struggling to slow down the transmission of the disease by testing & treating patients, quarantining suspected persons through contact tracing, restricting large gatherings, maintaining complete or partial lock down etc. The coronavirus crisis is likely to produce unprecedented levels of effects on the migrant economy. The social distancing and the lockdown, businesses were mostly shut and only a few people were allowed to work. This resulted in mass unemployment of migrant workers while many people were stranded during the lockdowns as governments imposed travel restrictions, cancelled transport services and sealed borders. COVID -19 has widely impacted on economy, society and polity of all the countries. However, most affected sectors are tourism, hotel and restaurants, manufacturing, construction and real estate, agriculture, transport and trade. The less affected sectors were reported to be mining and quarrying and infrastructure. During the COVID -19 pandemic, most of the companies, private entities and other organizations allowed their workers to work from home. Thus, there was revival of employment in the initial period of pandemic in India (Mathai, 2020). As per information available from Centre for Monitoring of Indian Economy, there has been sharp decline in employment in salaried class. The employment in salaried class was reported 86.1 million in 2019-20 which declined to 67.2 million in July, 2020.

However, employment in non-salaried class increased from 317.6 million in 2019-20 to 325.6 million in July, 2020. The amount of GST collection has fallen down in many states due to impact of COVID-19 pandemic and closure of economy due to locked down. Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Haryana, West Bengal and Delhi witnessed heavy loss in collection of GST in March-July, 2020 as compared to March-July, 2019.

In view of the global crises, Government of India declared a complete lockdown which has left a deep impact upon the labourers, migrant workers and all those marginalized communities. As on August 31, 2020, there were 25.24 million cases at the global level, with recovery of 16.63 million cases. U.S.A, India, Brazil, Russia, and Peru are the worst affected countries. In India, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and West Bengal continue to remain the worst-affected states by the Covid-19 pandemic. As per a study of ILO, Worldwide, 81 per cent of all workers are affected by partial or complete lockdown. But the impact will be the worst among informal workers, who are least protected among all types of workers. Millions dependent on the informal economy face survival crisis in India. As per UNESCAP- World Bank, 2020, 112.8 million persons are likely to lose their jobs while 107.66 million persons will join as new poor due to COVID-19. This much high as compared to other South Asian countries (Chart-8). The impact of COVID-19 pandemic will affect the economy, society and even polity in many countries. The efforts to mitigate the impact of the pandemic will require massive financial and physical resources. The fiscal measures adopted so far have proved to be grossly inadequate in many countries.

Chart-8: Potential Job Losses and New Poor due to COVID-19



(Number in Millions)

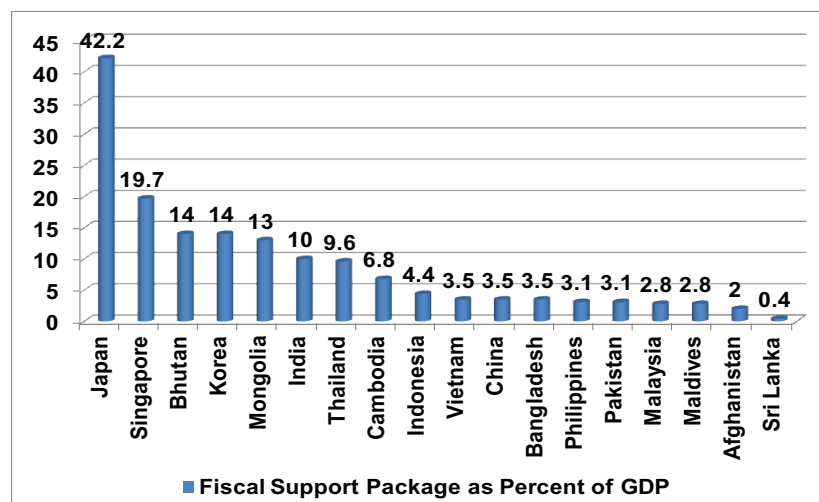
Source: UNESCAP (2020)

The policy reaction to the Covid-19 has brought together prompt responses from governments, international funding agencies and civil society organization all over the globe. Fiscal measures and policy initiatives have played critical role in prevention and mitigation of pandemic as well as providing relief to victims and sufferers besides provision of health care, treatment of patients, protection of frontline workers and care givers. Governments have intensified their fiscal policy actions and have adopted stringent containment measures as the pandemic has spread around the globe. The

aggregate fiscal packages include both budgetary and non-budgetary measures. The response channeled through the budget has a direct negative impact on fiscal balances. Budgetary measures include spending on health care, transfers to firms and households, wage and unemployment subsidies and tax cuts or deferrals. The non-budgetary part consists of funding and credit guarantees. Funding includes loans by governments or their financial agencies to firms, with a focus on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and other financial support, including equity injections to strategic firms. Government credit guarantees, including fiscal support to maintain the flow of credit to the economy in a high uncertainty environment (Baudino, 2020).

Many countries adopted fiscal measures to respond the COVID pandemic and revival of their economy. The fiscal measures as percentage of GDP accounted highest in Japan (42.2 percent) followed by Singapore (19.7 percent). It was reported higher than India (10 percent) in Bhutan and, Korea and Magnolia (Chart-9). In the context of COVID-19 pandemic, the role of civil society organizations has enormously increased for prevention from the spread of infection and rehabilitation of affected persons. In view of the global crises, Government of India declared a complete lock down in the country which has left a deep impact on the labourers, migrant workers and all those marginalized communities Fiscal measures as percentage of GDP was recorded highest in Japan followed by Singapore, Bhutan, Korea and Magnolia (Chart-9). The fiscal stimulus needed to mitigate socio-economic impact of COVID-19 in South Asia has been higher than the fiscal measures adopted. The gap was reported high in Sri Lanka followed by Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Chart-9: COVID-19 Related Fiscal Measures as Percent of GDP (Selected Countries)



Source: Based on UNESCAP COVID-19 Stimulus Tracker ADB COVID-19 Policy Database and Various National Sources.

The Government of India declared the novel coronavirus outbreak in the country as a “notified disaster” on 14 March, 2020 to enable the state governments to provide

assistance and utilise funds from the State's Disaster Response Fund towards avenues like temporary accommodation, food supplies, and medical care for patients and people in quarantine facilities. On 23 March, 2020, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India declared that the funds spent on COVID-19 management would be treated as eligible CSR activity. The circular of Ministry also stated that the CSR funds can be spent by companies for various activities related to COVID-19 as enlisted under item nos. (i) Eradicating extreme hunger and poverty and (xii) Disaster management, including relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction activities of Schedule VII appended to the Companies Act, 2013 and relating to the promotion of health care, including preventive healthcare and sanitation and disaster management. Ministry also notified that items under Schedule VII are broad-based and shall be interpreted liberally in the wake of the crisis.

As per information available on May 20, 2020, Rs. 9677.90 crores amount was donated by government agencies, private companies and foreign contribution while Rs. 2098.2 crores were pledged under Prime Minister CARE Fund in India (Table-4).

Table-4: Donations in Prime Minister Care Fund, 2020

Sector	Amount of Donation (Rs. Crore)	Amount Pledged (Rs. Crore)
Government Agencies	4308.3	1250
Private Companies, Industries and Social Organizations,	5369.6	772.4
Foreign Contributions	--	22
Individuals	--	53.77
Total	9677.90	2098.2

Source: India Spend, May, 20, 2020.

CRISIL (2020) reported that 84 companies contributed in tune of Rs. 7537 crores during COVID-19 pandemic in India, Most of the companies reporting CSR were in private sector while about 30 percent contribution was made by public sector companies during the pandemic (Table-5).

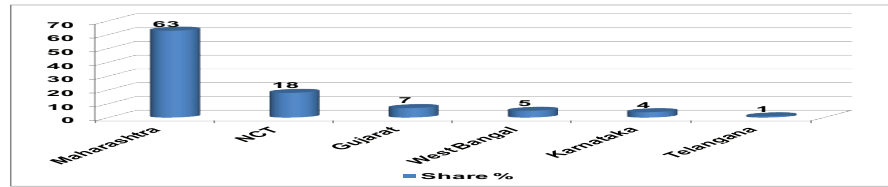
Table-5: Number of Companies and Contribution during Covid-19 Pandemic

Sector	No. of Companies	Total Amount (Rs. Crore)
Private sector	56	5122
Public Sector	24	2229
Private (Foreign Sector)	4	186
Total	84	7537

Source: CRISIL, 2020.

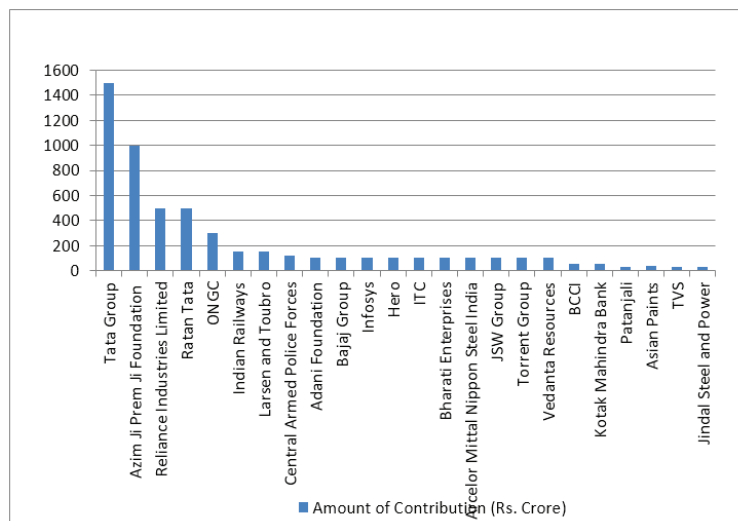
The CSR expenditure during the pandemic was found concentrated in Maharashtra, NCT, Gujarat, West Bengal, Karnataka, and Telangana (Chart-8).

Chart-8: Share of States in CSR Spending during Covid- 19 Pandemic



Keeping in view the need for dedicated national fund for dealing with emergency or distress situation due to COVID-19 pandemic, and to provide relief to the affected, a public charitable trust under the name of 'Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations Fund' (PM CARES Fund)' was set up on 28 March, 2020. On 26 August, 2020, the Government amended the CSR norms to include research and development (R&D) spending on new vaccines, drugs, medical devices related to COVID-19. Barely a week after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced setting up of the PM CARES Fund, donations pledged to it have crossed over Rs 6,500 crore. This is three times more than the combined public donation of Rs 2,119 crore received in the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF) between 2014-15 and 2018-19. While some of the bigger donations to PM CARES have come from India Inc. and government organisations, including Rs 1,500 crore by the Tata Group, Rs 1,000 crore by the Azim Premji Foundation (Chart-10), Rs 500 crore collectively by the Army, Navy and Air Force, defence PSUs and employees of defence ministry, there have also been innumerable smaller contributions by individuals too (The Print, April 14, 2020).

Chart-10: Corporate Contribution to Prime Minister Care Fund



Source: PM Care Fund 2020.

On May 12, Hon'able Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi, announced a special economic package of Rs 20 lakh crore (equivalent to 10 percent of India's GDP) with

the aim of making the country independent against the tough competition in the global supply chain and to help in empowering the poor, labourers, migrants who have been adversely affected by COVID-19. There are five pillars of Atmanirbhar Bharat (Self Reliant India) viz. economy, infrastructure, system, vibrant demography and demand special economic and comprehensive package. It is time to become vocal for our "local" products and make them global. There has been focus on land, labour, liquidity and laws. Central Government has consistently extended generous support to states in this hour of need. Government devolved of taxes Rs 46,038 crores in April besides, revenue deficit grants to states Rs 12,390 crores as SDRF funds in first week of April, 2020. Rs. 1.70 lakh crore relief packages under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana were provided for the poor to help them fight the battle. The Prime Minister Garib Kalyan Yojana has been launched in 116 districts in India and 31 districts of Uttar Pradesh have been included under the scheme. The districts where more than 25000 migrant workers have returned have been selected under the scheme. However, state of Uttar Pradesh has selected those districts where more than 30,000 migrant workers have returned during COVID-19. In order to mitigate the effect of the lockdown on the vulnerable groups, Government of India on March 26, 2020, announced a Rs. 1.70 lakh crore package under the Pradhan Mantri Gareeb Kalyan Yojana.

CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic has devastated the whole economy, social fabric and the life of poor, migrants and marginalized workers. In view of the increasing employment opportunities for them, skill up gradation is called for. The footprints of CSR programmes are now extended to the remote and backward areas. The business organizations have developed a variety of strategies for dealing with the inter-section of societal needs, natural environment, and the corresponding business imperatives. Thus, corporate responsibility is a prime phenomenon of business and society. There is increasing interface with business organizations and community for societal development. The close link between a corporation and community creates sustainable development. CSR projects give aids to local organizations and marginalized communities. The societal perception on CSR activities of business is changing. The liberalization of economy has reduced the regulatory framework imposed by the state. However, self regulation by business has increased in the changing business environment. There is major focus on bottom of the pyramid principle initiated by management Guru C.K. Prahalad that corporate houses have to substantially invest on social development in order to penetrate their products and services and sustain their customer base. The business is no longer viewed as selfish endeavor of profit maximization. Society takes a positive view of their actions and expects a responsible and ethical behavior. Thus, the process of integration of the society and business has begun a business has to reinforce the positive momentum to strengthen the confidence and trust in the society. In view of the holistic development and empowerment of the migrant labours and their dependents, multiple approaches and multi pronged strategies are required. The effective implementation of social security and social welfare schemes besides effective enforcement of legislations

and laws. Mitigating these extra-ordinary challenges would also require equally extra-ordinary responses. These include large people-centred relief and stimulus packages; community participation and whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches to be effective.

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