

## DOES CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS ATTRACTING YOUNGER GENERATION?

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**Abstract:** *The purpose of this paper is to examine the impact of corporate social responsibility on corporate reputation. A survey was conducted among 200 working young professionals in India. The research hypotheses were tested using regression analysis. The findings suggest that CSR activities positively correlate with corporate reputation among generation Y.*

**Keywords:** India, Corporate Social Responsibility, Corporate Reputation, Internal Corporate Social Responsibility, Generation Y

**JEL Classification:** G34, A22

### INTRODUCTION

In present day's highly competitive scenario, it is important for the corporations to act in a socially acceptable manner. Every business takes a lot from the society and hence, it becomes a moral obligation on them to return back to the society. This practice of returning back to the society is broadly what we call corporate social responsibility (CSR). Ignoring this aspect while conducting any business will certainly affect an organizations performance. No growth can be sustainable if Corporations do not work in an ethical manner. (Heald, 1957, cited in Ullmann, 1985) stated that it is an everlasting need on the part of organizations to take up activities that are socially responsible and the same has been used as a subject of study since quite a long time. This statement clearly indicate that CSR is not something that is acquired due to trend and increasing competence, but the same has been in existence since quite a long time. India is known for its rich history wherein business have been continuously engaged in contributing to some or the other social cause.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has been explored by several researchers in relationship with different parties of an organization such as stakeholders, marketing people, stockholders, human resource, quality, and loyalty (Brammer & millington, 2003; Mandhachitara & Poolthong, 2011). The concept of corporate social responsibility was initiated from a book published in the year 1953 by

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Howard R. Bowen (Windell, 2006). Light was thrown on the stakeholder approach of CSR by Carroll (1979) through his model. He was an early CSR theorist and he defined CSR as “Businessencompasses the economic, legal, ethical and discretionary expectations that society has of organization at a given point in time”.

### CSR MODELS IN INDIA

Several models have been developed in context of CSR all over the world. In Indian context, four models of Corporate Social Responsibility (Kumar *et al.*, 2001) have been identified and used in major researches. (Refer Table 1).

**Table 1**  
**The Four Models of Corporate Responsibility**

<i>Model</i>	<i>Focus</i>	<i>Champions</i>
Ethical	Voluntary commitment by companies to public welfare	M. K. Gandhi
Statist	State ownership and legal requirements determine corporate responsibility	Jawaharlal Nehru
Liberal	Corporate responsibilities limited to private owner (shareholders)	Milton Friedman
Stakeholder	Companies respond to the needs of stakeholders – customers, employees, communities, etc.	R. Edward Freeman

If employees are satisfied, then they will perform well and will be able to maintain a perfect work-life balance. It has been said that CSR puts an impact on an employee’s behaviours and commitment to their organization (Ali, Rehman, Ali, Yousaf, & Zia, 2010). Many employees do perceive that a socially responsible firm would be definitely concerned about them rather than a firm with no CSR policy (O’Reilly & chatman, 1986).

This study will prove to be beneficial for managers in deciding on CSR practices that will further lead to their attractiveness among young graduates. In addition to this, corporate reputation will also be enhanced in the light of CSR. The aim of this paper is to identify the impact that corporate social responsibility put on one variable which is corporate reputation.

### The Research Questions

*Does corporate social responsibility impacts corporate reputation among Generation Y?*

Overall, this study is an attempt to identify the relationship between corporate social responsibility and corporate reputation with special reference to Generation Y working or willing to work in Indian corporate sector. The scope of this study is restricted to Generation Y category youths in India. Before the empirical testing, literature review has been done to find and understand previous similar studies.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Concept of Corporate Social Responsibility

The definition of corporate social responsibility has been through a paradigm shift as different experts have given different dimensions to it. Due to difference in viewpoints regarding corporate social responsibility, we have got a pool of relationships that can be drawn through it (Refer Table 2)

**Table 2**  
**CSR and Related Terminologies (Waddock, 2004)**

<i>'Root Concepts' &amp; Subsets</i>	<i>Description/Definition</i>
Corporate Citizenship (CC) Business Citizenship	Manifested in the strategies and practices a company develops in operationalizing its relationships with and impacts on stakeholders and the natural environment. Similar to CC, involving the "broader perspective on business rights and duties, stakeholder relationships, opportunities, and challenges that accompany the global economy"
Corporate Responsibility (CR) Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	The degree of (ir) responsibility manifested in a company's strategies and operating practices as they impact stakeholders and the natural environment day to day. Subset of CR that deals with a company's voluntary relationships with its societal and community stakeholders. Frequently operationalized as community relations, philanthropic, multi-sector collaboration, or volunteer activities; falls into discretionary and ethical responsibilities of business (Carroll, 1991)
Corporate Social Performance (CSP)	CSR focusses on the principles of responsibility at the institutional, organizational and individual levels, the processes of responsiveness, and outcomes. CSP provides a framework for accessing business-society relationships.
Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984)	Posits that organizational responsibility/citizenship is manifested in decisions, actions, and impacts on stakeholders and the natural environment.
Corporate Community Relations (CCR) or Involvement (CCI)	A boundary-spanning corporate function that encompasses relationship-building with communities and "society" at large; usually includes corporate philanthropy, volunteer activities, in-kind giving, and multi-or intersector partnerships/collaboration.
Corporate Reputation (e.g., Fombrun, 1996, 2000)	Perceptions that companies' external and internal stakeholders have about strategies, practices, products/ services, corporate responsibility/citizenship, and performance across a broad range of stakeholder and environmental measures, not just financial measures.

Here is a collection of the most followed CSR definitions obtained from the literature review to showcase different meanings in which the concept has been understood (Table 3).

**Table 3**  
**Definitions of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)**

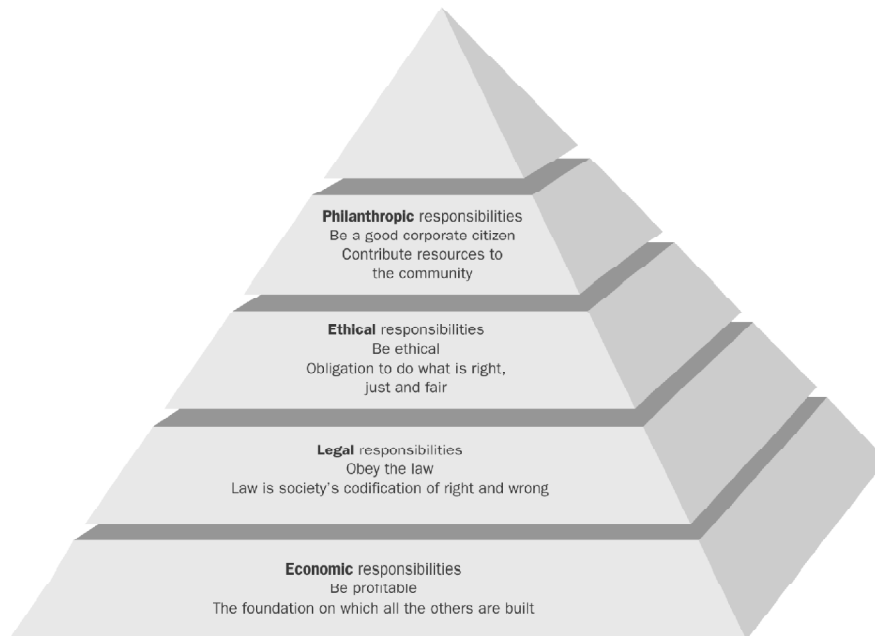
<i>Name</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Bowen (1953)	He defined CSR as “social responsibility of businessman”. “It refers to the obligations of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions or to follow those lines of actions which are desirable in terms of objectives and values of our society”
Friedman (1970)	He elaborated the concept of CSR and quoted that “there is one and only one social responsibility of business—to use its resources and to engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it stays within the rules of game, which is to say, engages in open and free competition without deception or fraud”
Carroll, 1991	Carroll is known as a creative name in the field of CSR. He showcased the meaning of CSR as a mixture of ethical, legal, economic and discretionary expectations of society. He quoted that “the social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time.

### **CARROLL’S CSR PYRAMID**

Carroll came up with a pyramid depicting all dimensions of corporate social responsibility. According to Carroll (1983: 608), “corporate social responsibility involves the conduct of a business so that it is economically profitable, law abiding, ethical and socially supportive. To be socially responsible then means that profitability and obedience to the law are foremost conditions when discussing the firm’s ethics and the extent to which it supports the society in which it exists with contributions of money, time and talent”.

In his pyramid, he included four main factors, namely philanthropic responsibilities, ethical responsibilities, legal responsibilities and economic responsibilities (Figure 1) The four layers of the pyramid helps the management to understand diverse societal obligations on an organization.

Figure 1: Carroll's pyramid



These can be explained as below:

- (1) **Economic Responsibility:** This aspect of the model is concerned with the responsibility of a business to produce those goods and services, which are demanded by the people in a society and would lead to generation of profit in return. Moreover, this has been the basic objective behind formation of organizations (Dahlsrud, 2008).
- (2) **Legal responsibility:** Legal responsibility lays emphasis on the fact that expectations of a society are not restricted to the profits, which an organization is making, but is also affected by the organization's liability towards legislations designed by federal, local and state governments (Moir, 2001).
- (3) **Ethical Responsibility:** As the name suggests, ethical responsibility stands for behaving in a socially-acceptable manner. According to Carroll (1991), ethical responsibility includes what is expected by society in addition to economic and legal expectations.
- (4) **Philanthropic Responsibility:** The philanthropic responsibility focuses on activities that would contribute to improving the quality of life of employees at an internal level and that of the communities and society at the external or mass level.

Another theory laying emphasis on the social responsibility of an organization was proposed by Waldman *et al.* (2004). The theory stated that there are certain aspects of CEO leadership, which laid emphasis on the responsibility of the business organization to engage in CSR activities.

### **CORPORATE REPUTATION: AN INTRODUCTION**

The variable taken in the study is corporate reputation, which is mostly misunderstood as corporate image. Corporate reputation is somewhat related to corporate image, but it is majorly based on public judgments. People generally make judgements on several basis such as reliability, consistency and trust worthiness of an organization (Bennett & Rentschler, 2003).

Corporate reputation can be measured using various factors, which are called as the determinants of factors that have been defined as a determinant of corporate reputation. The reason for increasing importance of its reputation for any organization is that it is an important attribute that plays a crucial role in the success of an organization. Hence, the organizations are expected to come up with a measure to find out and alter its reputation as per the scenario.

For effective measurement of reputation of an organization, a widely accepted framework was proposed by Fombrun, A., Gardberg, & Barnett (2000). According to them, there are six major dimensions on which reputation can be measured. Further to explain these six dimensions, twenty attributes were identified.

These dimensions for computing reputation are:

1. **Social and Environmental Responsibility:** This includes perception of the people on the standards of a company with respect to dealing with people, contribution to the society as well the environment in which it prevails.
2. **Emotional Appeal:** Emotional appeal encompasses liking, respect and admiration of the people for an organization. The three main attributes on which emotional appeal of the people can be measured are Have a good feeling about company, admiration and respect for the company and the trust in the company.
3. **Products and Services:** This dimension of corporate reputation is all about the perception people carry about the quality of the products and services offered by an organization. The four attributes of measuring this reputation dimension are: organizations standing behind its products and services, capability to develop innovative products and services, the quality of goods and services offered and value of money received.
4. **Vision and Leadership:** As the name suggests, it considers the vision of the organization and leadership capabilities to administer that vision.

Three attributes to measuring vision and leadership are: number of excellent leaders, having clear vision of future and recognition of market opportunities.

5. **Workplace Environment:** This dimension of reputation can be judged by understanding the perception of people on the working environment rendered by an organization. Three major attributes to check the work environment conditions are well-managed environment, a reliable organization to work good organization to work and existence of exceptionally good employees.
6. **Financial Performance:** The financial performance relates to the people's perception on aspects such as competitiveness, growth areas, profitability and risk involved. There are four basic attribute to measure financial performance. These attributes include: financial record, involvement in low risk investment and excellent prospects of growth in near future and being at a competitive position.

#### **CORPORATE REPUTATION: LITERATURE REVIEW**

Corporate reputation has been an interest area of research among scholars and practitioners since quite a long time. It has been observed and researched that a company's inclination towards socially responsible practices puts an impact on its reputation among its existing and well as prospective employees and other related stakeholders and further impacts the success of a corporate (Fombrun, 1996). In fact, the concept of corporate reputation has been defined differently in different disciplines. In marketing disciplines (e.g., marketing strategy, relationship marketing, etc.) reputation illustrates the corporate associations that individuals establish with a company name" (Fombrun *et al.*, 2000). If we look at the concept of corporate reputation from the view of a strategic management concept, "it is a unique and non-imitable intangible asset depicting a firm's impression on its stakeholders (Shamma and Hasan, 2009).

Looking at the existence and relevance of corporate reputation from diverse fields, Fombrun and Van Riel (1997) came up with a holistic definition that defines corporate reputation as, "a collective representation of a firm's past actions and results that describes the firm's ability to deliver multiple stakeholders". Whenever there is a mention of the concept of corporate reputation, some of the most significant theories that are always referred include institutional theory, signaling theory, and resource based theory (Walker, 2010). The major contribution in the field of corporate reputation by the signaling theory is that it well-explains the impact of strategic choices made by an organization on the signals that a firm projects to its diverse stakeholders that further contributes to reputation building (Basdeo *et al.*, 2006). On the other hand, the institutional theory lays emphasis on gaining cultural support towards building a healthy reputation of the firms (Deephouse and Carter, 2005).

## **EMPLOYER ATTRACTION: A VIEW FROM GENERATION Y PERSPECTIVE**

The key to creating effective workplace policies is in understanding the characteristics of all three generations (Kovary and Buahene, 2005). Hence, it can be concluded that the way in which an organization handles generational diversity gives it a competitive advantage over the competitors and hence, ensure better talent attraction and retention.

Referring to the Tulgan study, there are six major findings that would set the stage for the emerging workforce:

- Work has become more demanding on employees.
- Employer-Employee relationships have become less hierarchical and more transactional.
- Employers are moving away from long-term employment relationships.
- Employees have less confidence in long-term rewards and greater expectations for short-term rewards.
- Supervisors are now the most important people in the workplace.
- Supervising employees now requires more time and skill.

Based on the above mentioned findings, it can be concluded that Generation Y forms the major workforce population in any organization and hence, they would be required to match their skills to the nature of work and the workplace culture.

This theory considered trends that balance social structure, social and human capital growth, lifelong learning, and a promotion of self, workplace flexibility and creating an organizational identity. By creating such a model the company became "the employer of choice" and appears to be an attractive and modern corporation" (Jorgensen, 2005a).

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Sample Size and Population**

A sample size of 30-500 is acceptable in social sciences Sekaran (2003). The Generation Y employees included in the study were selected on the basis of convenience while distributing the questionnaires. 200 questionnaires were distributed among the Generation Y employees, out of which 147 were included in the study.

### **Data Analysis**

Data analysis after data collection is important in order to empirically prove the relationship between variables taken into consideration.



The data analysis tool used for this study was SPSS, which is an acronym for statistical package for social scientist. The questionnaire was designed in such a way that all questions could be answered and recorded on a five-point Likert scale (rank questions). The codes that were used for the data were: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree and 5=Strongly Agree. Out of the total 200 questionnaires, 147 were included in the study and rest were excluded either due to non-response or incomplete data. Further, data analysis technique used includes measuring frequencies, descriptive analysis and Linear Regression analysis.

### **Research Model**

In the study, there were two kinds of variables: dependent variable (on whose the impact of other variables is checked and are actually being measured) and the independent variable (those which put an impact on others, but are independent and are manipulated by the researchers). A variable is an empirical equivalent of some construct (Roger D. Wimmer, 2010). In this study, there is one independent variable, which is corporate social responsibility, and one dependent variable, which are corporate reputation.

### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

The purpose of this research is both descriptive and explanatory, wherein the impact of corporate social responsibility is seen on two variables. The reason for the research to be explanatory is that hypothesis testing is involved and for being descriptive is that there is prior literature available wherein this relationship is understood. "A hypothesis is a conjectural statement of the relation between two or more variables" (Kerlinger, 1956).

### **Hypothesis for the Study**

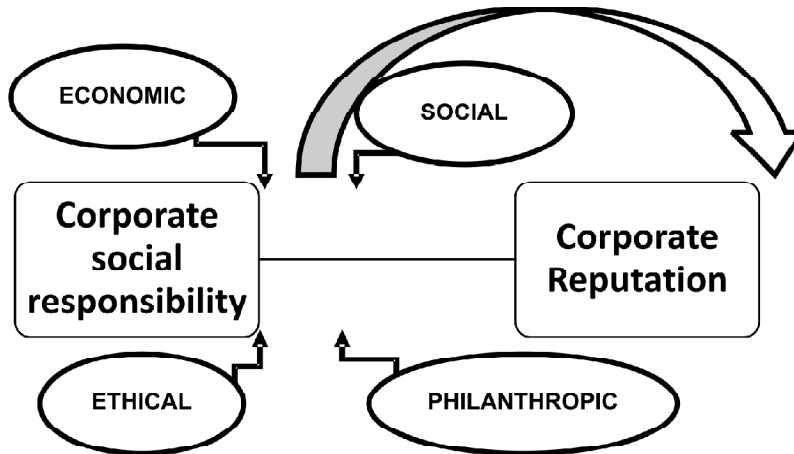
$H_0$ : Corporate Social Responsibility does not positively impact Corporate Reputation.

$H_1$ : Corporate Social Responsibility positively impacts Corporate Reputation.

As shown in Figure 2, the model is designed during the study depicting relationship between corporate social responsibility, corporate reputation and retention

**Data collection Instrument:** The data used in the study include both primary as well as secondary data. The secondary sources used include previous research papers, articles and other related documents. The data collection instruments used for collecting primary data is structured questionnaire. The questionnaire included 15 statements, wherein seven statements were on corporate social responsibility (Dimensions included the four elements of Carroll's pyramid) and eight on

Figure 2: Corporate Social Responsibility and Corporate Reputation Model



corporate reputation (Reputation Quotient scale proposed by (Fombrun, A., Gardberg, & Barnett, 2000). In addition to these 15 statements, three questions on demographic profile relevant to gender, experience, name of the organization and age were included in the questionnaire.

## DATA ANALYSIS RESULTS

### Reliability

Reliability test was performed on all variables included in the study. Value of Cronbach alpha is accepted as a measure of reliability. The value of alpha was computed using SPSS.

Table 4  
Reliability Test

Overall	0.892
Corporate Social Responsibility	0.751
Corporate Reputation	0.79

Source: Authors' Computation

According to Nunnally & Bernstein (1994), the value of Cronbach's alpha should be more than 0.7 to be considered reliable. The results indicate value of overall alpha as 0.89 and individually of other variables greater than 0.7, hence the data is reliable.

**Statistical Method Used:** Descriptive (Measure of central tendency and inferential statistics) and inferential statistics (generalization of sample) are the

two types of statistical methods that are used for variable testing. In inferential statistical analysis, linear regression has been performed.

**Descriptive Statistics:** This statistical measure is adopted to interpret the nature of respondents and the same is done through interpreting the values of Mean and standard deviation.

The mean value, as the name suggests is average of the responses recorded on five-point Likert scale. Mean value of 3 is acceptable in statistics. Standard deviation indicates variation from the mean value. In general, a lower value of standard deviation indicates that variable is normally distributed.

**Table 5**  
**Corporate Social Responsibility and Corporate Reputation**

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>N</i>
Corporate Social Responsibility	3.64	0.761	65
Corporate Reputation	3.36	0.637	65

Source: Authors' Computation

Mean value for corporate social responsibility, M=3.64, hence, this is acceptable.

Value of Standard deviation for corporate social responsibility, SD=0.761 depicts that data was normally distributed and is seen to be around the mean value.

Mean value for corporate reputation, M= 3.36 was significant.

Value of standard deviation for corporate reputation, SD= 0.637 proved normal distribution.

**Inferential Statistics:** As stated above, the test applied for calculating inferential statistics was linear regression and the same was applied in designing the model proposed in the study.

### Corporate Social Responsibility and Corporate Reputation

In the model, the linkage shows between CSR and reputation. Regression analysis is performed for testing the model.

**Table 7**  
**Corporate Social Responsibility and Corporate Reputation- Model Summary**

<i>Model</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R Square</i>	<i>Adjusted R Square</i>	<i>Std. Error of the Estimate</i>	<i>Change Statistics</i>				
					<i>R Square Change</i>	<i>F Change</i>	<i>df1</i>	<i>df2</i>	<i>Sig. F Change</i>
1	0.526 <sup>a</sup>	0.182	0.169	.694	.182	13.976	1	63	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Corporate Reputation

Source: Authors' Computation

ANOVA table present value of F-statistics = 13.976, which is quite large than 1 to state that there is an impact of independent variable on dependent variable.

**Table 8**  
ANOVA<sup>b</sup>

<i>Model</i>	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>Degree of freedom</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Regression	6.722	1	6.722	13.976	.000 <sup>a</sup>
Residual	30.302	63	.481		
Total	37.025	64			

<sup>a</sup>. Predictors: (Constant), Corporate Reputation

<sup>b</sup>. Dependent Variable: Corporate Social Responsibility

Source: Authors' Computation

**Table 9**  
Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

	<i>Unstandardized Coefficients</i>		<i>Standardized Coefficients</i>		
	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Beta</i>		
(Constant)	1.932	.465		4.157	.000
Corporate Reputation	.509	.136	.426	3.738	.000

<sup>a</sup>. Dependent Variable: Corporate Social Responsibility

Source: Authors' Computation

Level of dependence of Corporate Reputation on CSR can be determined by Coefficients table. Table showed that CSR affect Corporate Reputation 42%. It is significant at 1%.

## DISCUSSION

### Corporate Reputation and Corporate Social Responsibility

The relationship between corporate reputation and corporate social responsibility can be interpreted from the value of adjusted R-square. Moreover, ANOVA showing F-Statistics value indicates that there is significant relationship between CSR and corporate reputation. Coefficient table tells a standardized beta value of 43% stating 43% variance is due to CSR. There are existing papers that have already shown this relationship. (Ali & Ali, 2011; Schnietz & Epstein, 2005) correlated reputation with CSR, financial performance and behaviour of the consumer. According to some researchers (Alsop, 2004; M. L. Barnett, Jermier, & Lafferty, 2006; Fombrun, 1996), corporate reputation is measured using 6-dimensions of the reputation quotient and these dimensions relate reputation to corporate social responsibility.

It can be said that corporate social responsibility and corporate reputation are strongly correlated as reputation of an organization builds through the CSR activities it is engaged in to a great extent. It won't be wrong to state that CSR is one of the important determinants of corporate reputation. Corporate reputation comes into picture with respect to the external stakeholders.

There are several issues through which CSR might put an impact on corporate reputation by performing in an ethically, economically and socially acceptable manner.

### **Implications**

The study has made an attempt to elaborate the relationship between corporate social responsibilities (CSR) on reputation with special reference to Generation Y in Indian context. The study comes up with empirical evidence highlighting the relation between corporate social responsibility and corporate reputation. In addition to these, impact of CSR has been studied on the reputation by using the corporate reputation-quotient scale.

It can be counted as a small effort to add to this relationship. Although the sample is not large, but further research can be done by widening the scope of research to get more generalized results.

### **CONCLUSION**

Corporate social responsibility is a multi-faceted term and has been discussed a lot for last some decades. It is inevitable part of a business for sustainability and economic growth. It is absurd to strive for success and overlooking CSR factor in this era of competition. Pakistan is a country in which CSR is in his infancy stage. People are not aware of CSR notion and its worldwide prominence. This study has three purposes to answer the vital role of CSR in organization. 147 respondents were used as a sample size to arrive at conclusion of two proposed models. Launching innovative and quality products, attaining a fair financial performance, possessing plausible leadership attributes, performing in accordance with social and environmental responsibilities lead to embedding corporate reputation with corporate social responsibility.

This study shows that in the Indian context, Generation Y, while choosing their workplace, would prefer employers who are actively involved in corporate social responsibility initiatives and hence, are capable of providing growth opportunities both on career and on personal front. Importance of company image also plays an important role in balancing the employee's social life. The study opened new avenues for consideration of CSR policies and their communication. Limitations of study are area, sector, sample size, analysis techniques and time limits. Study is helpful for further research in different industries and on a different set of population.

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