

# Exploring the relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Organisational Profitability-A study of the UAE Manufacturing Industry

<sup>1</sup>Sarwat Jahan, Ibrahim Alrajawy

## **Abstract**

*Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is an important and strategic tool for an organisation to maintain its sustainability and creating a trustful and good image in the market as well as for their customers. The rationale of the CSR and organisation's profitability is that all of the enterprises gain their benefits from the society that is why the organisations are required to return the benefits in other ways back to the society and the environment. This research is about examining the impact of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on the organisation profitability, and the research shows that CSR has a positive impact on the organisation's profit. The sample size for this research is 150, for conducting the survey from the employees of the UAE manufacturing industry, and the sample size is 10 for the interviews conducted from the managers of the industry. Both primary and secondary sources of information are used and mix approach of qualitative and quantitative analysis is considered. The quantitative analysis for this research is based on the correlation, regression and descriptive analysis to show the link between the variables and the intensity of their relationship is also determined, and the qualitative research design is thematically analysed.*

**Keywords:** *Corporate Social Responsibility, Organizational profitability, UAE Manufacturing industry, environmental focus*

## **I. Introduction**

The interests of investors and the activities of managers of any business enterprise must be structured by the laws of economics, requiring adequate financial return on investments made, in practice, an enterprise's operations must be guided by a much larger set of goals that are currently defined under the term Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) (Roth, 2018.). According to Laudon (2016), any business cannot gain profit or succeed if in a society that fails to provide the services to the environment. Therefore, it makes it clear that a

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<sup>1</sup> Lincoln University College, Selangor, Malaysia

business entity is interested in the good health and well-being of a society of which it is a member. Most specifically, in this era of mass interaction and emergent focus on openness, consumers of any product or service are unlikely to feel comfortable with purchasing from a business that is seen to breach ethical and socially responsible conduct standards (Bok, 2018). That is why with the increasing number of the organisations the social responsibilities are also increased, and the companies who value CSR are also valued by the consumers and their products, services and goods are preferred first.

In the following research, the impact of CSR on the profitability of an organisation is observed. The relationship between them is also highlighted in this research, moreover, the purpose of this research is to demonstrate conceptualization, measure and examine different concepts of organisation's profit and CSR.

## **II. Literature Review**

According to Khattak (2017), many organisations consider CSR a constraint, additional cost in their work and profit, but in reality, CSR is the opportunity for an organisation to revolutionise and gain the economic advantage. In the study conducted by Sparkes (2017), the money spent on CSR indicates that managers are primarily responsible for maximising the organisation's profit as they behave socially responsible. Moreover, according to Saeidi (2015), a positive relationship between CSR and financial performance using corporate social performance as a measure of CSR and return on investment (ROI), return on assets (ROA) and return on equity (ROE) as a measure of profitability or financial performance of the company. In fact, businesses participating in CSR have good financial results, as the opportunity to invest in socially responsible practices implies good managerial efficiency, and provides the business with assets that can be used for flexible investments. Most of the administrators consider that fulfilling corporate social responsibility improves the organisational profit.

It is also comprehended that the CSR promotes the respect of the corporate in a market, maximise sales, boost the employee's performance and loyalty and also attracts the potential investors to the company (Hur, 2018). CSR activities that focus on sustainability issues can also reduce the costs of the resource use, improve efficiencies and make the most of the profit, this can raise the stock price of the company, making equity and stock options for managers more lucrative and happier for investors. But there are also some cases in which CSR is not profitable to the organisation, study accompanied by Maak (2016), shows that CSR can be seen as a way to achieve the organisation's ultimate goal, which enhances shareholder returns but cannot be treated as a target itself. Organisations should balance the scarification of certain economic gains and the short-term gratification of their shareholders. When the organisation returns what it has gained from the environment, community and the society in an efficient way giving the using environmental friendly apparatus for the manufacturing process, providing improved and comfortable working conditions, by imposing gender equality in a workplace, corporate governance and improving the community and employee relationship always benefits the organisation in the profitable. And CSR also establishes the relationship of trust between the employee and an organisation.

According to De Grosbois (2016), a large number of companies are deeply committed to the concept and implementation of CSR in all areas of their sector. To sacrifice profits in the interests of society, to be a

victim, the organisation must, on a voluntary basis, go beyond its legal and predetermined obligations. CSR thus promotes a wide range of behaviours, such as being welcoming to staff, environmentally friendly, authorised, respectful of communities where the company's plants are located and even friendly to shareholders. The following definition of CSR has the potential to be consistent regarding some of the most important perspectives and by keeping in mind all the positive and fascinating normative responsibilities of a corporate. Moreover, Crane (2019), also discussed that some organisations take CSR as an example of good social behaviour of the corporate while others consider its implementation as sacrificing the profit of the company to the environment and society. And according to Escobar (2017), corporate social responsibility is to delight the shareholders and customers of an organisation efficiently and ethically by taking precautions about protecting the environment and should act responsibly accordingly. This implies that CSR is a way in which the businesses deal with different social issues in their areas of operation, individually or collectively to make the environment bearable.

Many profit organisations in the world only care about the money, the company sees some profit in something then they are attracted to it. According to the study conducted by Nagle (2017), describe that the organisations are always implementing and thinking new strategies that can benefit them and made them gain more money in various ways. The profitability of an organisation shows how demandable their products and services are in the market and customers, and the organisations peaking the limits of the profits are considered as successful organisations having long-term plans (Yan, 2018). Many strategies such as speeding up the cycle for the manufacturing of the product, minimising the activities that do not contribute to the company's profit, increasing the prices of the products, increasing the quality of the product to make it demandable and many other strategies are considered by an organisation to escalate the profit. The money-making process of the organisation is not easy but what matters the most that in any way the organisation profit must not harm the environment. The customers mostly prefer the products of an organisation that is not causing harm to nature (Roscoe, 2019). This implies that in order to make the organisation profitable not only the quality of the product matters but also the process of manufacturing those products should be environmentally friendly.

Society and the business is projected to find the business in the society, in which the CSR appears as a matter of interaction between two units that are the organisation and the environment (de Jong, 2017). According to Schmitz (2016), described that the many ways CSR increases the profit of the corporate, that is why many companies are engaged in CSR. However, it is also observed that linking the factors of the CSR that actually benefits the organisation is a challenging task to determine. The relationship between CSR and the organisation profitability is in such a way that the companies on different platforms and in different ways use the environment and the society to gain profit and make the organisation successful (Epstein 2018). Such as in the manufacturing industry the resources for the products are gained from the environment which benefits the organisation, therefore there also exists the responsibility of an organisation to favour the environment and the society in the same manner. But many organisations nowadays only focus on their profits and benefits gained from the environment is returned back to it in the form of various kind of pollution, for example, dumping waste and harmful materials as the by-product of the manufacturing process into the oceans, emission of harmful gases polluting the environment (Lacy, 2016). Therefore, it implies that the organisation's profit is important for the company, but also protecting the environment is equally important. Therefore, the organisational profit and CSR should go hand in hand with each other.

The employees and community relationships with the organisation in the CSR have emerged in recent years as a specialised area of activity involving CSR communication and reporting as well as community commitment initiatives (Wang, 2016). The overall objective of these activities for an organisation is to create positive and lasting relationships with the communities in which it works. For example, use approaches to save water and resources, recycling material, using precautions to eliminate harmful gases before releasing it in the atmosphere, proper dumping of waste, etc. develops the trust between the organisation's customers, employees, and community and eventually maximise the corporate's profitability.

### III. Research Model

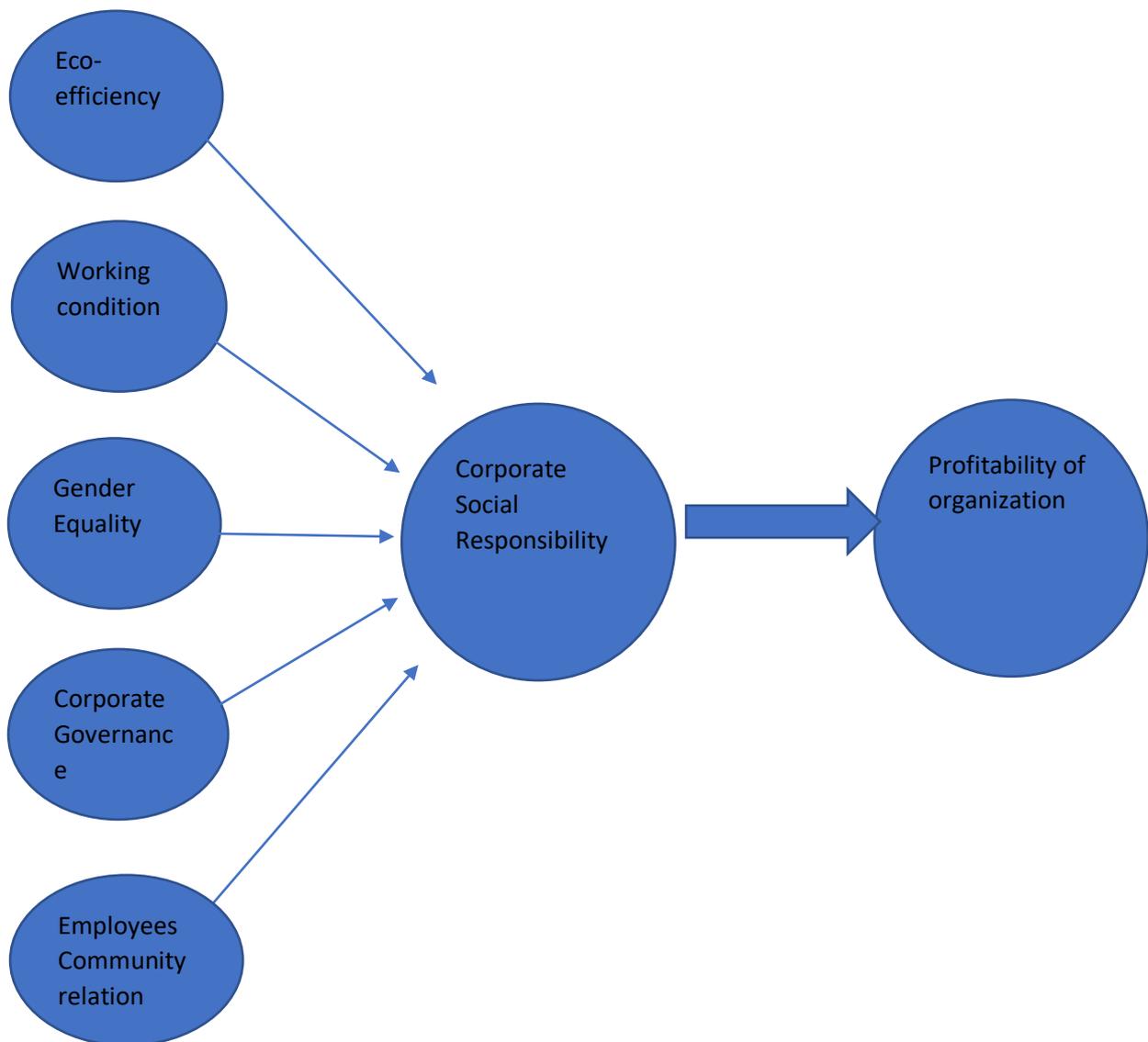


Figure1. Conceptual Framework

#### **IV. Methodology**

In this research, the mixed approach is used, which means that both the quantitative and qualitative research designs are used as well as the deductive approach is also under consideration. In the qualitative research design, the statistical or numbered outcomes are generated, which helps the corporates in their decision making procedure. Moreover, according to Castleberry (2018), the qualitative research design determines the quality of the research, it determines the research model is concerned with finding answers to the how's and why's of the phenomena in question. The qualitative research subjectively describes the outcomes, unlike the quantitative research which generates outcomes objectively.

For this research, the deductive approach is used as well, in which according to Rahi (2017), the purpose of the deductive approach is to examine the already existed theories. For the deductive approach the research starts with the relative theory of the research topic and then these theories are expressed as the assumption, further, the data is collected to test the theories and assumptions in order to gain the effective outcome of the research. The deductive method is more based on the cause and effects of the experimental factor and is therefore generally considered to check or confirm a hypothesis; extensive research design uses the deductive approach. The outcomes generated from these qualitative and quantitative research design for the impact of CSR on the company's profit is highlighted in the chapter of the findings.

For this research about determining the impact of CSR on the profitability of an organisation both primary and secondary sources of information are used. The primary data collection is based on the questionnaire survey and interviews, and according to Schilthuizen (2015), the primary data is collected through self-research about the topic, also targets the concerned issue of the research and interprets the data in a better way. For this research the primary data will be collected through a survey questionnaire and interviews conducted to the employees and managers of the UAE- manufacture sector that how CSR impacts the organisation profitability. The secondary data is collected through already published journals, books research papers available on the internet. The relevant data about the topic of the research is collected and then analysed, collecting the secondary data is not expensive and can also be obtained in a short period of time (Johnston, 2017).

In this research, convenience sampling is used. The convenience sampling is a kind of non-probabilistic sampling; it is easy because the people through which the data is collected are easily available, and in this research, the employees and managers of the UAE manufacture sector are easily reachable. The convenience sampling no doubt is very inexpensive, and it is extensively used and understood. But according to Etikan (2016), the variability and bias factor of the convenience sampling can never be measured, and also the outcomes sometimes cannot be generalised. In this research about the impact of CSR on the organisation profit, the sample size is 160 in total, which includes 150 employees of the UAE manufacture sector that will answer the questionnaire survey consisting of 15 questions in total is based on the Likert scale for the primary data collection. The Likert scale for the questionnaire survey provides a confident and precise response towards the research topic based on the rejection or the acceptance of the statement. The remaining sample size of 10 includes the manager of the UAE manufacture sector through which the interview comprising of 7 questions will be conducted. The survey questionnaire will be quantitatively analysed, whereas the interview results will give qualitative outcomes.

In this research the quantitative research design is based on the questionnaire survey will be analysed using the software namely SPSS and the data is descriptively analysed to generate statistical results. To find the relation between the dependent and independent variable and in this research the independent variable is CSR and the dependent variable is organisation's profit the correlation analysis is used, and to find the intensity of this relation the regression analysis is used. The qualitative analysis for this research is based on the data collected through the interviews which will be thematically analysed. According to Castleberry (2018), thematic analysis is a tool that can be used to visualise and familiarise the data in generating valuable outcomes for the research. as a group.

## **V. Findings and Discussions**

In this section, the methods of analysis are used to generate outcomes, for the qualitative research design thematic analysis is done first, and then for the quantitative research design descriptive analysis, correlation, and regression is used. For reliability analysis, Cronbach's Alpha value is also used.

Themes are trends across data sets that are relevant to explain phenomena associated with specific research questions are analysed using a thematic analysis. For the qualitative research thematic analysis is used, and for this research, the sample size is 10 managers of the UAE manufacture sector and the interview consists of the 7 questions about CSR and organisation profitability.

The overall findings highlighted the importance of CSR in the organisation, especially in the manufacturing companies, where there is a high role of CSR has resulted in the profitability rate. According to De Grosbois (2016), it is shared that CSR is highly contributing to managing the interaction between two high entities as this directly affects the profit rate of an organisation. Similar to this, it is observed by the responses of respondents that there is a high contribution of CSR activities to generate more sales rates and direct the business activities towards the large customer base. Added to this, it is observed that CSR activities and high involvement towards environment-friendly activities resultantly offer an increased chance to increase the revenue rate. In the view of Crane (2019), the companies having a focus towards CSR are more likely directed to the increased level of productivity as the customer-friendly environment as well as a high pollution-free environment help the manufacturing industry to achieve organisational goals. Added to this, majority of employees shared that companies having safe and environment-friendly working conditions are more preferred to retain the employees, even, the collected data revealed that working environment having better working condition allow the employees to reflect the productive workplace environment.

Considering the impact of CSR, it is observed that the highlighted effect of CS policies includes the organisational profitability where this can affect the number of aspects within an organisation (Nagle, 2017), as the data collected from respondents shared that CSR help to reduce the rate of gender equality. With this, it is observed that there is an improvement observed in the organisation in the form of equal opportunities towards a social and official workplace where it is found that employees are now more confident and competitive to deliver the working condition. Furthermore, it is observed that with the help of good and effective CSR practices, the manufacturing companies in the UAE are getting an opportunity to deal with more investors (Yan, 2018). The high interaction towards investors directly contributes to increasing the profitability

rate of the organisation. With the help of collected data or information, it is shared that the implementation of CSR practices is aligned with the policies of the UAE government as there is restriction towards gender equality. It is shared by the study of Roscoe (2019) that there is a positive relationship between CSR and the profitability rate of the organisation where the overall performance of an organisation is highly affected by the aspects including under CSR. It is also observed by the managers' viewpoint that there is considerable improvement observed in organisational profitability rate after the implementation of CSR.

It is summarised that consideration of CSR helps manufacturing companies of the UAE to increase the profitability rate of the organisation. On analysing the chapter of data analysis, it is observed that there are some highlighted factors that contributed to affect the organisational performance and ultimately the profitability rate of the manufacturing organisation. With the help of collected data, there is improvement observed in the working condition of employees, the management of gender equality, the focus towards corporate governance and the management of community relations. With this, it is concluded that there is a high impact of CSR on organisational performance where it gives a competitive advantage to business activities. Added to this, the collected data summarised that there is the high contribution of CSR to achieve the ultimate goals. The importance of CSR is highlighted in a way that the practices allow the organisation to use environment-friendly apparatus for the manufacturing process.

## **VI. Conclusion and Implications**

### **Conclusion**

The current study concludes that CSR helps to promote a wide range of business activities in an environment-friendly manner, this directly helps to attract more customers towards the services and products. With this, it is also concluded that CSR is the practice adopted by organisations to reflect the friendly relationship with stakeholders as well as with customers. The data collected by primary as well as secondary sources revealed that there is a high chance of profitability for the organisation followed the practices of CSR, even the viewpoint of customers and managers reflected the positive change in business activities of UAE manufacturing companies after the adoption of CSR. Added to this, it is observed that CSR help organisations to deal with different social issues in a productive manner as the overall business activities are managed easily to improve the environment. With the help of the current research study, it is observed that there is an effective link between corporate social responsibility and organisational profit where the implementation of CSR is highly focused to improve the decision-making practices as well as improve the overall social system.

Furthermore, it is observed that CSR adopted by manufacturing organisation helps to guide the management about the accurate as well and suitable way to use the resources. With the help of this research study, it is observed that the management in working condition is one of the factors of CSR that can affect the organisational profit. This can be done in a way that CSR practices and more friendly management criteria helps the manufacturing companies to work in a comfortable scenario. Added to this, there is a high chance to reflect employee performance with the help of CSR as the employees working in a friendly environment is more likely to give productive work.

Among the factors of CSR, it is observed that there is the management of corporate governance in order to deal with the stakeholders and other authorities related to business activities. It is concluded that CSR helps to create a better image of manufacturing companies by showing attractiveness towards the investment and other performance criteria. On analysing the impact of CSR on the organisational profitability, it is observed that there is accurate management of resources as well as it is effective decision making regarding the organisational profit. In other words, it is observed that there is a number of benefits related to the implementation of CSR including the promotion of respect for the corporate advantage as well as for the increased revenue in sales rate.

On analysing the overall findings, it is observed that there is a high need for business policies and profitability formulas followed by the manufacturing companies of the UAE. With the help of financial planning and sustainable planning for managing the profitability rate will help the UAE organisations to deliver more satisfying services. Added to this, it is recommending to the manufacturing company that there is a need to design more innovative and effective CSR program that will help to deal with better management policies. As it is observed that the CSR program will help to formulate the chances for manufacturing companies in the UAE to manage the activities of organisations. With these recommendations, it is added to show some consideration towards the practices of CSR that are in favour of society and the community. It is observed that there is a need to develop a framework that highly beneficial for the interest of the community or society. With this, there is a need to concern the growth rate of manufacturing companies, this will help the company to select the most suitable CSR policies or practices. With the help of financial policies and the suitable selection of the CSR framework, there is a high chance for the manufacturing company to increase the financial position in order to improve the performance of an organisation.

### **Implications**

After conducting the research study, it is observed that the findings and collected data will definitely help the management of the organisation to design a suitable CSR framework in the respective organisation. With the research study and the examination of overall findings, it will easy for the organisation to get the benefits of CSR with respect to the activities of companies. With this, the benefits of CSR framework will help the organisation to know about the importance of this framework that how it contributes to increasing the profitability rate of the organisation. Furthermore, it is observed that the study related to the implementation of CSR will help the management in order to aware them about maintaining the relationship with stakeholders. The highlighted implication for the future with respect to this research study includes the analysis of profitability that how an organisation can develop the profitability rate with the help of a CSR framework.

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