

STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTING CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN SUPPORTING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY: A THEORETICAL STUDY

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Abstract

This theoretical review of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) implementation strategies in support of environmental sustainability highlights the importance of CSR integration into a company's business strategy, stakeholder engagement, and government policy support. The study emphasises that by making social and environmental responsibility an integral part of a company's vision and mission, as well as involving stakeholders in the process of planning and implementing environmentally friendly initiatives, the effectiveness of CSR programmes can be increased. In addition, supportive policies and regulations from the government will create a conducive environment for companies to implement sustainable practices. The synergy of these various elements is expected to strengthen the role of CSR in environmental conservation in an effective and sustainable manner.

Keywords: Strategy, Implementation, Corporate Social Responsibility, Environmental Sustainability.

Introduction

Sustainable business approaches are increasingly the focus of attention in this era of globalisation. A clean and healthy environment is at the core of societal well-being and economic sustainability. However, ever-increasing levels of pollution and environmental degradation suggest that environmental protection should be a top priority (Issa & Bensalem, 2022). In this context, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) emerges as an important mechanism that can assist companies in their contribution to environmental sustainability.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a concept whereby companies voluntarily take on responsibilities beyond mere legal compliance to contribute to environmental and social well-being. The concept has evolved over time and has become widely accepted as a core part of business operations. CSR is not only an important element in a company's strategy to improve image and reputation, but it also helps in addressing various environmental and social challenges facing the world today (Issa & Hanaysha, 2023).

The definition and importance of CSR in environmental sustainability has been presented by various experts and international organisations. CSR focuses on the three main pillars of sustainability: ecological, economic, and social, often referred to as the triple bottom line. By integrating CSR in business strategies, companies can play a key

role in creating enabling conditions for sustainable development (Arayakarnkul et al., 2022).

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) plays a crucial role in promoting environmental sustainability. By taking responsibility beyond mere regulatory compliance, companies can contribute directly to reducing the negative impacts of their operations on the environment (Winarno et al., 2024). For example, by adopting sustainable business practices such as good waste management, energy efficiency, and the use of environmentally friendly raw materials, companies can help lower carbon emissions and minimise pollution. In addition, CSR can encourage green innovation and introduce environmentally friendly technologies that can accelerate the transition to a sustainable economy (Ngamvilaikorn et al., 2024).

Not only does CSR contribute to environmental sustainability, it also brings benefits to the company itself. Effective implementation of CSR can improve a company's image and reputation in the eyes of consumers and other stakeholders. Modern consumers tend to be more appreciative and loyal to companies that show concern for environmental and social issues. In addition, companies that are actively involved in CSR activities usually find it easier to secure investment from parties concerned with sustainable business practices. Thus, CSR not only helps maintain the health of the environment but also increases the competitiveness and business continuity of the company in the long run (Tresnawati, 2021).

However, in the field, the implementation of CSR often faces many challenges and obstacles. Starting from limited resources, lack of management support, to lack of knowledge and awareness of the importance of environmental initiatives. Therefore, an in-depth theoretical study is needed to find out the best strategies and practices in effective and efficient CSR implementation in supporting environmental sustainability (Dathe et al., 2022).

Therefore, this study aims to analyse CSR implementation strategies that can support environmental sustainability, identifying the obstacles faced. Thus, it is expected that this research can contribute both academically and practically in understanding and implementing effective and sustainable CSR for the benefit of the environment.

Research Methods

The study in this research uses the literature method. The literature research method is an approach used to collect and analyse information that already exists in the form of written publications, such as books, journals, articles, reports, and other documents. The main purpose of this method is to understand and integrate existing knowledge, identify trends, gaps, and various perspectives related to certain research topics (Firman, 2018); (Suyitno, 2021). This process involves critically reviewing relevant sources, categorising findings by specific themes or categories, and compiling a

comprehensive synthesis to provide a holistic view of the subject under study. As such, the literature research method allows researchers to build a strong theoretical foundation and inform the direction and design of further research (Jelahut, 2022).

Results and Discussion

CSR Implementation Strategies Can Support Environmental Sustainability

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is the commitment of companies to behave ethically, contribute to sustainable economic development, and improve the quality of life of their employees, families, local communities, and society at large. In practice, CSR includes policies and actions intended to prevent negative impacts on the environment and society and support practices that have positive social and environmental impacts (Mohy-ud-Din et al., 2024). As such, CSR is not only about complying with applicable legal regulations, but also involves proactive efforts to go beyond such compliance by adding ethical values and social responsibility into daily business operations.

The basic concept of CSR stems from the premise that companies have a responsibility not limited to profitability alone, but also to social and environmental well-being. The essential elements of CSR include three main aspects: economic, social, and environmental which is often referred to as the 'triple bottom line'. The economic aspect emphasises the importance of efficient and sustainable management, the social aspect covers how companies interact and impact society, while the environmental aspect relates to how companies manage their impact on natural ecosystems. These three aspects must be balanced to ensure long-term business sustainability (Zeng et al., 2023).

The implementation of CSR in a company can be realised through various initiatives and programmes. For example, companies can implement carbon emission reduction programmes, recycling initiatives, and energy efficiency to reduce their environmental footprint. On the social side, companies can support education, health, and community well-being through philanthropic projects, skills development, and fair and inclusive work practices (Farooq et al., 2020). On the economic aspect, CSR encourages transparent, fair, and ethical business practices that ultimately not only strengthen positive relationships with customers and stakeholders, but also enhance a company's competitiveness and reputation in the global market (Vargas-Santander et al., 2023).

Then, environmental sustainability is a concept that refers to the management and maintenance of natural resources so that they remain available and able to support life on earth in a sustainable manner for current and future generations. The basic principle of environmental sustainability is to ensure that the use of natural resources—such as water, air, soil, and biodiversity—does not exceed their regenerative capacity and does not result in irreversible damage to ecosystems. To achieve environmental

sustainability, environmentally friendly practices and policies must be implemented, such as resource conservation, waste and pollution reduction, and the adoption of renewable energy to reduce carbon footprint. Thus, environmental sustainability aims to create a balance between human needs and the preservation of nature so that life on this planet remains harmonious and sustainable (Borger & Costa, 2022).

The ecological pillar of sustainability emphasises the importance of maintaining the sustainability of ecosystems and natural resources that sustain life on earth. This includes practices that aim to protect the environment from degradation, reduce pollution and support biodiversity conservation. This may include wise use of natural resources, effective waste management, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Water conservation, forest preservation and wildlife habitat protection are also part of the ecological focus. In essence, the ecological pillar invites us to understand that human well-being depends on the health and sustainability of the natural environment (Belas et al., 2020).

The economic pillar of sustainability focuses on developing economic systems that are not only environmentally sustainable but also capable of creating long-term prosperity for society. This means designing efficient, innovative and inclusive economic models, where resources are optimally utilised without damaging nature's regenerative capacity (Wu & Jin, 2022). The economic pillar also emphasises the importance of business responsibility and ethics, including sustainable production and consumption practices. This includes accounting for environmental and social costs in the production process, encouraging a circular economy, and supporting the development of green technologies that can reduce negative impacts on the environment (Hadi et al., 2024).

The social pillar of sustainability highlights the importance of building a just, inclusive and cohesive society. These social aspects include the creation of decent work, the protection of human rights, improved access to education and health, and the eradication of poverty. The basic principle of the social pillar is to ensure that every individual has an equal opportunity to enjoy the fruits of development and prosperity (Orazalin & Baydauletov, 2020). It also means involving communities in decision-making processes that affect their lives and ensuring active participation from all walks of life. The social pillar plays an important role in supporting stability and harmony in society, which ultimately contributes to overall sustainability (Saenz, 2022).

An effective CSR implementation strategy can play an important role in supporting environmental sustainability by integrating environmentally friendly practices into business operations. Companies can adopt a greener approach by conducting environmental audits to assess the impact of their operations on the ecosystem. Based on the results of these audits, they can develop and implement policies that focus on reducing their carbon footprint, energy efficiency, and better waste management. For example, companies can invest in renewable energy

technologies, reduce their use of fossil fuels, and implement recycling programmes in their offices and production facilities (Ullah et al., 2021).

In addition to internal actions, companies can also support environmental sustainability through partnerships and collaboration with environmental organisations, NGOs, and government agencies. Through these partnerships, companies can contribute to conservation projects, habitat restoration and preservation of natural resources. They can also participate in global initiatives to fight climate change, such as commitments to the goals set out in the Paris Agreement. Afforestation programmes, forest protection, and environmentally friendly supply chain policies are other examples of how external collaboration can amplify the positive environmental impact of CSR (Xiao & Park, 2021).

Furthermore, companies should also play their role in educating and inspiring employees, customers, and the wider community about the importance of environmental sustainability. By conducting awareness campaigns, training, and volunteerism programmes, companies can build an overarching culture of sustainability. For example, employees can be involved in tree planting, environmental clean-ups or water conservation programmes.

Constraints in the implementation of CSR related to the environment

Although Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has great potential to support environmental sustainability, its implementation often faces various obstacles. One of the main obstacles is high cost. Implementing green initiatives such as investing in green technology or implementing sustainable operating procedures often requires significant funds (Xiao & Park, 2021). For companies that have limited budgets or are in highly competitive industries, resource allocation for CSR initiatives can be challenging. This can hinder a company's ability to fully implement necessary green measures (Park & Park, 2021).

In addition to cost, the lack of understanding and awareness of environmental issues among top-level management and employees is also a significant obstacle. Many companies may not fully realise the importance of CSR initiatives for environmental sustainability or how to implement them effectively. Without support and participation from all levels of the organisation, CSR efforts often cannot be thoroughly integrated into a company's business strategy. This makes CSR programmes less effective and sustainable in the long run (Luo & Wu, 2022).

Another obstacle often encountered is government regulations and policies that do not support or even conflict with green initiatives. In some cases, existing regulations may not be clear or comprehensive enough to encourage companies to adopt more sustainable business practices. In addition, cumbersome bureaucracy and time-consuming permits can hinder companies from implementing progressive environmental programmes. The lack of government incentives to support green

practices can also make companies less motivated to invest in such initiatives (Tian & Tian, 2022).

Lastly, companies often face pressure from stakeholders, such as shareholders, who expect maximum profits in the short term, so they may be reluctant to support long-term investments in environmental sustainability. In this situation, environmentally responsible business practices may be viewed as an additional burden rather than a strategic investment. Stakeholders' lack of understanding of the long-term benefits of CSR may also prevent companies from fully adopting environmental sustainability programmes (Roche & Baumgartner, 2024).

Overall, constraints to the implementation of environment-related CSR can be overcome through strong commitment from company leaders, increased awareness of the importance of environmental sustainability, government policy support, and effective communication with stakeholders. With the right approach, companies can overcome these challenges and contribute more significantly to environmental sustainability.

Conclusion

In the theoretical study of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) implementation strategies to support environmental sustainability, there are several main conclusions that can be drawn. First, the importance of integrating CSR into a company's business strategy occupies a central position. Policies and programs must be well designed, aligned with the company's vision and mission, and supported by all levels of management. By making social and environmental responsibility part of the corporate strategy, companies can be more effective in implementing these environmentally friendly initiatives.

Second, stakeholder involvement is a crucial aspect in the success of CSR implementation. Companies need to build open and transparent communication with stakeholders, including employees, customers, local communities, and shareholders. Collaboration with various parties can help identify and prioritize relevant environmental issues, and ensure that the CSR programs developed truly have a positive impact on environmental sustainability and receive broad support.

Finally, support from government policies and regulations is very important to create a conducive business environment for CSR implementation. The government needs to create a clear regulatory framework, provide incentives for companies that adopt environmentally friendly practices, and apply strict sanctions for violations. Thus, companies will be more motivated to implement sustainable CSR programs and contribute more significantly to environmental preservation.

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