

# MEASUREMENT OF DIMENSIONS OF CSR INITIATIVES IN AUTOMOTIVE SECTOR IN INDIA

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## ABSTRACT

*The corporate scandals and scams challenging the protection of interests of stakeholder groups have highlighted the significance of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) all the more and the study of the concept has become of utmost prominence for the corporate worldwide. The present study seeks to develop and validate a construct of Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives in automotive sector in India through a sample of 152 middle and high level managers of the sample automotive companies on a 5-point Likert Scale. Exploratory factor analysis was then applied to develop the measurement tool for identifying dimensions of measuring CSR. A total of 36 dimensions selected on the basis of literature were reduced to 30 indicator variables and three latent variables: Social, Environmental and Financial which were subject to CFA with AMOS22.*

*Keywords: Corporate Social responsibility, Social dimensions, Environmental dimensions, Financial dimensions.*



## INTRODUCTION

Corporate Social Responsibility is not a mere business buzzword or a fad, rather one of the most promising management topics of mounting significance for companies (Ribers 2010). Although, a huge amount of ambiguity and uncertainty about the real meaning of corporate social responsibility and the drivers for the business to pursue it exists (Abiodun2012), the theme is rapidly flourishing on the domestic and global schema of the corporate sector (Khurana 2011) and has long existence in India. The term CSR conceptualizes analyzing the interdependent relationships existing between economic systems, corporations and the community (Uddin and Hassan 2008). Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as a common corporate parlance has proven a foothold in nations which are developing with businesses committing to advance the societal and economic standing of numerous stakeholders by complying with all legal and economic requirements (Krishnan and Balachandran 2010). CSR embraces responsibility for the company's actions and encourages a positive impact through its activities on the environment and its stakeholders (Prateek and Chandan 2010), representing a differentiating factor that may be used successfully by firms to distinguish themselves within their industries (Hill et al, 2006). It is vital for the corporate sector to realise the triple bottom-line effect: profits, protection of environment and fight for social justice of every CSR activity

(Berad 2011). CSR is the DNA of a company and is a business decision responsible for its financial sustainability and value creation of the operating business. Hence, the companies try to trim down the negative impacts and maximize the positive impacts for their benefit and that of the society as well. CSR, generally called charity (Sharma 2011) by the corporate does not treat corporate growth and social welfare as a zero-sum game rather focus and voluntarily assume doing well for the community, the society, the environment and all other aspects (Singh 2010). The CSR dialogue has in last few years taken a new turn because of various regulatory requirements such as Business Responsibility Reporting arising out of the National Voluntary Guidelines for Social and Environmental Responsibility and CSR provisions under the Companies Bill. This has started a new discussion within the business sectors on the appropriate paradigm for CSR. Basically, corporate social responsibility is how companies manage their business processes to produce an overall positive impact on society. However, what constitutes corporate social responsibility varies from company to company, place to place and over the time, as there have been conflicting expectations of the nature of companies' responsibility to society. It is increasingly accepted that in order to define precisely what social responsibility means to a company, it needs to engage with its stakeholders and take into account their needs and aspirations when designing CSR strategies and programmes. The companies may internally adopt employee welfare

activities; but when it comes to external stakeholders they may adopt community & society welfare, environmental protection etc. Even the automotive industry, has to meet the challenges allied with rapid depletion and the mounting cost of fossil fuels, the negative impact of vehicles on the environment and climate change. These are areas of severe concern not only to the Governments worldwide but also to industry experts and automotive leaders across the globe. The CSR initiatives taken by these companies are one step to get an edge over other corporates in the competitive world.



**LITERATURE REVIEW**

The global development of the concept of CSR has led to more and more researchers pay their attention for CSR in the field of business practices.

GhoshSumona (2015) undertook an empirical and analytical study to explore pattern of corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities disclosures made by the private sector companies in the company documents available publicly. The companies' websites were analyzed for the time period of two years and 'number of sentences' was used as the measurement unit of CSR participation. Pearson's correlation, multiple regression analysis and conjoint analysis was applied and the results showed that major contributing and preferred CSR areas were education, environment and health.

BalaMadhu and Singh Narendra (2014) studied and analysed the similarities between the CSR practices or components across private Indian companies, MNCs and public sector companies using Factor analysis. It was analysed that employee welfare, environmental and natural resources protection, community development and affairs are the CSR factors identified by private Indian companies. The MNCs identified employee development & safety, community welfare, law and compliance, environment protection, generation of employment and community support as the factors affecting CSR and public sector undertakings listed employee welfare and social support, sustainable development, community development.

ValmohammadiChangiz (2014), in his study of 207 Iranian organisations provided valid constructs of CSR and a measurement instrument of the core subjects of ISO 26000 standard. The practices like community involvement and development plays an important role in enhancing organizational performance of organizations.

ZaborekPiotr (2014) explored the link between social responsibility involvement and financial performance among Polish small and medium manufacturing companies in food, beverage and cosmetics industries. A structural model was developed and tested on the data from a survey of 187 managers. The outcomes suggested a weak but statistically significant positive correlation between the CSR involvement construct and sales profit margin, no discernible direct effect of CSR on ROA.

Sophie Hadfield-Hill (2014) explored CSR focusing on the banking sector in the Indian context. The study highlighted four levels of CSR engagement which currently exist in the day-to-day operations of Indian companies. Patnaree Srisuphaolarn(2013) investigated the CSR Practices in Thailand corporations and revealed that social and environmental issues are not as important as social and religious values are to the business' core activities.

Khan and Hassan (2013) examined the annual reports descriptively and it was observed that companies CSR activities cover at least two or three pages and companies are involved in approximately three or four areas concerning these activities but not completely covering the monetary aspect. He major areas were quantity consumed on CSR activities or donations.

Gamerschlag Ram et.al (2010) examined company's profitability and firm size as the dimensions affects the CSR disclosure. It was observed that a higher level of environmental disclosures was made by the "polluting industries" companies the disclosure by small companies was less than that by big companies.

SalehMustaruddin and MuhamadRusnah (2010) using longitudinal data analysis, examined the link of CSR to financial performance for PLCs in Malaysia. Although CSR disclosure concept is at a nascent stage in Malaysia, still it was found that CSR disclosure is positively related to financial performance. The findings confirmed that the social activities by local firms help them achieve advanced levels of financial performance.

Sweeney, L (2009) semi structured interviews were carried out with a small sample of large firms and SMEs operating in Ireland, spanning a variety of industries. CSR was found to have a strong positive relationship with social reputation, employee attraction, motivation and retention and consumer attraction and loyalty but a weaker relationship with other business benefits proposed to result from CSR, namely; access to capital and business reputation

**OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

To explore and confirm the dimensions for measuring corporate social responsibility of companies in automotive sector

**RESEARCH DESIGN**

**Sample for the Study**

The list of 26 companies which met the prescribed criteria was finalized as a sample for the study. These were the listed companies which satisfied the mandatory criteria for CSR contribution imposed by the Section 135 and Schedule VII of the Companies Act, 2013, whose five years (2010-2015) financial data was available and CSR initiatives were disclosed through CSR reports.

Since the nature of study was purely exploratory in nature, a

structured questionnaire was served to 450 middle level and senior level employees. A web-enabled version of the questionnaire was developed and sent through mails, by tracking the LinkedIn profiles of the CSR manager, HR managers and Communication Managers, the websites of the companies and some were contacted telephonically. The limitation was that the managers were not available for a one-on-one interaction. With limited sample size and a large size of employees in few sample companies, 34% was the response rate, which is considered to be a reasonably good response rate. (Sweeney 2009) had a response rate of 22.5 % of her survey, (Zaborek 2014) got filled 220 completed interviews for a response rate of 39%. The sample distribution was as follows:

**TABLE 1: THE SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION OF STUDY BASED ON RESPONSES OF EMPLOYEES**

<b>Gender</b>	Males	92
	Females	60
<b>Tenure in Organisation</b>	Less than 5 years	74
	5-Less than 10 years	35
	10-Less than 15 years	31
	15 years and above	12
<b>Level of Management</b>	Senior level	46
	Middle level	106

Source: Ownelaboration

**STATISTICAL TOOLS**

Factor Analysis is a multivariate statistical process that decreases a large number of variables into a smaller set of variables. It ascertains underlying dimensions between measured variables and latent constructs, thus allowing the construction and refinement of theory Malati N and Ruchika (2014). Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) are the two modules of Factor Analysis. EFA helps the researcher to explore the observed variables which inter-correlate freely (Anderson and Gerbing 1988) and helps create a theory or a model from a large set of latent constructs, whereas CFA seek to find a model that best fits the data (Sweeny 2009).



**ATA ANALYSIS**

Exploratory factor analysis was applied to develop the measurement tool for identifying dimensions of measuring CSR. A total of 36 dimensions were selected on the basis of literature. The information was collected through a sample of 152 middle and high level managers of the sample automotive companies on a **5-point Likert Scale** (1: Strongly disagree; 2:

**TABLE 2: DIMENSIONS FOR MEASURING CSR**

Production of sustainable goods and services by the company	CSR 1
Corporate image and Market Share of the company	CSR 2
Support to inclusive growth and equitable development	CSR 3
Customers and Consumers satisfaction	CSR 4
Protecting Shareholders and Investors interest	CSR 5
Supplier relations and supply chain management	CSR 6
Industry research and development and innovation	CSR 7
Focusing on Quality as a core value	CSR 8
Public Policy and Regulatory Framework adopted by the company	CSR 9
Handling Investor grievances handling policies	CSR 10
Following Code of Conduct of business with ethics, transparency and accountability followed by the company	CSR 11
Following an Environmental Policy	CSR 12
Following the System of reduce, reuse and recycle	CSR 13
Development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.	CSR 14
Providing regular voluntary information about environmental management to stakeholders	CSR 15
Supply of clear and accurate environmental information on its products, services and activities to stakeholders	CSR 16
Adopting a Policy towards employees	CSR 17
Taking Greater employee satisfaction measures	CSR 18
Following Occupational Health and Safety policies	CSR 19
Skills and Career Development of Employees	CSR 20
Providing a good work-life balance for employees (flexible working hours or work from home facility)	CSR 21
Non-discrimination, Diversity and Equal Opportunity	CSR 22
Prevention of Forced and Compulsory Labor	CSR 23
Adopting Poverty Alleviation measures	CSR 24
Community Development and investment	CSR 25
Creation of Employment	CSR 26
Alliances with NGOs, charities and not for profit organizations	CSR 27
Employee Volunteering	CSR 28
Infrastructural Development	CSR 29
Taking Women Empowerment measures	CSR 30
Direct economic value generated by the company	CSR 31
Profitability of the company	CSR 32
Public image of the company	CSR 33
Increased sales of the firm	CSR 34
Increased earnings per share of the firm	CSR 35
Increased credibility of the firm	CSR 36

Source: Ownelaboration

disagree; 3: neutral; 4: strongly agree; 5: strongly agree).

It was observed that all the variables correlated fairly well and none of the correlation coefficients were particularly large. The Kaiser- Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Test (Table 3) was .875 and chi- square value of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Table 3) was found to be significant (chi sq= 2975.435, p= .000). For the KMO test, a score of .70 is considered adequate while .80 or

**TABLE 3: RESULTS OF KMO AND BARLETT TEST OF SPHERICITY**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.875
Approx. Chi-Square		2975.435
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df	630
	Sig.	.000

Source: Ownelaboration

higher is excellent (Hair et al. 2010), hence, confirming the acceptance of exploratory factor analysis.

The EFA revealed that some of the measures did not seem to represent their respective constructs satisfactorily and hence were removed from the further analysis and the final rotated

component matrix was generated. The variables that were not retained were CSR\_2 (Corporate image and market share of the company), CSR\_9 (Public policy and regulatory framework adopted by the company), CSR\_12 (Following an environmental policy), CSR\_15 (Providing regular voluntary information about environmental management to stakeholders), CSR\_16 (Supply of clear and accurate environmental information on its products, services and activities to stakeholders) and CSR\_27 (Alliances with NGOs, charities and not for profit organizations).

The 36 dimensions were reduced to 30 through Exploratory Factor Analysis. Maximum likelihood method was used with promax rotation and generated four components with eigen values above 1. The clubbed items in four components along with their factor loadings and the Cronbach alpha values are shown in the table below:

On the basis of Exploratory Factor Analysis, a diagram depicting the preliminary measurement model was designed. The model displayed 30 measured indicator variables and four latent variables which were subject to CFA with AMOS22, a computer program through which all interactions between

**TABLE 4: CSR DIMENSIONS WITH FACTOR LOADINGS AND CRONBACH ALPHA VALUES**

CSR Dimensions	Variables	Factor Loadings	Cronbach Alpha values
CSR_SOC	CSR 26	.821	.911
	CSR 20	.808	
	CSR 21	.785	
	CSR 24	.722	
	CSR 23	.701	
	CSR 19	.683	
	CSR 18	.669	
	CSR 22	.649	
	CSR 30	.629	
	CSR 25	.605	
	CSR 29	.558	
CSR 28	.510		
CSR_ECO	CSR 5	.782	.858
	CSR 1	.774	
	CSR 33	.676	
	CSR 31	.641	
	CSR 7	.622	
	CSR 10	.602	
	CSR 6	.575	
	CSR 8	.525	
	CSR 11	.490	
CSR 4	.489		
CSR ENV	CSR 36	.539	.670
	CSR 14	.521	
	CSR 33	.511	
	CSR 13	.501	
	CSR 17	.408	
CSR FIN	CSR 35	.836	.895
	CSR 34	.801	
	CSR 32	.727	

Source: Ownelaboration

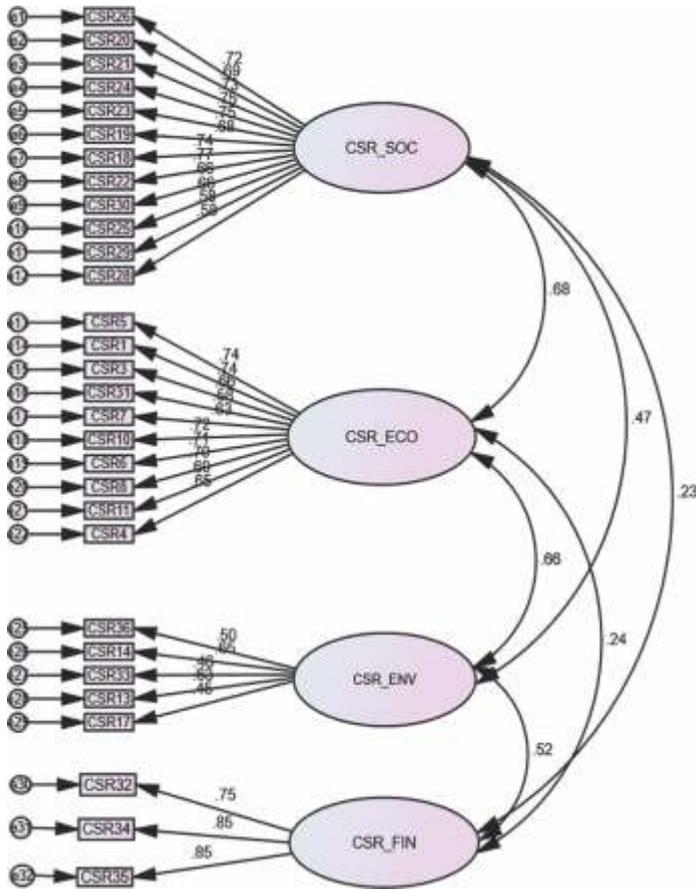


FIG. 1: PRELIMINARY CFA MODEL

variables represented in the conceptual model are captured and examined as a single statistical test.

The latent variables were identified as:

1. The dimensions CSR 26, CSR 20, CSR 21, CSR 24, CSR 23, CSR 19, CSR 18, CSR 22, CSR 30, CSR 25, CSR 29 and CSR 28 got clubbed under the head “CSR\_SOC” which comprised of the social dimensions of the CSR initiatives taken by the companies.
2. The dimensions CSR 5, CSR 1, CSR 3, CSR 31, CSR 7, CSR 10, CSR 6, CSR 8, CSR 11 and CSR 4 were grouped under the head “CSR\_ECO” which comprised of the economic dimensions of the CSR initiatives taken by the companies.
3. The dimensions CSR 36, CSR 14, CSR 33, CSR 13 and CSR 17 were named as “CSR\_ENV” which included the environmental dimensions of the CSR initiatives taken by the companies.
4. The dimensions CSR 32, CSR 34, CSR 35 were named as “CSR\_FIN” which included the dimensions indicating the effect of CSR initiative on financial performance of the companies.

The principal task in CFA model was to determine the goodness of fit between the hypothesized model and model determined by the sample data. The adequacy of model fit was

evaluated using the CFI (Comparative Fit Index), AGFI

TABLE 5: OVERALL GOODNESS OF FIT MEASURES FOR THE PRELIMINARY CFAMODEL

Metric	Value	Base Value	Acceptance
CFI (Comparative FitIndex)	.829	≥ 0.9	Not acceptable
AGFI (Adjusted Goodness of FitIndex)	.711	≥ 0.8	Not acceptable
RMSEA (Root MeanSquare of Approximation)	.07	≤ 0.05	Not acceptable
RMSR (Root Mean Squared Residual)	.06	≤ 0.05	Not Acceptable
NFI (Normal FitIndex)	.71	0 to 1	Acceptable

Source: Ownelaboration

(Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index), RMSEA (Root Mean Square of Approximation), RMSR (Root Mean Squared Residual) and NFI (Normal Fit Index). The table with all the values is below:

The preliminary model was amended to improve the model fit. Modification indices and standardized residuals calculated throughAMOS22 were used to modify the model resulting in the final model.

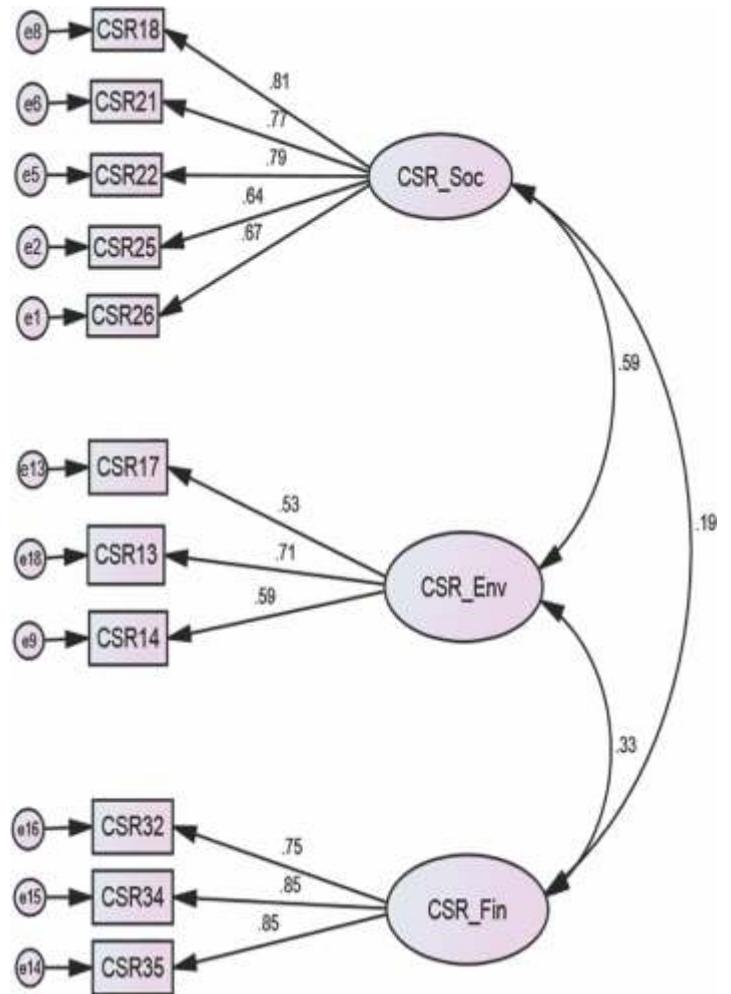


FIG. 2: FINAL CFA MODEL

The results could not be achieved when all the four variables were taken together implying high co linearity between the latent variables. So, the CSR\_ECO and CSR\_FIN variables were clubbed into one: CSR\_FIN. The items CSR\_18, CSR\_21, CSR\_22, CSR\_25, CSR\_26 were included in the construct

**TABLE 6: OVERALL GOODNESS OF FIT MEASURES FOR THE FINAL MODEL**

Metric	Value	Base Value	Acceptance
CFI (Comparative Fit Index)	.965	≥ 0.9	Acceptable
AGFI (Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index)	.896	≥ 0.8	Acceptable
RMSEA (Root Mean Square of Approximation)	.05	≤ 0.05	Acceptable
RMSR (Root Mean Squared Residual)	.041	≤ 0.05	Acceptable
NFI (Normal Fit Index)	.908	0 to 1	Acceptable

Source: Ownelaboration

CSR\_SOC. The items CSR\_5, CSR\_9, CSR\_14 were included in the construct CSR\_ENV. The items CSR\_32, CSR\_34 and CSR\_35 were included in the construct CSR\_FIN in the final model. The improved Goodness of Fit are given below:

The model fit of the final model with all the indices' values beyond the threshold limits is indicative of the fact that the model is offering an adequate approximation of empirical data, hence it is acceptable. The standardized factor loadings of the dimensions of CSR initiatives (CSR\_SOC, CSR\_ENV, CSR\_FIN) ranged from 0.53 for CSR\_17 to 0.85 for CSR\_35. The extent of variance of observed variables of the factor is indicated through the squared multiple correlations. The R2 statistics corresponding to the latent variable (CSR\_FIN) was found highest at 0.72, 0.65 for (CSR\_SOC) and 0.52 for (CSR\_ENV) in the final model. This implies that employee satisfaction, following the system of 3Rs, increase in sales and EPS of the company are the major CSR initiatives taken by companies in the automotive sector. Companies should be responsible for adding value to the community and the environment through their operations and taken strategic decisions to deepen it as a core business.



**CONCLUSION**

The augmenting pressure of the globalized economy has made the concept of CSR a need of the hour. Indian companies, by developing an internationally tolerable socially responsible behaviour (Sharma Seema 2011) are evidently unveiling their ability to make a note worthy change in the society advancing the overall life quality (Berad 2011). CSR has become an effective management strategy and buy-in at all level soft he company (Oron Emmanuel 2011). The present study reveals that the companies are actively representing their participation in the CSR initiatives for the economic, environmental and social benefit. Consumers, stockholders and investors, employees, community environmental friendly technologies, occupational health and safety policies, prevention of forced and compulsory labour poverty alleviation are the significant dimensions of corporate social initiatives taken by the companies. The segregation of the

sustainability factors into economic, social and environmental factors will help companies in achieving the Triple Bottom Line Effect, augmenting the stakeholders' trust in the companies.

Although CSR is still at a nascent stage in India, management should be cognizant of the strategic benefits that firms may comprehend from engaging in CSR activities. A better understanding and practice of CSR among companies will not only augment companies' sustainability, but also advance the development of CSR in India.

The study may promote the introduction of a strict and mandatory internal policy for CSR contribution. The study may result in the introduction of more counselling and motivational programs in the companies to increase the awareness among the employees about the significance of the CSR activities and its effect on company's profitability and public image.



**SUGGESTIONS**

Companies should be responsible for adding value to the community through their operations. The corporate world commitment towards the CSR can give them an opportunity to explore the potentially viable areas to augment the company profits portfolio. It should be taken as a strategic decision by the companies and to deepen it as a core business. It is of utmost importance to the companies to share with their Stockholders the kind and amount of investment they are making in the field of CSR and how are they working towards betterment of the society. This necessitates the creation of awareness about CSR amongst the general public. The companies should increase the intensity and frequency of making CSR disclosure through reporting.

Organizations must realize that upliftment of the society is not the sole responsibility of the government, corporates have a dominant role instead. Hence, the companies should invest more in the projects which helps in societal development at large.

The Government should introduce a regulatory mechanism through an independent agency for mainstreaming and institutionalizing CSR in the main business framework of the companies.

The companies should aim at ingraining CSR into the DNA of core business activities of companies.

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