

Does COVID-19 call for pressing the reset button for CSR? Reflections from the literature

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Abstract

For around two months, the second wave of Covid-19 infections in India showed no signs of abating, as the country's strained and overburdened healthcare system struggles to meet demand for hospital beds, oxygen, medicines, and vaccines. The government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is under fire for allowing large crowds to gather in various parts of the country for religious festivals and election rallies. The massive gatherings were most likely transformed into super spreader events (Choudhury, 2021). However, the Covid-19 pandemic provides a great opportunity for businesses to transit to more genuine CSR and contribute to urgent social and environmental challenges (He & Harris, 2020). One could therefore argue, that going forward, the instrumental version of CSR that dominated management scholarship, underlines the need to explore different systems of governance across the globe that dealt with these challenges and how business responsibility is allocated for in these systems (Crane & Matten, 2020). Against this backdrop, research question of this study suggests to focus on CSR in the times of crisis, as follows –

RQ: To highlight different dynamics of CSR, along with the opportunities and challenges in the long-run post COVID-19, which leads to an outcome with increased incorporation of societal issues into our driving philosophies, thereby creating a long-term value for the company in a sustainably-oriented culture.

The study attempts to answer the research question by conducting an integrative review (a combination of Bibliometric review, Systematic review and Scoping review) of existing work, contributing significantly to the existing literature. To this end, we analysed and reviewed 40 research papers from Scopus database using keywords - 'COVID', 'CSR', 'Corporate Social Responsibility' and 'Crowdfunding'. By considering CSR as response strategy to uncertainties, pandemics and crises, the paper examines companies' CSR approaches and analyses their response to the pandemic crisis. The paper shall make important contributions to the existing CSR theory and summarize the key findings highlighting how CSR can help with crises management in the times of pandemic. The study also provides theoretical propositions, contextual propositions, and methodological propositions. The paper concludes by setting up future agendas for research and policy.

References

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