



Significance of Corporate Social Responsibility for Enhancement Public Health Care System of Uttar Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the evolving landscape of healthcare in Uttar Pradesh, India, emphasizing the crucial role of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in addressing the region's healthcare challenges. It highlights the significance of collaboration between governments and businesses, as mandated by the Companies Act 2013, with a focus on the mandatory reporting of CSR investments. In the context of the growing healthcare demand in Uttar Pradesh in 2023, CSR in healthcare emerges as a critical concept requiring heightened attention, particularly in resource-constrained regions.

The Economic Survey for the fiscal year 2022-23 underscores a significant uptick in healthcare budget allocations from both the Central and State Governments, surging to 2.1% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Despite this positive trend, the paper underscores the need for further examination and investment in comparison to global healthcare budgets. Maternal and infant mortality rates in India remain concerning, highlighting the disparities between outstanding healthcare in private hospitals, financially inaccessible to the majority, and the challenges faced by overwhelmed public hospitals. The paper recognizes the substantial, untapped potential for impact within marginalized communities, emphasizing the obligation to fortify India's healthcare system, especially in the post-pandemic era.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Public Healthcare System, Sustainability

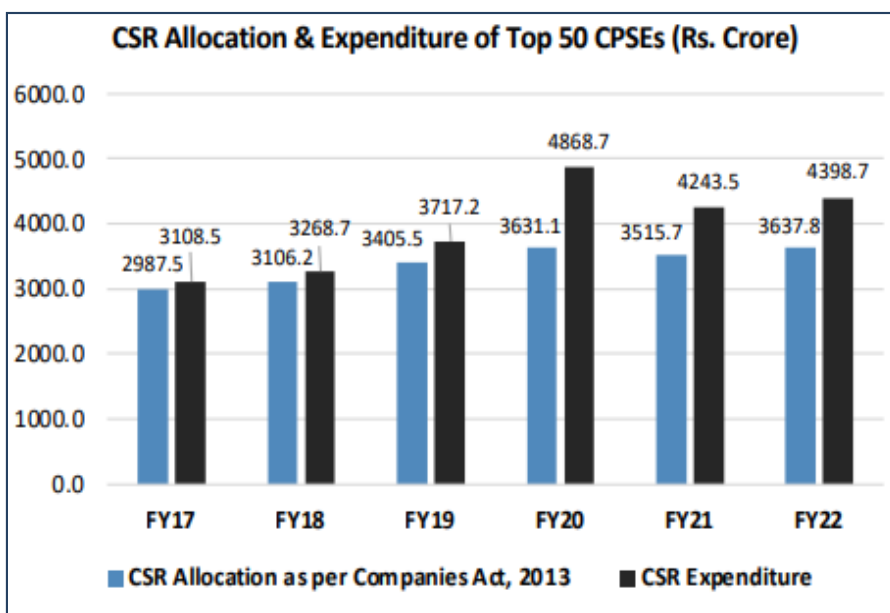
INTRODUCTION

The field of healthcare, which concerns everyone, has become more complex due to new medical challenges. To address these issues effectively, it's vital for governments and businesses to collaborate on research. The Companies Act 2013, which is the primary legislation governing corporate affairs and regulation of companies in India, introduced several significant provisions related to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). One of the key provisions was the mandatory requirement for certain companies to report their CSR investments. In Uttar Pradesh in 2023, the growing population has increased the demand for healthcare. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in healthcare, where companies contribute to social causes, is not a new concept but requires greater attention, especially in resource-constrained regions like Uttar Pradesh. This paper's primary objective is to underline the significance of CSR in healthcare and how it benefits both the public and businesses. To illustrate this importance, we will examine practical examples of how CSR initiatives can positively impact healthcare challenges in Uttar Pradesh.

According to the Economic Survey for the year 2022-23, there has been a remarkable upswing in the allocated budget for the healthcare sector by both the Central and State Governments. In the fiscal year 2023, this allocation has surged to 2.1% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), signifying a significant financial commitment. However, it's noteworthy to emphasize that this percentage still falls behind the healthcare budget allocations of other nations, underscoring the need for further examination and investment.

In India, maternal and infant mortality rates remain alarmingly high, posing a significant concern. Despite improvements, the nation's life expectancy still trails behind that of many other countries. The situation is characterized by a stark contrast: private hospitals deliver outstanding healthcare, but their services are financially out of reach for a majority of the population. Meanwhile, public hospitals grapple with overwhelming patient loads and often fall short in terms of responsiveness to patient needs.

Although healthcare systems in India have contributed significantly to advancements in public health, the untapped potential for impact, particularly among marginalized communities, is substantial. Given India's vast population, there is a compelling obligation to harness these fundamental building blocks to rejuvenate and fortify its healthcare system, especially in the aftermath of the global pandemic.



Within the state of Uttar Pradesh, the Companies Act of 2013 mandates that businesses allocate 2% of their average net profits from the past three years to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities. Similarly, the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) has designated annual CSR themes since 2018-19, such as School Education & Health Care, Nutrition, and more recently, Health & Nutrition with a COVID-19 focus in 2021-22. This strategic approach also benefits Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) in Uttar Pradesh, aiding long-term planning and contributing to the state's progress in reducing hunger and enhancing public health, particularly for children.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Pluye, Potvin, & Denis, (2004) pointed sustainability of an institution is based upon the principles, rules and policies that regulate the healthcare industry. Van Weele (2010) postulated that sustainable profitability can be achieved by balancing the interest of core groups like customers, workers and the ecology. He talks about 'People, Planet and Profit' where people stands for the employees, their working condition, safe working environment where their competencies and skills are honed and leads to achievement of safety, health and environment goals simultaneously. Harwood & Humby (2008) pointed out that potential performance gains from CSR activities include cost savings and mitigation of reputation risk and sometimes were followed by increased market share (Kong, 2012). MadhuBala (2018) revealed that education is on top priority for Indian companies, healthcare is on second priority, environment is on third priority, others Social Issues are on fourth priority, Welfare of Underprivileged Sections and Rural Development are on equal priority that is fifth and Natural & Other Calamities is on sixth priority for the companies.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To underscore the significance of CSR in healthcare and demonstrate its benefits for both the public and businesses.
- To Evaluating the Initiatives and Strategies of CSR Companies to Propel the Enhancement of the Uttar Pradesh Healthcare System

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper adopts a meticulous analytical approach, rooted in the examination of secondary data. Focused specifically on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices, the study zeroes in on the vibrant context of the healthcare sector in Uttar Pradesh.

This sector gets a lot of money from corporate CSR efforts, making it a big deal. We want to dig into how corporations are making a real difference in healthcare. This study aims to show us exactly how companies are playing a crucial role and making important contributions to the healthcare system.

CSR IN HEALTHCARE SYSTEM OF UTTAR PRADESH

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) within the healthcare sector signifies a commitment by businesses to positively impact societal well-being. Beyond profit-driven motives, CSR emphasizes ethical practices and community engagement. Given the healthcare sector's intrinsic link to public welfare, it bears a unique responsibility for addressing social and environmental issues. CSR initiatives in healthcare go beyond legal obligations, striving to improve healthcare access, quality, and sustainability.

In resource-constrained regions, where healthcare challenges are intensified by limited access, inadequate infrastructure, and financial constraints, CSR gains heightened relevance. Strategic CSR implementation becomes a catalyst for positive change in these areas. Companies, by focusing on resource-constrained regions, can effectively address specific healthcare needs, promote preventive measures, and contribute to the development of resilient healthcare systems. This strategic approach aligns corporate interests with societal well-being, creating a meaningful impact on healthcare outcomes in these vulnerable regions.

The Companies Act 2013 mandates certain Indian companies to allocate a percentage of their profits to CSR activities, with a specific focus on healthcare. This legislation ensures transparency through mandatory reporting, enabling stakeholders to assess the social impact. This requirement fosters accountability, prompting companies to invest in impactful healthcare projects and allowing public scrutiny. The Companies Act positions the healthcare sector as a central focus for meaningful CSR interventions, aligning corporate interests with societal well-being.

UNDERSTANDING HEALTH CHALLENGES IN INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS OF UTTAR PRADESH

Irregular Employment

Irregular employment, marked by unstable hours and inconsistent income, significantly impacts individuals' health, both physically and mentally. Financial instability stemming from unpredictable incomes creates chronic stressors, hindering access to basic needs and contributing to heightened anxiety. Limited healthcare access accompanies irregular employment, with inconsistent work hours and lack of benefits resulting in inadequate health coverage. This leads to delayed medical treatment, preventive care neglect, and increased reliance on emergency services, perpetuating a cycle of poor health outcomes.

Poor Access to Fair Credit

Limited access to fair credit exacerbates health vulnerability by hindering individuals' ability to afford essential healthcare services. Without financial resources, individuals face barriers to seeking timely medical care, leading to worsened health outcomes. Potential solutions include implementing microfinance initiatives, community-based credit programs, and financial literacy campaigns to empower individuals and enhance their access to fair credit. These interventions aim to break the cycle of health vulnerability caused by financial constraints, promoting better overall well-being.

Widespread Alcoholism:

The prevalence of alcoholism in slums contributes to severe health consequences, including mental health issues and an increased risk of injuries. Community-based approaches such as awareness campaigns, counseling services, and support groups can be instrumental in addressing and mitigating the health impacts of alcoholism within slum populations.

Gender Inequity:

Gender inequity exacerbates health vulnerability in slums, with women facing disparities in healthcare access and decision-making power. Empowering women through education, skill development programs, and initiatives promoting gender equality is crucial in fostering healthier communities and breaking the cycle of inequity.

Poor Educational Status:

Poor education is linked to adverse health outcomes in slums, perpetuating cycles of poverty and limiting access to healthcare information. Interventions, including community-based educational programs, scholarships, and vocational training, can help break these cycles and improve overall health by empowering individuals with knowledge and skills.

Overcrowding:

Overcrowding in slums contributes to the rapid spread of diseases. Addressing this issue requires urban planning strategies, such as optimizing living spaces, constructing additional housing units, and implementing zoning regulations, to alleviate the health risks associated with overcrowded conditions.

Poor quality of health care

Subpar healthcare quality in slums contributes to compromised health outcomes. Interventions to enhance quality include training healthcare professionals, implementing rigorous quality control measures, and promoting community awareness to empower individuals to demand and receive better healthcare services.

**ADDRESSING HEALTHCARE SYSTEM DEFICIENCIES IN UTTAR PRADESH:
AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT**

- ***Inadequate Infrastructure in Public Health:*** Only 20% of primary healthcare in India is provided by the government. Larger hospitals are private. Government hospitals usually lack enough doctors, nurses, and staff. These hospitals are often crowded because they serve a large local population.

- **Enhancing Health Outcomes in India through Primary Care Expansion:** The Imperative for Expanding Primary Healthcare Centers to Deliver Compassionate Care Locally, Prioritizing Prevention and Early Detection, has Reached a Critical Juncture in India. The Establishment of Additional Centers will Markedly Enhance Health Outcomes Amongst the Population, Simultaneously Easing the Strain on Hospital Resources, Including the Workforce Comprising Doctors, Nurses, Laboratory Technicians, and Other Medical Staff.
- **Inadequate Workforce:** India grapples with a deficiency in proficient and qualified healthcare professionals, encompassing doctors, nurses, technicians, and support staff. This deficiency ripples into various issues, including suboptimal equipment upkeep and constrained diagnostic capabilities.
- **Using Health Information for Good Governance:** A Proper Health Information System Helps Collect, Analyze, Share, and Use Reliable and Timely Health Data by Decision-Makers at All Levels.
- **The COVID-19 pandemic** shows that we should review the standards for Indian public health facilities like district hospitals, sub-district hospitals, community health centers, and primary health centers. These are crucial parts of our healthcare system, and we need to look at their standards for services, staffing, equipment, supplies, and buildings again.
- **Empowering District Hospitals as Knowledge and Training Hubs:** In order to establish district hospitals as hubs for offering top-tier training, technical expertise, and professional assistance to both public and private organizations within the district, it's essential to enhance the local capacity.
- **Strengthening Telemedicine and Technology Integration:** Leveraging telemedicine and technology can bridge the healthcare gap, especially in remote areas. By integrating digital solutions, healthcare can become more accessible and efficient.
- **Public Awareness and Education:** Promoting health awareness and education at the community level is critical. Public participation and understanding of preventive measures can significantly improve overall health outcomes.
- **Government and Private Sector Collaboration:** Encouraging partnerships between the public and private healthcare sectors can help address resource gaps and improve healthcare accessibility.
- **Research and Innovation:** Investing in medical research and innovation can lead to the development of new treatments, diagnostic tools, and healthcare practices that can benefit the entire population.



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN HEALTHCARE

A GLIMPSE INTO DIVERSE CSR INITIATIVES IN UTTAR PRADESH

- Dabur launched the "Dengue Fighter" initiative to prevent Dengue among school-going children in Delhi-NCR, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka. Healthcare professionals visited schools to educate students, teachers, and parents about Dengue prevention. Schools were rated based on their preventive measures, and a Dengue Report Card for each city was created. The initiative reached over 700,000 students and 40,000 teachers, encouraging schools to implement mosquito breeding prevention measures and raise awareness.
- In the financial year 2020-21, Dr Lal PathLabs Limited, a diagnostic healthcare service provider, allocated Rs 5.74 crore to various Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Out of this budget, the company contributed Rs 1.20 crore to the PM CARES fund for COVID-19 relief. The CSR initiatives included a skill development project for unemployed youths in healthcare in Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan, with an expenditure of Rs 2.61 crore, and skill development training in phlebotomy services in Uttar Pradesh, with an expense of Rs 0.38 crore.
- Swarna Jayanti Samudayik Hospital in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh, established in 1999, is a 50-bed facility offering free medical treatment to the destitute and subsidized care to others. It conducts various medical camps and has treated over 2.5 lakh patients in the last 5 years, including operative procedures on 2670 patients. During the second wave of COVID-19, the hospital was converted into a 104-bed COVID facility with oxygen support.
- The Rajiv Gandhi Arogya Yojana (RAY) started in 2005 in Amethi, Uttar Pradesh, aimed to provide rural primary healthcare. It covered around 200 villages with a population of over

70,000 people. In 2019, non-communicable disease (NCD) screening was introduced, expanding the services with a portable screening kit.

- Cipla's Respiratory Care Support Program comprises six projects in Uttar Pradesh, aimed at providing primary healthcare support, diagnosis, and treatment. Additionally, the program focuses on raising awareness about health, hygiene, and nutrition, offering infrastructure support, and organizing medical camps. These projects in Uttar Pradesh aim to enhance access to healthcare services, particularly through interventions for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder (COPD) and Pulmonary Rehabilitation for post-COVID patients.
- The 128 Swasthya Sakhis have been on the frontline, extending support to an impressive 1.5 million beneficiaries in Uttar Pradesh, Goa, and Madhya Pradesh. In their dedicated efforts, they've identified and assisted nearly 10,000 pregnant women, with a particular focus on addressing the unique challenges posed by 5,000 high-risk pregnancies. It's a testament to the significance of targeted healthcare interventions in diverse communities.
- Dalmia Bharat Sugar And Industries Limited have made a tangible difference by installing 30 handpumps in Uttar Pradesh, providing a reliable source of water for 1,500 individuals. This initiative not only addresses a fundamental need but also contributes significantly to community development, ensuring access to clean and sustainable water resources.
- HCL Foundation launched eight mobile health clinics in Hardoi, UP, under HCL Samuday. These clinics, led by on-field MBBS doctors, offer free healthcare, consultations, diagnostics, counseling, and medicines to rural communities across eight blocks. The initiative targets an annual benefit for approximately 2.5 lakh people, aiming to bridge health disparities and enhance healthcare access in remote areas.
- The company is a significant supporter of Mirza Charitable Hospital Ltd. in Unnao District, UP, providing OPD and IPD services to low-income residents. Treating 5631 patients, mainly from rural areas, the hospital also hosts free eye camps, conducting 386 successful eye operations.

Uttar Pradesh government observes that there is significant room for companies to adopt a more effective approach to healthcare spending. While the government plays a crucial role in healthcare provision, businesses can complement these efforts by implementing a more strategic and impactful CSR approach as follows.

Targeted Healthcare Initiatives: Companies should collaborate with local health authorities to identify specific healthcare needs within the state. Rather than funding general health camps, they could focus

on addressing prevalent diseases, improving maternal and child health, or expanding access to critical medical services in underserved areas.

Health Education and Awareness: Implement CSR programs that prioritize health education and awareness campaigns. These initiatives can be more sustainable in the long run as they empower communities with knowledge to make informed health choices.

Support for Public Health Infrastructure: While constructing hospitals can be part of the strategy, companies should ensure these facilities are strategically located in areas with high demand. Additionally, they should provide ongoing support to ensure these hospitals are adequately equipped and staffed.

Research and Innovation: Encourage investment in healthcare research and innovation. This can lead to the development of cost-effective and impactful healthcare solutions, which can be especially beneficial in a state like Uttar Pradesh with diverse healthcare needs.

Collaboration with Government: Collaborate closely with the Uttar Pradesh government to align CSR efforts with state health policies and priorities. This can lead to more coordinated and effective healthcare interventions.

Long-Term Sustainability: Focus on creating sustainable healthcare programs that extend beyond short-term numerical goals. A sustainable healthcare initiative might involve training local healthcare professionals, improving access to clean water, or supporting nutrition programs. By adopting these strategies and shifting their approach to CSR spending, companies can play a more substantial role in supporting healthcare in Uttar Pradesh in 2023.

In conclusion, the available literature strongly emphasizes the integral role of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in promoting sustainable healthcare practices specifically in Uttar Pradesh, India. CSR initiatives should concentrate on enhancing awareness regarding disease prevention, organizing health check-up camps, advocating for hygiene and sanitation, training healthcare personnel to minimize waste, implementing effective recycling practices, promoting a connection with nature, and adopting energy-efficient equipment. While some corporations demonstrate responsible practices, there is a critical imperative to extend these health-related services to marginalized sections in Uttar Pradesh, which spans diverse geographical regions. This underscores the need for a focused, concerted effort to reach and benefit the wider spectrum of society, particularly vulnerable populations, in tandem with ongoing CSR innovation.

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