

Strengthening Livelihoods: Tata Group's CSR Initiatives for Women in India

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ABSTRACT

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has evolved as a pivotal force shaping the intersection of business and societal development. This research paper delves into the multifaceted realm of CSR through a comprehensive case study of Tata Group, one of India's premier conglomerates, renowned for its commitment to social responsibility. The paper focuses on Tata Group's CSR initiatives in India, specifically examining their impact on women's empowerment and livelihood enhancement.

The literature review traces the historical evolution of CSR, emphasizing its evolving role in promoting empowering women within the corporate landscape. The methodology section outlines the research approach, data sources, and case study selection criteria, while acknowledging the limitations inherent to secondary research.

Tata Group's pioneering role in CSR is explored in detail, with an overview of its history, principles, and the array of CSR programs it has initiated in India. Particular attention is paid to initiatives addressing women's empowerment and livelihood enhancement, revealing the strategies, objectives, and outcomes of these projects. A rigorous analysis assesses the tangible impact of Tata Group's CSR initiatives on women's lives and livelihoods, including enhanced access to education, economic opportunities, and healthcare. The research also evaluates the broader implications of these initiatives for the communities they serve.

This case study goes beyond descriptive analysis to identify best practices and lessons learned from Tata Group's CSR journey, offering practical recommendations for organizations seeking to replicate and scale similar initiatives. The paper concludes by underscoring the significance of Tata Group's CSR efforts in driving women's empowerment and livelihood enhancement, shedding light on the potential for CSR in achieving the highest possible level of human development.

Keywords: TATA Groups, CSR, NGO's International Labor Organization (ILO), Labour market. Women in India Etc.

"No success or achievement in material terms is worthwhile unless it serves the needs or interests of the country and its people".

- J R D Tata

Economic empowerment of women plays a pivotal role in strengthening not only individual families but also entire communities and nations. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), civil societies and self-help groups have been working tirelessly in this direction. Offlate Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has proved to be a valuable tool. CSR is highly beneficial in advancing the cause of empowering marginalized women. By encouraging business houses to focus on profitability while also taking care of all marginalized people, CSR aligns with the societal need for inclusivity and equitable development. When women are economically empowered, it creates a ripple effect, enhancing the overall well-being of families, fostering prosperous communities, and ultimately contributing to the growth and progress of the entire nation.

This research paper focuses on understanding corporate social responsibility (CSR). It looks at what CSR means and how far it can go. It uses the TATA Group, led by Mr. Ratan Tata, as an example. Mr. Tata has shown a strong sense of responsibility in helping ordinary people, preserving the environment, and developing the nation. This paper looks at how the TATA Group has practiced CSR and what we can learn from it. For a considerable period, large companies have been allocating funds to support the well-being of individuals from lower economic backgrounds. The introduction of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) provided a framework for companies to channel their resources towards initiatives that can make a significant and lasting impact on the

lives of marginalized individuals, including women facing economic hardships.

This research paper aims to build a comprehensive understanding of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). TATA Group has been taken as a case study for this purpose. The research draws upon a wide range of secondary sources, including literature from books, research papers, newspapers, magazines, and websites. Through this secondary research method, the paper seeks to offer valuable insights into how CSR is practiced and its impact, as well as the exemplary practices of the TATA Group in this regard.

Women empowerment can be addressed through various national and international conventions, treaties, policies and agreements which are dedicated to advancing women's rights. Many countries incorporate gender equality into their national programs, policies, and even constitutional provisions to uphold these principles and work towards a more equitable and just society.

Despite the world's commitment to promote women empowerment, the actual situation often doesn't match our goals. Recent data from the World Bank shows a concerning trend in India. In 2021, only 23% of the people working in formal and informal jobs in India were women. This is a decrease from nearly 27% in 2005. This is troubling because India's economy has grown a lot since 1990. But strangely, as the country has become more prosperous, fewer women are joining the workforce. In 1990, 30% of the workers were women, but in 2021, it was only 19%. The biggest drop happened in the last 15 years, going from 32% in 2005 to 19% in 2021, even though the economy became four times bigger. These numbers show that we need to work harder to ensure that women have equal opportunities.

The lockdown had a more severe impact on women. About 61% of working men were able to keep their jobs, and only 7% lost employment without returning to work. In contrast, for women, the situation was much tougher. Only 19% of them remained employed, while 47% lost their job permanently during the lockdown. Additionally, working women had to bear an increased burden of domestic work, and their work hours didn't decrease accordingly. This shows that the lockdown disproportionately affected women, both in terms of job security and increased domestic responsibilities.

The most recent estimate from the International Labor Organization (ILO) indicates that the global unemployment was more significant for women in 2020. Women experienced a 5.0% decrease in employment, while men faced a 3.9% decrease (ILO 2021).

In India, the impact of unemployment has persisted for a longer duration for women compared to men, further emphasizing the gender disparities in the labor market. It is indeed a matter of concern that only 22.3% of women in India are actively participating in the labor market. This low level of participation not only indicates underutilized human potential but also underscores the pressing need to address the barriers and challenges that hinder women from engaging in economic activities. Efforts to promote gender equality, improve access to education and training, and create more inclusive and supportive work environments are crucial in increasing women's participation in the labor force and unlocking the full spectrum of talent and skills they bring to the workforce.

Above mentioned reports indicate that unemployment should be addressed to empower women. Corporate Social Responsibility initiative have proved to be a catalyst in empowering women. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) means that companies try to do good for society and the environment as part of their business. They also aim to be responsible and open when dealing with the people they work with. With the help of CSR, a company aims to find a balance between making money and doing things that benefit society. They do this while also considering what their shareholders (people who own the company's stock) and stakeholders (people affected by the company's actions) expect from them. The Government of India has made it a requirement for companies that meet specific criteria based on their financial performance (like turnover, net worth, or net profit) to allocate at least 2% of their average net profit from the past three years for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities. This regulation encourages businesses to contribute to the welfare and development of society in these important areas.

The National Commission for Women, in partnership with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), various industry groups, and leaders of major corporate foundations, hosted a roundtable discussion on "Women Empowerment in India and How Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Can Help." The objective was to figure out how CSR funds can be used to support the overall well-being and development of women.

CSR initiatives have been instrumental in driving sustainable livelihoods for women in India. Several companies have taken up initiatives in areas such as agriculture, healthcare, education, and skill development to support rural communities and marginalized sections of society. According to data from the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, in the financial year 2019-20, companies spent Rs 10,030 crore on CSR initiatives related to education, livelihoods, and healthcare. These initiatives have helped create employment opportunities, increase incomes,

and improve the standard of living for many households. CSR grants have played a significant role in supporting livelihood initiatives in India. According to the India CSR Outlook Report 2020, CSR spending on livelihoods increased by 11% from the previous year, with a total of INR 6,111 crore (\$813 million) spent on livelihood-related initiatives. These initiatives included micro-enterprise development, skill development, and vocational training programs.

Micro-enterprise development initiatives supported by CSR grants have had a significant impact on livelihoods in India. According to a report by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), micro-enterprises generate employment for over 50 million people in India. CSR grants have supported the creation and development of micro-enterprises which has helped to generate new income sources, create job opportunities, and enhance the skills of people, particularly women and youth.

Social Responsibility Initiatives by Tata Entities

CSR policy of Tata is centered on ensuring the sustainable development of all its stakeholders. This policy encompasses several key components, which include a commitment to demonstrating responsible behaviour to issues related to protection of the environment. It also entails a continuous dedication to complying with environmental regulations. The group has established institutional arrangements aimed at addressing significant challenges like climate change and global warming. Additionally, the policy emphasizes the creation of sustainable livelihoods and the development of communities through various social programs that focus on health, education, women's and youth empowerment, as well as encouraging employee volunteering. The Tata Group is engaged in businesses through its companies and affiliated organizations. These companies and societies operate in energy, chemicals, telecommunications, and social welfare, including initiatives related to women empowerment.

Tata Motors

Tata Motors uses a "close to home" method for its CSR projects. This means they allocate a certain percentage of their CSR budget based on how far communities are from their factories. Tata Motors aims to be a responsible company that helps everyone grow together, supports fairness in society and works towards sustainability. The company utilizes the expectations and needs of its identified stakeholders to inform its strategy, policies, and action plans in the realms of economy, environment, and society. The company has made its CSR efforts consistent all over India using a Common Minimum Programme at different places. At the same time, they have also added flexibility and quick adaptability to their CSR projects based on the specific needs of each location.

The Tata Group is involved in many activities viz making steel, cars, software, consumer products, and telecom services. They also have trusts that use a significant part of their earnings to help people in need every year. Tata is known for starting various labor welfare laws to make sure workers are treated well. In the 1970s, the Articles of Association for major Tata Group companies underwent changes. This change reflects Tata's commitment to considering the well-being and ethical responsibilities towards all these stakeholders. To make the CSR charter an official part of their operations, the Tata Group included a clause which ensures that every company within this group try to make a positive impact on the communities they serve.

Tata Steel

Tata Steel allocate 5-7 percent of their post-tax profits to various CSR initiatives. They have created more than 500 Self-Help Groups (SHGs) with an aim to alleviate poverty. Around 200 of these SHGs are involved are using microenterprises for income generation. More than 700 villages have empowered women with the help of these SHGs.

Tata Motors

The Tata Motors Grihini Social Welfare Society provide skill development programmes to women and help them create a range of products for income generation.

Tata Tea

Tata Tea have initiated the Srishti Welfare Centre in Munnar, Kerala, with an aim to provide education training, and rehabilitation of specially abled individuals. They initiated projects in educational field which goes beyond teaching basic academics, offering students practical skills like gardening, cooking, and weaving. They also nurture artistic talents through painting, and some artwork is transformed into greeting cards for sale, the proceeds of which support the program. The DARE strawberry preserve unit trains youngsters, providing payment, social coverage, and medical aid. Similarly, the Athulya vocational training center imparts stationery-making skills, fostering self-sufficiency. The Aranya project not only supports disabled individuals but also revives natural dye techniques, with products sold nationally and internationally, creating economic opportunities for participants.

Titan

Titan as a part of their CSR philosophy they are committed to sustainable development. This company has given employment to 169 people who belong to specially abled class.

TISCO

TISCO is actively implementing the Global Compact principles related to sustainable development and protection of human rights and HIV/AIDS.

TELCO

TELCO's CSR initiatives include fight against Leprosy at Jamshedpur. The company also worked for environment protection and ensure education and skill development programmes reach the TELCO families and local residents.

Tata Consultancy Services

TCS has provided relief and rehabilitation to the victims of the 2010 Chilean earthquake. Additionally, Tata Consultancy Services have also supported elderly population especially women. They started literacy programmes for them.

TCSR

Tata Consultancy Services' corporate social responsibility division, is engaged in a wide range of impactful initiatives. These initiatives encompass various areas, including agriculture, animal husbandry, literacy, women's empowerment etc. TCSR's multifaceted efforts reflect its commitment to making a positive and sustainable difference in communities by addressing diverse needs and challenges.

Tata Relief Committee

The Tata Relief Committee (TRC) focuses on delivering aid to areas affected by disasters. When natural calamities strike, they provided relief and rehabilitation programmes to the victims of Gujarat earthquake, Orissa floods and Tsunami disaster.

TATA Power

They worked to enhance the livelihood of farming, fisherfolk, and artisan communities of Gujarat, through poverty reduction, promoting and ensuring inclusive and sustainable economic growth, and capacity building for existing Fisher community-led enterprises at Mundra.

Tata Health Infrastructure

Tata's commitment to healthcare is reflected in its comprehensive health infrastructure. This network includes the Tata Main Hospital in Jamshedpur, a cornerstone of healthcare services. In addition, it extends to Intensive Care Units (ICUs) in Joda and Balangir, vital for critical care needs. Community Health Centers (CHCs) in Bari and Kuhika are essential hubs for community healthcare. Tata's healthcare reach further encompasses hospitals in various locations, such as Gobarghati, Sukinda, Joda, Belpahar, Belipada, and Bamnimal, ensuring access to medical facilities in these regions. The "Lifeline Express" operates as a mobile hospital, reaching underserved areas, while mobile health clinics expand healthcare access to remote and inaccessible regions. Moreover, the Centre for Hearing Impaired Children addresses the unique needs of the hearing-impaired, demonstrating Tata's dedication to improving healthcare access and services for diverse communities.

Tata Sports Infrastructure

This company promotes adventure sports and outdoor activities. The network also encompasses various Sports Feeder Centers that nurture young talents and a Stadium in Keonjhar. These facilities and programs underscore Tata's commitment to the development and promotion of sports and athletic talent.

Preservation of culture and heritage

The Tata Group is deeply committed to the preservation of culture and heritage. Their dedication is evident through various endeavors, including the establishment of the National Center for Performing Arts in Mumbai, which fosters the growth and promotion of performing arts, contributing to the safeguarding of cultural traditions. Additionally, they have created Tribal Cultural Centers that serve as showcases for the rich legacies of nine tribes from Jharkhand and Orissa, ensuring that their unique cultural heritages are celebrated and protected. Furthermore, the Tata Group actively participates in Gramshree Mela activities, engaging with and supporting rural communities and their traditional crafts, thereby playing a vital role in preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of these local communities.

Successful Endeavours

Junnar

Tata Motors partnered with a local NGO called Shashwat to improve the lives of women. They created various ways for women to earn a living, like growing mushrooms. They used environment friendly materials to grow mushrooms. However, they needed money to expand and make the process better, and they also needed

customers. Tata Motors helped women form groups and gave them money and training to start growing mushrooms. Shashwat worked with the Tribal Department to get 10 lakh rupees to build a place to grow mushrooms. The project quickly grew because women in nearby villages saw that it helped women earn more money and stop them from leaving their homes. From one small project, they now have five businesses that support 133 women. They produce about 100 kilograms of mushrooms every month and sell them to markets and restaurants.

Anokha Dhaaga

Anokha Dhaaga, a project was introduced to empower women in Maharashtra. The aim was to provide nurture the traditional skills so that traditional art could be conserved. The aim was also to train the identified women group so that they could work in garment factories and become financially independent. This project empowered around 1050 women across 8 states of the country.

CONCLUSION

Business is important in society, so it needs to take care of different societal needs. When a business is successful, it has a special duty to the community. When businesses get involved in society, it can improve the relationship between them and society, benefiting both. This involvement can also make the company look better in the public's eyes and attract more customers, skilled employees, and investors.

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