

A STUDY ON UTILIZATION OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY TO EDUCATE THE FARMERS OF ORGANIC FARMING WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO KHAMBHAT AND MEHSANA DISTRICT.

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Abstract:

This research paper investigated the factors influencing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives aimed at educating farmers on organic farming, with a special focus on Khambhat and Mehsana districts of Gujarat, India. The study employed descriptive statistics to analyze the socio-demographic profile of 100 farmers in the selected districts. A non-probabilistic convenient sampling technique is applied to gather insights into the characteristics of the farming population. The research findings revealed a predominant male presence among the surveyed farmers, with the majority having attained education up to the schooling level or, at most, graduation. The study also highlighted limited income, with a significant portion of the respondents earning nearly Rs. 4,00,000 annually. The use of descriptive statistics allowed for a comprehensive examination of the socio-demographic landscape, shedding light on key attributes that may influence the success and effectiveness of CSR initiatives. Understanding the educational background, gender distribution, and income levels of farmers is crucial for designing CSR programs to cater to the specific requirements and challenges faced by the agriculturists in Khambhat and Mehsana districts. This research contributed valuable insights for policymakers, corporations, and NGOs engaged in CSR activities, guiding them in the development of targeted and impactful initiatives aimed at educating farmers and all stakeholders on organic farming.

Key Words: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Organic Farming, Adoption of Organic Farming Practices, Improvement in Yield and Crop Quality and Enhanced Socio-Economic Well-being of Farmers.

1. Introduction:

The impact of CSR on organic farming in India depends on the design, implementation, and sustained commitment of corporate initiatives. Positive outcomes are more likely when CSR programs are holistic, inclusive, and actively address the challenges faced by farmers in transitioning to and sustaining organic farming practices. A comprehensive approach that considers economic, social, and environmental dimensions is essential for meaningful and lasting impact for all the stakeholders.

CSR activities can contribute to the adoption of sustainable and organic farming practices. Companies may support farmers in implementing eco-friendly methods, reducing reliance on synthetic inputs, and promoting biodiversity in agriculture. The impact may be limited if CSR

initiatives do not prioritize or effectively communicate the importance of sustainable practices. Lack of awareness or inadequate support may hinder the transition to organic farming. CSR programs often include training and capacity-building components, providing farmers with the knowledge and skills needed for successful organic farming. This can empower farmers to adopt best practices and enhance the overall quality of their produce. If training programs are insufficient or poorly executed, farmers may not fully grasp the principles of organic farming. Inadequate support in terms of resources and ongoing training can hinder the success of such initiatives. CSR initiatives may provide farmers with access to resources, technology, and inputs necessary for organic farming. This includes the provision of organic seeds, natural fertilizers, and innovative technologies that support sustainable agriculture. Limited access to essential resources or a lack of appropriate technology may impede the successful adoption of organic farming practices. CSR initiatives should address these barriers to ensure their impact is maximized.

CSR can facilitate market linkages for organic farmers, connecting them with consumers and ensuring fair trade practices. This can lead to better economic returns for farmers engaged in organic farming. If CSR initiatives do not address market access challenges or fail to establish fair trade practices, organic farmers may face difficulties in marketing their produce and achieving reasonable prices. CSR activities may extend beyond farming practices to include broader community development initiatives. This can positively impact the overall well-being of farming communities by addressing social, educational, and healthcare needs. If CSR initiatives do not consider the holistic development of the community, their impact may be limited. A narrow focus on agriculture alone may miss opportunities for comprehensive community upliftment.

In Addition to that CSR initiatives can contribute to environmental conservation by promoting organic farming, reducing chemical inputs, and fostering sustainable land management practices. In the absence of a clear commitment to environmental sustainability, CSR initiatives may inadvertently contribute to environmental degradation or fail to address critical ecological issues. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation mechanisms within CSR programs can ensure accountability and measure the actual impact on organic farming practices. Transparent reporting enables stakeholders to assess the effectiveness of these initiatives. On the other hand, Inadequate monitoring and evaluation may result in a lack of understanding of the true impact of CSR activities. Without robust assessment mechanisms, it becomes challenging to identify areas for improvement and make informed decisions.

2. Literature Review:

Kumar, H. V., et.al. (2019) defined that the agricultural sector in India is undergoing a significant transformation, which is resulting in a state of crisis. The pace of agricultural production increase has been consistently decreasing in recent years. The agricultural sector's proportional contribution to the overall GDP has been progressively declining over time. The current investigation was carried out in the Ahmedabad area of Gujarat, India. A sample of 100 agricultural landholders from 20 villages was chosen to investigate the variables that lead individuals to reject farming as a means of living. This study used an Ex-Post-Facto research

methodology. The correlation coefficient 'r' was calculated between parameters related to avoiding agriculture as a livelihood and other variables. The results showed that the correlation coefficients between age (0.589), education (0.330), agricultural experience (0.250), occupation (0.446), livestock possession (0.207), and yearly income (-0.236) were all statistically significant at the 0.01 level of significance. The regression analysis revealed a strong positive influence (0.730) of personal characteristics on the decision to forgo pursuing agriculture as a vocation. In addition, the economic component (0.291) and social element (0.229) also had a substantial and favorable impact. An in-depth analysis is conducted to get comprehensive understanding of the personal, social, economic, psychological, market, situational, labor, and next-generation aspects that agricultural landholders encounter. The evaluated recommendations would facilitate the transformation of agriculture into a lucrative venture, hence enticing farmers and young people to sustain their involvement in agricultural operations. The resolution to the issue lies not in a limited number of packages and programs, but rather in implementing substantial modifications to the current agricultural policy. The expansion and development of other sectors should not come at the expense of agriculture.

Suryana, N. K., et.al. (2022) mentioned that CSR plays a crucial role in promoting social empowerment by fostering self-sufficiency within communities and enhancing overall social well-being. The study aimed to determine the impact of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on the empowerment of Women Farmer Groups (KWT) in Kampung Salak. Additionally, it sought to assess the current level of empowerment among the Women Farmer Groups (KWT) in Kampung Salak and develop a strategy for their empowerment through CSR. The informant selection approach included purposive sampling, which involved a total of 10 individuals. The data analysis used descriptive qualitative analysis, which included gathering data via data reduction, data presentation, generating findings, verification, and finalizing results. The study's findings revealed the many functions of CSR in promoting social empowerment as follows: (a) The motivator received an average score of 2.75, meeting the good criterion. (b) The educator received an average score of 3, meeting the good criteria. (c) The facilitator received an average score of 2.8, meeting the good criteria. The level of empowerment of the Women Farmer Groups (KWT) in terms of participation received an average score of 2.8, meeting the criterion for a good level. In terms of satisfying their requirements, they received an average score of 2.6, also meeting the criteria for a good level. Additionally, their skills received an average score of 2.75, which also meets the criteria for a good level. The strategies employed to empower the Women Farmer Groups (KWT) in Kampung Salak through CSR encompass: (a) expanding the cultivation area and enhancing the productivity of the harvest yield, (b) advancing the processing of agricultural products, (c) expanding the marketing network and forming partnerships, and (d) fostering the development and implementation of innovative practices through the CSR program.

Hudaifah, A., et.al. (2019) mentioned that the objective of this study was to identify a reliable financial planning formula or model that aligns with the inherent features of a paddy farming cycle in Tuban. The qualitative study utilizes an engaged and involved community by conducting a focus group discussion, in-depth interviews, and face-to-face interviews with relevant stakeholders and key informants. The Salam contract, a very advantageous financial

strategy, eliminates the lengthy business chain often seen in most Indonesian enterprises. Implementing the Syariah approach to Corporate Social Responsibility (I-CSR) may serve as a method to address the funding gap in the execution of a Salam contract. The application of the Salam contract is contingent upon the Islamic farmer cooperatives (BMT), which are a unit of a joint venture organization that serves as the primary actors in carrying out the role of a paddy warehouse-trading agent and providing direct finance to farmers. The zakat, infāq, and shodaqoh institution (LAZ) provides significant support by training and motivating paddy farmers to enhance their skills and competence. This support aims to help them enter end-user markets with the use of information technology.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research Problem

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) plays a vital role in fostering sustainable development by addressing societal and environmental concerns. This research aims to explore the factors influencing CSR initiatives focused on educating farmers about organic farming in the specific context of Khambhat and Mehsana districts. As these districts are integral to the agricultural landscape of the state of Gujarat, understanding the dynamics of CSR in promoting organic farming can have broader implications for sustainable agricultural practices. The central research problem is to identify and analyze the factors that contribute to the successful implementation of Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives aimed at educating farmers on organic farming in Khambhat and Mehsana districts of Gujarat State. This involves examining the motivations, challenges, and outcomes associated with CSR efforts in the context of sustainable agriculture.

3.2. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study for the checking the impact of corporate social responsibility on the organic farming with special reference to Khambhat and Mehsana District have been mentioned below:

- To study the different kinds of profile of the farmers in which they are basically belonging with special reference to the Khambhat and Mehsana District of Gujarat State.
- To define the important factors with respect to the fulfilling the need of the farmers for the part of the Corporate Social Responsibility.

3.3. Limitations of the Study

The limitations are very difficult to catch for any research study. The limitations for this particular study are mentioned below:

1. The sample size could be bigger
2. The study could be extended to some more districts of Gujarat

3.4. Sampling Plan of the Study

The sampling plan for this particular study in terms of defining the impact of corporate social responsibility on the organic farming done by the farmers especially in the Mehsana and Khambhat district of Gujarat state:

Table 1: Sampling Plan of the Study

Sampling Plan Elements	Description
Sampling Technique	Non-Probabilistic Convenient Sampling
Sample Size	Total of 100 Samples have been taken from the farmers of the Mehsana and Khambhat District of the Gujarat State to find out the factors which are considered to be the important for the receiving the impact of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as a part of the consideration of the Impact on the organic farming.
Total Population	Demographics of the farmers from the selected district of Gujarat state i.e. Mehsana and Khambhat District of Gujarat State
Sampling Frame	Structured Questionnaire have been framed for the farmers of the Khambhat and Mehsana district of Gujarat state for knowing their opinion in terms of the role of CSR with the consideration of educating them for the organic farming.
Letting the Consent to the Farmers	Farmers have been informed well in advance by the researcher for generating the study

(Source: Research Result)

4. Data Analysis and Interpretation:

Table 2: Socio Demographic Profile of the Farmers in Mehsana and Khambhat District.

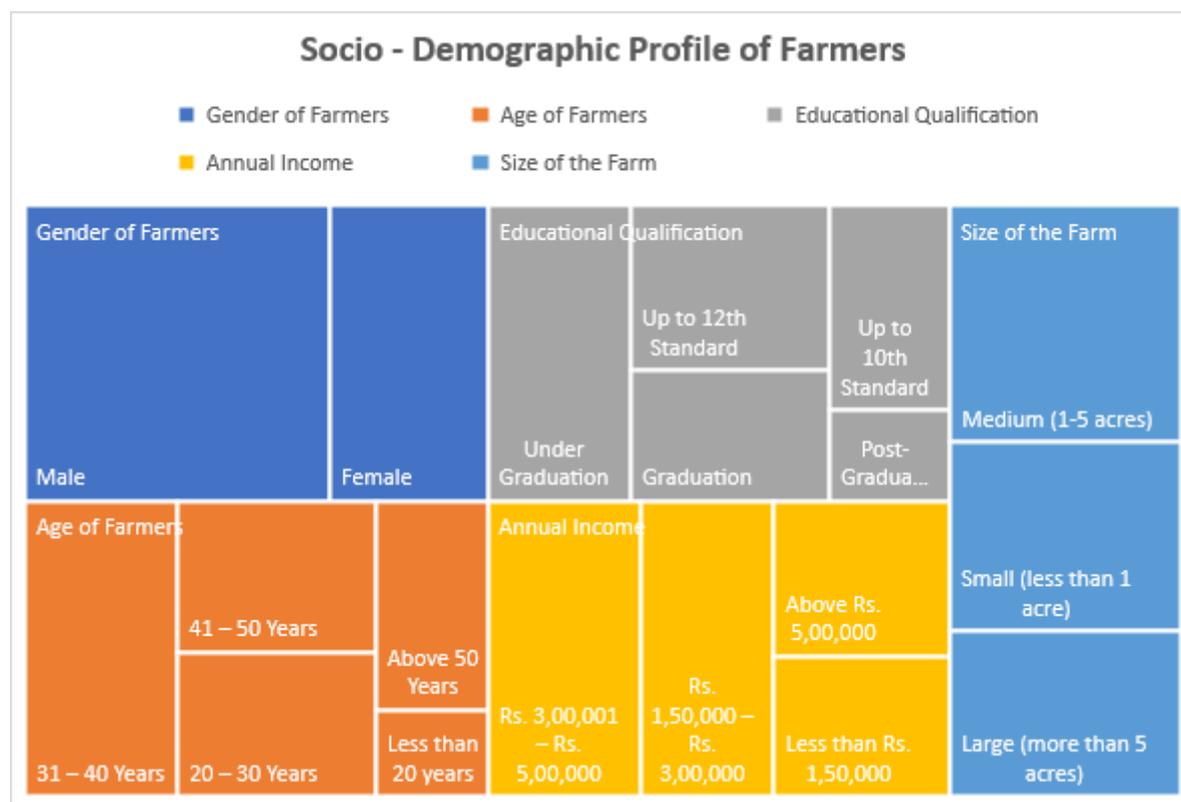
Socio-Demographic Profile of Farmers	Frequency
Gender of Farmers	
Male	66
Female	34
Age of Farmers	
Less than 20 years	07
20 – 30 Years	21
31 – 40 Years	33
41 – 50 Years	22
Above 50 Years	17
Educational Qualification	
Up to 10 th Standard	18

Up to 12 th Standard	24
Under Graduation	31
Graduation	19
Post-Graduation	08
Annual Income	
Less than Rs. 1,50,000	18
Rs. 1,50,000 – Rs. 3,00,000	29
Rs. 3,00,001 – Rs. 5,00,000	33
Above Rs. 5,00,000	20
Size of the Farm	
Small (less than 1 acre)	32
Medium (1-5 acres)	40
Large (more than 5 acres)	28

(Source: Research Result)

The above table represents socio-demographic profile of farmers in Mehsana and Khambhat districts offers insights into the gender distribution, age distribution, educational qualifications, annual income, and the size of farms. The detailed interpretation of each of the profile of the farmers from these two districts of Gujarat state have been mentioned below:

The data indicated that 66% of the farmers are male, while 34% are female. This suggests a gender imbalance in the farming community, with a higher representation of male farmers. The majority of farmers fall within the age range of 20 to 50 years, with the highest frequency in the 31-40 years category. This suggests that a significant portion of the farming population is in the active and productive age group. The educational profile of farmers is diverse, with representation across various educational levels. The highest frequencies are observed in the categories of 'Under Graduation' and 'Up to 12th Standard.' This indicates a mix of educational backgrounds among farmers. The majority of farmers have an annual income falling within the range of Rs. 1,50,000 to Rs. 5,00,000. This suggests a middle-income group dominating the sample, with a relatively smaller proportion having incomes below Rs. 1,50,000 or above Rs. 5,00,000. The data on the size of farms indicates that there is a relatively even distribution among small, medium, and large farms. However, the highest frequency is observed in the 'Medium' category (1-5 acres), followed by 'Small' farms (less than 1 acre) and 'Large' farms (more than 5 acres). This distribution provides insights into the diversity of farm sizes in the surveyed population.

Figure 1: Socio Demographic Profile of the Farmers in Mehsana and Khambhat District.

(Source: Research Result)

Table 3: Total Variance Explained for the factors for the Corporate Social Responsibility on the Organic Farming in Mehsana and Khambhat District

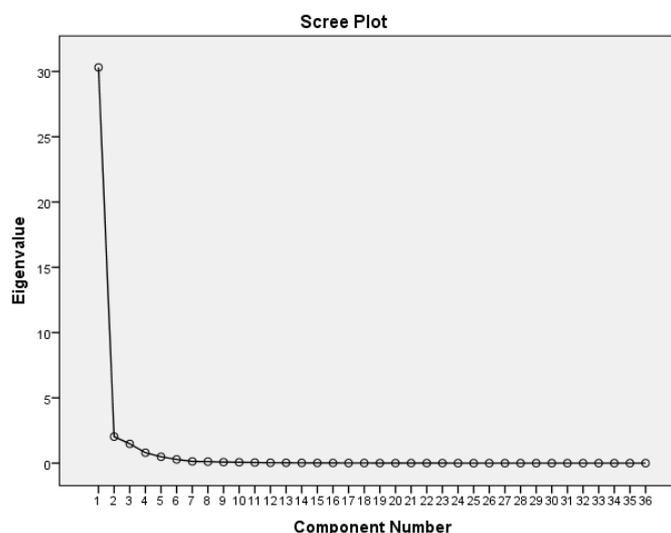
Total Variance Explained									
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	20.310	54.194	54.194	20.310	54.194	54.194	29.980	53.279	53.279
2	18.035	30.652	84.846	18.035	30.652	84.846	17.310	5.418	84.696
3	1.380	3.112	93.959	1.380	3.112	93.959	1.535	4.263	93.959
4	.803	2.230	96.189						
5	.486	1.351	97.539						
6	.286	.793	98.333						
7	.135	.375	98.708						
8	.116	.323	99.031						

9	.081	.224	99.255						
10	.067	.187	99.441						
11	.046	.127	99.568						
12	.033	.092	99.660						
13	.030	.082	99.742						
14	.020	.056	99.798						
15	.018	.049	99.847						
16	.015	.041	99.888						
17	.011	.030	99.918						
18	.009	.024	99.943						
19	.005	.015	99.957						
20	.005	.014	99.971						
21	.004	.012	99.982						
22	.003	.008	99.990						
23	.002	.007	99.997						
24	.001	.003	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

(Source: Research Result)

Figure 2: Scree Plot for the factors for the Corporate Social Responsibility on the Organic Farming in Mehsana and Khambhat District



(Source: Research Result)

The table and Scree Plot provided represents the Total Variance Explained for factors derived from Principal Component Analysis (PCA) in the context of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Organic Farming in Mehsana and Khambhat District.

The first component explains a substantial portion of the variance (54.194%). After rotation, it retains its significance in explaining the variance (53.279%). The second component contributes significantly to the total variance (30.652%). After rotation, its contribution decreases, indicating potential overlap with other components. The third component captures

a smaller percentage of variance (3.112%), and its contribution increases after rotation. The first three components collectively explain 93.959% of the total variance after rotation, suggesting that these factors are essential in understanding the relationship between CSR and organic farming in Mehsana and Khambhat District. The scree plot or a similar visualization can aid in deciding the optimal number of components to retain, balancing the explained variance with simplicity in interpretation. In summary, the table and Scree Plot provided insights into the contribution of each component in explaining the variance in the data, emphasizing the importance of the first three components in the context of CSR's impact on organic farming in the specified districts.

Table 4: Factor Name for the perception for measuring the impact of CSR activities on the Organic farming in Mehsana and Khambhat district

Factor Number	Factor Name
Factor 1	Adoption of Organic Farming Practices
Factor 2	Improvement in Yield and Crop Quality
Factor 3	Enhanced Socio-Economic Well-being of Farmers

(Source: Research Result)

The table you provided associates factor numbers with factor names related to the perception of consumers toward the impact of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities on organic farming in Mehsana and Khambhat districts.

Factor 1 - Adoption of Organic Farming Practices: This factor likely corresponds to the perception that CSR activities have an impact on the adoption of organic farming practices. It may encompass aspects such as the promotion of sustainable and environmentally friendly agricultural methods through CSR initiatives.

Factor 2 - Improvement in Yield and Crop Quality: Suggested that there is a perception among individuals that CSR activities contribute to improvements in the yield and quality of crops in organic farming. This could imply that CSR initiatives are seen as positively influencing agricultural outcomes and productivity.

Factor 3 - Enhanced Socio-Economic Well-being of Farmers: Reflected the perception that CSR activities positively contribute to the socio-economic well-being of farmers engaged in organic farming. This may include aspects such as increased income, improved livelihoods, and overall better socio-economic conditions for farmers.

5. Findings, Conclusions and Suggestions of the Study:

5.1. Findings and Conclusions:

The socio-demographic profile highlights the heterogeneity within the farming community in Mehsana and Khambhat districts. Understanding the demographics of farmers is essential for tailoring agricultural policies, extension services, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives to meet the specific needs of different farmer groups. Policymakers, agricultural researchers, and CSR practitioners can use this information to design targeted interventions and support mechanisms that align with the characteristics and requirements of the local farming population. These factors from the factor analysis indicated that individuals in Mehsana and Khambhat districts perceive CSR activities as having a multifaceted impact on

organic farming. Beyond the direct agricultural practices, these factors indicate that CSR initiatives are associated with broader outcomes related to crop quality, farmer well-being, and the adoption of sustainable farming practices. This interpretation aligns with the idea that CSR initiatives should not only focus on the immediate and tangible outcomes but should also consider the holistic impact on the community and the environment.

5.2. Suggestions of the Study:

- To validate and refine these factors, it would be beneficial to conduct more in-depth qualitative research, such as interviews or focus group discussions, to understand the specific elements that individuals associate with each factor.
- Quantitative surveys could be designed to measure the strength and prevalence of these perceptions among different demographic groups within the community.
- It is crucial to consider the local context and cultural nuances when interpreting these factors. Conducting local stakeholder engagement could provide valuable insights into the unique aspects of CSR perception in the Mehsana and Khambhat districts.

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