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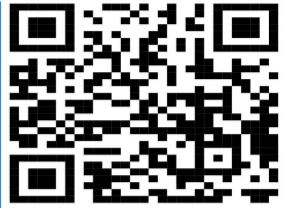
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The Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Initiatives on Employee Attraction and Retention

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	Abstract
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INTRODUCTION

One of the most significant challenges that the majority of businesses face simultaneously is the Human Resources function, which consists of recruiting and maintaining the greatest skills in order to accomplish corporate goals. Due to the significant expenses that are spent from recruiting procedures, it is an essential aspect in the management of an organization's resources (Kim, Song, and Lee 2016). This is because of the possibility of an increased turnover and the associated costs. According to Backhaus et al. (2002), there is now a "war for talent" ongoing, and there is a pressing need to acquire a strategic competitive edge in the labour market. Therefore, it is essential to place a high priority on the retention and attraction of internal and external human resources, respectively, in order to guarantee a steady supply of workers throughout the course of the prolonged period of time. According to Russell and Brannan (2016), a significant number of company executives are only beginning to acknowledge the fact that people play a more active part in selecting the businesses they will work for in the future.

According to Falkenberg and Brunsael (2011), a number of studies have shown that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts are responsible for contributing to the positive results of successful organisations and the corporate image of such firms. There has not been a sufficient amount of research conducted in the past that focuses on the perception of corporate social responsibility (CSR) by the general public and how that affects employee attractiveness (Zhang & Gowan 2012). For example, the majority of research conducted in the past has concentrated on the relationship between CSR and organisational performance, financial performance, social responsibility investment (SRI), and firm competitiveness. Additionally, it is essential to do research and analysis on the many aspects of corporate social responsibility (CSR), as well as to investigate the ways in which these aspects influence the employment choices of job seekers, as well as the perceptions and attitudes of employees inside an organization, regardless of its size.

Both academic and non-academic sources, such as the media, experts, and pundits, have acknowledged the significance and value of corporate social responsibility (CSR), which often provides a company with the opportunity to gain a possible advantage over its rivals. It has been noted that the implementation of corporate social responsibility has a positive impact on the financial performance of companies (Cho et al., 2019), employee engagement (Bapat & Upadhyay, 2021), and other aspects of business. Because of the benefits that come with corporate social responsibility (CSR), many businesses have begun to include CSR-related activities into their business strategies and operations.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has evolved to become a marginal issue to a strategic imperative among companies around the world. In the modern competitive labor market, CSR initiatives are not limited to improvement of the corporate image or the ability to meet the ethical requirements rather, they have a profound effect on the human resource performance, especially attraction and retention of employees. Companies that engage in active CSR practices are an indication of commitment to social, environmental, and ethical responsibilities thus appealing to the employees and potential hires on a deeper level. Such consistency of organizational values and employee expectations creates loyalty, engagement, and long-term commitment.

The impact of CSR on staff recruitment is more pronounced with younger age groups of workers like the Millennials and the Generation Z as they consider working with socially responsible organizations. CSR programs are used as a source of competitive labor market, complementing employer branding, and making organizations more attractive to talent pools who are concerned about good conduct. At the retention end, CSR promotes a sense of purpose and belonging which consequently leads to increased job satisfaction and reduced attrition. Keerti (2023) emphasizes that CSR activities play a role in employee well-being, engagement, and organizational culture factors which are key retention drivers.

Theoretically, Stakeholder Theory and Social Exchange Theory can be used to explain the effect of CSR on attraction and retention. According to Stakeholder Theory, an organization should compromise between the interests of all stakeholders including the employees and the Social Exchange Theory states that the increased investment by the organization in CSR should be rewarded by the employees through increased commitment and performance. These frameworks explain the mutual connection between the CSR programs and employee performance. Although previous studies in the antecedent research show that CSR efforts can positively impact employee morale, job satisfaction, and organizational loyalty, there is very little empirical evidence to support the claim that CSR has a direct association with attraction and retention outcomes in particular industries. This puts managers and policymakers in a dilemma of how CSR can be implemented as a human-resource strategy. Moreover, many organizations still treat CSR as a peripheral process as opposed to an employee engagement factor. CSR initiatives can be underestimated or implemented in a non-uniform manner, thus reducing the prospects of CSR forming a competitive advantage in talent management, in the absence of conclusive evidence that relates to this effect on workforce dynamics. Therefore, the current research will fill the knowledge gap in the area of the impact of CSR initiatives on employee attraction and retention. The research will explore this relationship by providing empirical evidence to prove the sustainability of CSR as a business approach to attract and retain talents, which in the end would result in organizational success and general welfare of the society at large.



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Objectives

- To check the effect of CSR initiatives (social, environmental and ethical) on employee attraction.
- To find out the role of CSR initiatives (social, environmental and ethical) on employee retention.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite the fact that corporate social responsibility (CSR) has been around for a very long time, defining it may be somewhat difficult since academics and executives in business have not yet reached a consensus on a single definition. The reason for this is most likely due to the diverse nature of the problems that are included by the notion. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is connected to such intricate and dynamic systems as ecology, society, and economics (Sheehy, 2015). It is likely that Carroll (1979) was the first person to propose a definition of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the context of business and management. Carroll proposed that CSR should encompass economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic responsibilities. This idea appears to have resulted in a new research agenda, as the ethical and philanthropic responsibilities began to be regarded as "beyond compliance." As concerns over corporate social responsibility garnered an increasing amount of attention, this strategy emerged as the most sought-after option. In later years, Robbins (1994) defined corporate social responsibility (CSR) as the duties of a company corporation that go beyond those mandated by the law and economics in order to seek long-term objectives that are beneficial to society. As this term captures the heart of corporate social responsibility, we decided to use it as a foundation for our selection of books.

Empirical studies also indicate that CSR has a beneficial effect on job satisfaction, which is a strong indicator of retention. The workers who feel that their organization helps the society to be well report higher rates of pride and motivation hence reduce their tendency to leave. In their systematic review, Yassin and Beckmann (2024) identified 270 journal articles and found that CSR activities have a positive effect in micro-level employee outcomes, including retention, morale, and organizational citizenship behaviors.

The age difference is another illustration of why CSR is relevant in retention strategies. The most significant changes to consider are those related to the employment of millennials and Generation Z employees as they tend to prefer organizations matching their personal values. They are therefore likely to stay in companies whose genuine intentions are sustainability, ethics and community building. Onkila and Sarna (2021) note that CSR initiatives act as a competitive advantage in the labor markets, which make organisations more appealing to younger human resources and at the same time minimise turnover among current employees.

This shift in the generation highlights the need to have the organizations integrate CSR in their strategic frames and not push it to the periphery as fringe activities. Otherwise, the retention of talents is at stake because the competitors that show stronger commitments towards social responsibility will attract the leaving employees. These theoretical propositions are supported by empirical data of various industries. As an example, in the banking sector, CSR activities like financial inclusion, community outreach and wellness programs among other activities have proven to increase retention rates. As stressed by Boutmaghzoute and Moustaghfir (2021), turnover is directly reduced by actions of CSR that are related to the needs of the employees, such as recognition programs and ethical practices at the workplace. In line with this, Yassin and Beckmann (2024) emphasize that CSR programs create a favorable organizational culture that strengthens the loyalty of the employees and prevents attrition.

Even though evidence is blossoming, there are still gaps in literature. Majority of the existing literature is anchored in the Western context and little empirical information has been carried out in the developing economies, thus creating a sense of ambiguity about the applicability of results to other cultural and institutional backgrounds. Onkila and Sarna (2021) recommend the need to conduct additional cross-cultural studies in order to explore the applicability of CSR in employee retention across various environments. In addition, many studies do not question the mediating presence of employee motivation and engagement in the relationship between CSR and retention outcomes though CSR is often linked to retention outcomes. The achievement of these gaps would provide a more detailed picture on how CSR can be strategically utilized as a sustainable human-resource practice.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The population of the study includes those workers who operate in the industry sector of Hattar, District Haripur. Hattar Industrial Estate is one of the largest industrialities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with a wide range of industry such as textiles, cement, food processing industry, chemicals industry, pharmaceutical industry, and packaging industry that provide a high number of employees with a wide range of workforce expertise such as skilled worker to managers. The CSR initiatives in this industry are often focused on the safety of workplace, environmental sustainability, and development of communities. As a result, the employees have a direct contact with such practices, and they are an effective population to explore the impact of CSR on organizational attractiveness and employee retention. The research shall include employees in different levels of the



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organization such as operational, administrative and supervisory to have representative sample of the industrial workforce. The stratified random sampling will be used to reflect the heterogeneity that defines this sector. This group is of special interest since industrial players, in Hattar, tend to experience high employee turnover and lack of skilled labour thus making CSR a potentially useful strategic instrument in improving retention and recruitment rates.

The current study will determine its sample size through the formula of Yamane (1967) which can be derived based on the formula of Yamane, which assumes the overall number of employees in the industrial sector of Hattar, District Haripur. Given a decent number of the workforce distributed in various sectors, a sample population of about 250 workers will be attracted hence guaranteeing the consistency and external validity of the results retrieved. This size sample is considered sufficient to cover diverse opinions that cut across operational, administrative and managerial levels.

The approach that will be used in the selection of participants will be based on stratified random sampling. The employees will be divided into categories based on organizational hierarchy i.e. workers, supervisors and managers and random samples will be taken in proportions out of each category. This method will ensure that there is a complete coverage of all employee groups and thus avoid biasness as well as enhance the accuracy of the empirical results. Stratified sampling is particularly suitable with heterogeneous population like workers in industries where it is expected that experiences and perceptions of CSR initiatives will vary with various occupational jobs.

The information to be used in this research will be collected through a questionnaire survey which will take the form of a structured questionnaire to be given to employees working in the industrial sector of Hattar, District Haripur. The questionnaire will be developed to evaluate the perception toward Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities and their impact on the attraction and retention of employees. It will also include closed-ended questions on the use of Likert scale and demographic questions to cover all of the relevant variables. The survey will be distributed both in a hardcopy and electronic format, depending on the accessibility of organizations, to maximize the participation rates. A pilot test will be carried out before a large group of employees to ensure clarity and consistency. Such ethical issues as informed consent and confidentiality as well as voluntary participation will be strictly followed. The research will be carried out within a specified period to maintain consistency and the answers will be coded to be later subjected to statistical analysis. This methodology ensures precision, consistency, and soundness in the process of gaining the employee opinions regarding the CSR practices.

RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

Reliability Statistics

Variables	Cronbach Alpha	Remarks
Social Initiative	0.86	Reliable
Environmental Initiative	0.95	Reliable
Ethical Initiative	0.77	Reliable
Employee Retention	0.81	Reliable
Employee Attraction	0.79	Reliable

The reliability statistics presented in the table give Cronbach Alpha coefficients of the study variables, which all exceed the traditional cutoff of 0.70 thus confirming strong internal consistency. Values were 0.86, 0.95, 0.77, 0.81 and 0.79 in social initiatives, environmental initiatives, ethical initiatives, employee retention, and employee attraction respectively. These coefficients have statistically shown that items that were used to measure each construct have coherence and stability, which means that the respondents gave consistent answers to related items. The greatest coefficient was secured by environmental initiatives, which means that the participants had rather homogeneous perceptions as the sustainability and environmental practices. Theoretically, the findings increase the validity of the following analysis processes. Assure of reliability eliminates the chances that the results of the relationships between CSR initiatives and employee outcomes would be due to random measurements error and thus depict genuine relationships. The available literature sheds light on the importance of reliability in CSR studies. Yassin and Beckmann (2024) emphasize that accurate accounting of the dimensions of CSR is essential to the establishment of links to employee outcomes like retention and attraction. Similarly, according to Boutmaghzoute and Moustaghfir (2021) measures of the constructs of CSR should be reliable in order to explain their impact on the dynamics of workforce. The existing findings help to support the idea that the tools used in the given research are reliable and contribute to the reasonable interpretation of regression analyses and confirm the assumption that CSR initiatives have a significant impact on employee behavior in the industrial sector that Hattar operates.

Regression

(CSR Initiatives - Employee Retention)

Employee Retention	Coefficient	Std Error	t-value	p-value
Social Initiative	0.296	0.116	2.551	.000
Environmental Initiative	0.334	0.103	3.242	.000
Ethical Initiative	0.249	0.112	2.223	.000
R-Square	0.571			
F-value	33.19			
P-value	.000			

The regression table shows the relationship between corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs and employee retention in the industrial industry of Hattar. Coefficients indicate the intensity of each predictor: social initiatives have a coefficient of 0.296, a t statistic of 2.551, and a p -value of less than 0.001, meaning the initiatives have a statistically significant impact on retention; the environmental initiatives have the strongest impact, with a coefficient of 0.334, a t -statistic of 3.242, and a p -value of less than 0.001, and so, show that sustainability practices have a strong impact on retention. The total model is useful as it explains 57.1 per cent of variation in employee retention ($R^2 = 0.571$), which is high. The fact that the model F statistic of 33.19 exceeds that of a 0.001 p value proves the model to be statistically significant. These findings indicate that, overall CSR programs have a powerful and significant effect on employee retention. The findings are in line with the past literature in discussion. Yassin and Beckmann (2024) found that CSR activities have a consistent positive impact on employee results including retention; Boutmaghzoute and Moustaghfir (2021) found that CSR actions lower turnover through the establishment of loyalty and organisational commitment; the strong effect of environmental activities supports the findings of Onkila and Sarna (2021) who stated that sustainability activities are becoming a central focus in how employees view organisational responsibility. In turn, the current findings support the idea that CSR does not only act as a reputational tool but as a strategic driver of workforce stability in an industrial setting as well.

(CSR Initiatives - Employee Attraction)

Employee Retention	Coefficient	Std Error	t-value	p-value
Social Initiative	0.301	0.124	2.427	.000
Environmental Initiative	0.247	0.111	2.225	.000
Ethical Initiative	0.416	0.121	3.438	.000
R-Square	0.446			
F-value	28.47			
P-value	.000			

The regression table provides the outline of the correlation between employee attraction in the industrial sector of Hattar and corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Estimated coefficients provide the strength of each predictor on a relative level. The coefficient of social initiatives is 0.301, t-statistic is 2.427 and the p-value is below 0.001, which indicates that the effect of social initiatives on attraction is statistically significant. The coefficient of the environmental initiatives is 0.247, the t-statistic is 2.225 and the p-value is less than 0.001 and thus the initiatives also play a significant role in the result. The influence of ethical initiatives is the largest, having a coefficient of 0.416, t-statistic of 3.438, and a p-value of below 0.001, which means that ethical initiatives are especially relevant in employee attraction.

The general model is able to explain employee attraction ($R^2 = 0.446$) with a moderate but significant influence. A $F = 28.47$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.001$ proves the statistical significance of regression model. Combined with other results, they highlight that CSR efforts have an overall powerful impact on employee attraction, and the ethical initiative turns out to be the most powerful dimension. The findings are concordant with the literature available. Yassin and Beckmann (2024) noted that CSR activities increase the appeal of organizations, particularly when ethics are put into the limelight. Boutmaghzoute and Moustaghfir (2021) indicated that CSR activities enhance the results of recruitment in a positive manner, as they are an indicator of organizational accountability and equity. Onkila and Sarna (2021) also stated that educated and younger employees are highly likely to agree that ethics and CSR activities are key considerations in choosing an employer, as these two aspects are vital in determining employers through values and integrity



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considerations. To this end, the research in this paper validates the fact that CSR programs especially ethical ones are strategic tools aimed at attracting talent within the industrial environment.

CONCLUSION

The results of this paper give solid grounds to the belief that corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs have a strong impact on staff retention and attraction in the industrial sector of Hattar, Haripur. The demographic analysis showed that the workforce was mainly constituted of male, middle-aged and relatively well-educated people and most of them possessed master-degree. Such a profile means that staff members have the experience and the ability to judge the organizational practice such as CSR. This categorization of job titles further underscored the fact that the workers were more than dominant, which made the voices of the frontline employees to be well represented. The consistency and reliability of all the measurement scales used were validated through reliability statistics where the Cronbach Alpha values were found to be 0.77 to 0.95. This increases the validity of the regression analyses, and makes sure that the observed relationships are real and not the results of measurement error. The outcome of the regression analysis was that CSR programs produce a significant influence on retaining employees. Social initiatives (b 0.296, p 0.001), environmental initiatives (b 0.334, p 0.001) and ethical initiatives (b 0.249, p 0.001) all proved to be significant, and the impact of environmental initiatives was the most prominent. The model was able to explain 57.1% of the retention variances which implies that CSR is a strong predictor of workforce stability. The findings can be correlated with the literature, which highlights the importance of CSR in building loyalty and decreasing the turnover, especially in cases when community engagement and sustainability are placed as priorities.

On the same note, CSR programs were observed to have a major impact on employee attraction. The social initiatives (b 0.301, p 0.001), environmental initiatives (b 0.247, p 0.001), and ethical initiatives (b 0.416, p 0.001) are all significant and positive contributors. The model accounted 44.6percent of attraction, which validates the claim that CSR is a strategic aspect in recruitment. Ethical behaviours especially, are highly appealing to the potential workforce and give a signal of fairness, honesty, and corporate accountability. This observation is in line with the research that indicates the increasing significance of ethics and values in the selection of employees, particularly young and educated employees. Collectively, the findings highlight the two-fold nature of CSR in retention and attraction of talent. The CSR becomes an important strategic instrument in the case of industrial organizations in Hattar, where skilled labor competes and turnover becomes a key issue. Through investing in social, environmental, and ethical activities, organizations will improve their reputation, increase employee satisfaction, and ensure workforce stability in the long-run. These findings are both theoretical and practical in nature. In theory, they complement stakeholder and social exchange views which posit that workers are also rewarding the organizational responsibility with loyalty and commitment. In practice, they imply that industrial companies ought to place CSR as one of their human resource policies, that sustainability, ethics, and social welfare should become a part and parcel of the company activities. This is a way of not only helping employees but also helping organizations gain competitiveness in the market as well as development of the community. Conclusively, the paper has proven that the CSR activities are not marginal activities but they are core workforce management in the industrial setting. With the balance between organizational behavior and the expectations of the staff and the values of the society, companies in Hattar will be able to grow sustainably in the short term and build a devoted and motivated workforce.

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