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Maharatna PSUs: CSR Issues and Challenges

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Abstract

Maharatna Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) occupy a significant position in the Indian economy through their contribution to infrastructure, energy, manufacturing, transportation, and other strategic sectors. Along with their economic responsibilities, these enterprises play an important role in fulfilling Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) objectives and contributing to inclusive and sustainable development. This study examines the major issues and challenges associated with CSR practices in Maharatna PSUs in India. The analysis focuses on key areas such as community development, education, healthcare, environmental sustainability, rural development, skill enhancement, livelihood generation, and social inclusion. Although Maharatna PSUs possess substantial financial and institutional resources to implement large-scale CSR initiatives, several challenges affect the effectiveness and sustainability of their programmes. These include difficulties in identifying genuine community needs, geographical and operational complexities, coordination with local stakeholders, limited community participation, monitoring and evaluation constraints, and ensuring transparency in the utilization of CSR funds. In addition, balancing statutory CSR requirements with long-term developmental objectives remains a significant concern. The study also highlights the challenges of measuring the social impact of CSR initiatives and ensuring that projects generate sustainable benefits rather than merely fulfilling regulatory expenditure requirements. Effective CSR implementation requires stronger stakeholder engagement, need-based planning, impact assessment, digital monitoring, institutional coordination, and greater transparency. The study argues that Maharatna PSUs can make a more substantial contribution to national development by integrating CSR with their core organizational strategies and Sustainable Development Goals. Strengthening accountability and outcome-based approaches can enhance the social value and long-term effectiveness of CSR initiatives undertaken by these enterprises.

Keywords: Maharatna PSUs, Corporate Social Responsibility, CSR, Public Sector Undertakings, Sustainable Development, Stakeholder Engagement, Social Impact, Community Development, CSR Challenges, India.

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