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**REVIEW OF LITERATURE** 

**NEED/IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY** 

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

OBJECTIVES

HYPOTHESES

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY** 

**RESULTS & DISCUSSION** 

INDINGS

RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

CONCLUSIONS

SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

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**CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN INDIAN BANKING SECTOR: A STUDY OF SONIPAT BRANCHES** 

#### KAVERI HANS RESEARCH SCHOLAR DEENBANDHU CHHOTU RAM UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY MURTHAL

#### DR. MANISHA ASSTT. PROFESSOR DEENBANDHU CHHOTU RAM UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY MURTHAL

#### ABSTRACT

In today's era, deregulation of financial sector, technological advancement and other product innovations makes the market competition stiffer. Various institutions and banks had undertaken CSR practices to have a special edge. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a concept whereby organizations consider the interest of society by taking responsibility. CSR practices adopted by banks can led to betterment of society specially the weaker section, increased profits, enhancing customer loyalty and brand awareness. Present study put light on the concept of CSR practices taken by Public sector & Private sector banks in Sonipat branches. The study shows that all surveyed banks present themselves as having Corporate Social Responsibility policy and practices. A wide range of Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives ranging from income generation activities for livelihood, mobile health services, education, adult literacy, agricultural development, establishment of credit counseling centers, infrastructure facilities being carried out by these Banks. The main obstacle which comes in the way is of lack of dedicated human resources towards Corporate Social Responsibility.

#### **KEYWORDS**

Banks, Corporate social responsibility, Society.

#### INTRODUCTION

anks act as financial intermediaries in our society: they price and value financial assets, they monitor borrowers, they manage financial risks and they organize the payment system. By performing these functions, banks have a huge impact on society and appear to play an important role in economic development. The potential and need for the banking sector to contribute to closing the gap between the rich and the poor has never been more apparent.

The problems of hunger, ignorance, ill-health, high mortality and illiteracy are most acute in rural areas. This is not because of inadequate resources but due to inadequate and improper planning process and investment pattern. The solutions for the above problem not lies with government only but private sector also plays a pivotal role in ensuring flow of private investment to those rural areas that have been left out of the development process.

Corporate Social Responsibility began with a focus on the role of business leaders, as initially how they manage their business with a view to society and how they return benefits to their local community. In the 1950s, the focus of Corporate Social Responsibility was on the behavior of companies as a whole. In 1980s, stress was on responsibility and more on the role of the organization in acting responsibly. In late 90s, new concepts like corporate governance, sustainable development also emerged.

Corporate social responsibility is an ongoing process rather than any destination by which an organization gives commitment to its stakeholders to perform business ethically and towards betterment of society. The introduction of privatization and globalization resulted in a demand for corporations to play a central role in efforts to eliminate poverty, achieve equitable and fair governance practices and environmental security. There was a need to merge responsibility of society with the business operations so as to maximize positive benefits that business can bring to human and environment. The initiative taken to achieve all this is known as corporate social responsibility. And banking sector plays important role because they are more associated with majority of people as compare to any other sector.

The World Business Council for Sustainable Development in its publication Making Good Business Sense by Lord Holme and Richard Watts used the following definition.

"Corporate Social Responsibility is the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the local community and society at large".

- Corporate social responsibility can also be broadly explained with four dimensions that are:
- 1. Economic responsibility: that is to produce quality goods and services and to be profitable.
- 2. Legal responsibility: is to perform operations within the limits of law. In other words legal responsibility is about to obey the law.
- 3. Ethical responsibility: is to adopt fair and transparent practices that go beyond legal compliance. Also to do what is right and avoid harm.
- 4. Discretionary responsibility: is to contribute to the community and to the quality of life.

CSR practices helps to put a good impact on their customers, employees, suppliers, shareholders, other stakeholders and on environment. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a concept whereby organizations consider the interest of society by taking responsibility. Corporate Social Responsibility practices adopted by banks can led to betterment of society specially the weaker section, increased profits, enhancing customer loyalty and also enhancing brand awareness. In today's scenario both public and private banks contribute towards society and environment. The major focus of both banks is social welfare however approaches are different. Public banks mainly focus on rural development where as private banks focus on education and health. The main aim of this paper is to study and analyses the Corporate Social Responsibility activities taken by Public and private Sector Bank's branches. The main objectives of the study are:

- 1. To discuss major practices adopted by banks at branch level.
- 2. To analyze the challenges they face in implementing Corporate Social Responsibility activities.
- 3. To explore towards what their main focus is about.

The present study is divided into five sections; first section gives a brief introduction which is followed by literature review as second section. Third section explains what type of methodology is used by researcher. Fourth section analyses the recent practices taken by banks, Last section summarizes the findings & conclusions.

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

Corporate Social Responsibility has become an integral part of corporate management strategy for banking industry participants in recent times. The banks are not only under pressure from the shareholders but also from other stakeholders such as suppliers, customers, brokers and so on to become more and more responsible in dealing with social issues in its day to day operations. Over the past few years, a rising emphasis has placed on companies and financial

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institution's Corporate Social Responsibility. Various studies are undertaken to measure CSR, to check its impact on customer's satisfaction and its impact on society. Some views of researchers in this context are discussed as below:

SenithiKumar, N; Ananth, A. and Arulraj, A. (2011) in their study of "Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility on Customer Satisfaction in Banking Industry" states that customer satisfaction is the mediating factor for banking service quality and the Corporate Social Responsibility is the most influential factor for the customer satisfaction. The main objective of their study was to analyze the overall banking service quality as perceived by the customers and to find out the relationship between the Corporate Social Responsibility and customer satisfaction and their influence on the service quality. They further explored that understanding the customer's perception of bank's service quality dimension is vital and important for banks. Corporate Social Responsibility positively influence customer satisfaction towards banking service quality.

Pria, S and Sangeetha, K. (2011) in their study "Factors influencing Corporate Social Responsibility Initiatives of the banks in Oman: A Study based on Stakeholders perspective" explore the factors that influence the Corporate Social Responsibility activities of the banks. The application of their research was to understand the stakeholder's views. They further state that stakeholders believe that financial performance is not a factor to determine the Corporate Social Responsibility pursuits of the bank. It is found that banks do not phase their Corporate Social Responsibility based on the strategies of their competitors. Corporate Social Responsibility contributions of a bank are positively related to the diversity and nature of the workforce. They also state that presence of non-governmental, social and independent private organization as a factor to boost the banks involvement for social cause. Their research has identified three principle factors i.e. presence of non-governmental organization and social organization, good corporate governance system and diversity of the work force to pre dominantly influence the Corporate Social Responsibility activities of banks

McDonald, Lynette M. and Thiel, Sharyn Rundle (2008) in their study "Corporate Social Responsibility and Bank Customer Satisfaction: A Research Agenda" explores that bank's increasing investment in Corporate Social Responsibility program may not represent the best investment in terms of increasing satisfaction. Instead they propose that customer centric initiatives (Open new branches, Add staff) may achieve better customer outcomes than Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives. Further they identified a number of customer focused initiatives that determine the overall customer satisfaction. Finally they suggest that an understanding of how to best allocate company resources to increase satisfaction will also enable bank marketers to reduce customer churn and hence increase market share and profits.

Sharma, Nishi (2011) in her study "Corporate Social Responsibility Practices & Corporate Social Responsibility Reporting in Indian Banking Sector" explores that banking Sector in India is showing interest in integrating Corporate Social Responsibility into their business models but its Corporate Social Responsibility reporting practices are far from satisfaction. She further analyzes Corporate Social Responsibility practices in India by private & public banks and Corporate Social Responsibility reporting of banks in India. The study attempts to examine the steps initiated by India Scheduled Commercial banks to portray their responsible behavior. She states that there are only few banks which report their activities on triple bottom line principles. Main cause for negligence on the issue of reporting is the absence of mandatory provisions regarding reporting of Corporate Social Responsibility practices. The study further suggested that there is a great use for enacting some stringent regulatory provisions to ensure the adherence to social responsibility principles. Also, banks must provide appropriate training to its employees on environmental and social risks in lending to ensure that climate change is taken into consideration in corporate banking decisions.

#### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The term research methodology is combination of two words namely research and methodology. It explains what type of methodology is used in the research: what type of research researcher is conducting, what is the sample area and sample size, which tools are used etc.

Present study was exploratory cum descriptive in nature. Sample size of the present study comprises the banks both Public and Private.

3 public banks and 2 private banks are selected for the present study. They are:-

NAMES OF BANKS						
Public Banks	Private Banks					
State Bank of India	HDFC Bank					
Punjab National Bank	ICICI Bank					
Bank Of Baroda						

For the analysis of present study both primary and secondary data are collected. Primary data are collected through Bank's Branch Manager because to fulfill the objectives of the present study they know the actual position of the Corporate Social Responsibility activities in banks. Secondary data are collected through journals, Bank's magazines and websites.

#### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

The major thrust areas for Corporate Social Responsibility practice in Indian banks are common in public sector and private sector banks. These areas include children welfare, community welfare, education, environment, healthcare, poverty eradication, rural development, vocational training, women's empowerment, protection to girl child, employment. Indian public sector banks most actively participate for alleviation of regional imbalances through initiating various activities for promotion of rural development. Besides it, they primarily focus on the issues of gender equality through women's empowerment. The major areas for Corporate Social Responsibility activities in Indian private sector bank are to enhance the level of education and employment. The other prominent areas for their concern include community welfare, programs for child welfare and protection of environment.

The main challenge in public sector banks is the lack of human resources and the young talent. Young people may take some initiatives but in public sector banks majority of staff is not so young thus they take their steps back sometimes. However challenge in private sector bank is of lack of funds and of know how. The analysis is done with support of different tables which are summarizes as below:

TA	BLE 1: CORPORATI	E SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY	DEPARTMENT IN BAN	IKS	
Having CSR Department		Private Ban	ks		
	Bank of Baroda	Punjab National Bank	State Bank of India	ICICI Bank	HDFC Bank
Yes	-				-
No	No	No	No	No	No

From the Table:1 we analyzed that none of the banks have separate Corporate Social Responsibility department at Branch level. All initiatives are taken at corporate level. At corporate level every bank have separate Corporate Social Responsibility department such as ICICI foundation, Bank of Baroda's Rural and Agri Banking Department etc.

Public Banks	Private Banks			
Bank of Baroda	Punjab National Bank	State Bank of India	ICICI Bank	HDFC Bank
Responsibility for socio-economic development	Government guidelines	RBI guidelines	Public image	Brand image

From the above table we get to know that public sector banks undertake Corporate Social Responsibility activities because they feel responsible for the development of the country and also because of RBI guidelines whereas Private Banks undertake these activities to increase brand image.

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TABLE 3: CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY INITIATIVES TAKEN								
	Public Banks		Private Banks					
Bank of Baroda Punjab National Bank State Bank of India				ICICI Bank	HDFC Bank			
Initiatives taken by	Founder of the	Branch manager at	Government or RBI	Managing Director	Managing Director			
	bank branch level guidelines		guidelines					
Informed employees	Meetings and	Meetings and circulars	Letters or circulars	E-mails, E-circulars,	Centralized mails, internal			
through	circulars			meetings	employees portal sites			

The above table tells us that generally the head of the bank or the founder of the bank takes the initiatives and then by circulars, emails and meetings they inform their employees and branches about the Corporate Social Responsibility activities and also give them some guidelines to achieve them.

#### TABLE 4: ACTIVITIES TAKEN BY BANKS

Banks	Activities
Bank of	Establishment of 36 Baroda sar-yojgar vikas sansthans for imparting training to unemployed youth free of cost for gainful self-employment &
Baroda	entrepreneurship skill development. In addition 52 Baroda gramin pramersh kender, 18 financial literacy & credit councelling centres has been
	established.
Punjab	KYC norms, Senior citizen charter, farmer's club, farmer's training center, customer committee, e-knowledge etc.
National Bank	
State Bank of	Donations to Child Welfare Facilities, Training for Child Care Personnel, adoption of children for further education and quality life.
India	
ICICI Bank	Primary health, elementary education, financial education, sustainable livelihoods
HDFC Bank	The bank has approximately 33% of its branches in rural and under banked locations. The bank partners with NGOs across India to support
	educational initiatives and livelihood training programs. The bank also involves in promoting financial awareness, banking solutions to SME and
	lending to self help groups.

#### TABLE 5: CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY DEPARTMENT IN BANKS

Willingness to dedicate staff's working hours to CSR activities	Public Banks			Private Banks	
	Bank of Baroda Punjab National Bank State Bank of India		ICICI Bank	HDFC Bank	
Yes	Y	Υ	Y	Y	
No		-			N

The above table shows that all public banks' managers are willing to dedicate some of working hours of their staff towards Corporate Social Responsibility activities. As per our survey, in private sector HDFC bank does not agree to devote some working hours. This is because lack of know-how and lack of time. Whereas ICICI bank agrees to this point but the problem arises at the employees' interests.

#### TABLE 6: TOP CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY DRIVERS (1-3)

CSR drivers	Public Banks		Private Ba	inks	
	Bank of Baroda	Punjab National	State Bank of	ICICI	HDFC
		Bank	India	Bank	Bank
Responsibility towards customer		Yes		Yes	Yes
expectation					
Responsibility towards local community	Yes		Yes		
Responsibility towards employees	-	Yes		Yes	Yes
Responsibility towards environment					
Responsibility towards shareholders					
Acting responsibly/ethically	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Being profitable/successful					
Others	Yes, towards under privileged uner youth	nployed			

From the above table, we analyze that main driver for Corporate Social Responsibility activities for both public and private banks are to act ethically and responsibly. For public banks next main driver is towards local community whereas for private banks meeting customer expectation is more important. Public banks are generally more towards society and private banks are more towards their customers and employees.

TABLE 7: PERCEIVED BENEFITS FROM CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ACTIVITIES

Benefits	Public Banks			Private Banks	
	Bank of Baroda	Punjab National Bank	State Bank of India	ICICI Bank	HDFC Bank
Improve public image	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1
Increase brand image	Yes	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
Increase support from the community	Yes	-	-		
Improve employee morale	Yes	Yes		Yes	-
Increase customer loyalty	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lower criticism from public					
Enhance investor's confidence	Yes				Yes
Increase sales		Yes		Yes	
Minimize regulatory problems	Yes			Yes	
Improve market share prices	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes

From the information available in the above table shows that the main benefit arises from the Corporate Social Responsibility activities is the increase in customers' loyalty. Also brand image, public image and market price of shares also enhanced due to Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives. Corporate Social Responsibility approach shows that the bank is not only concerned with their business but also towards society. Thus, the customers and other stakeholders believe in the system of banks and hence increase their loyalty and market share

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Activities	Public Banks			Private Banks	
	Bank of Baroda	Punjab National Bank	State Bank of India	ICICI Bank	HDFC Bank
Education	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Arts					
Public health			Yes	Yes	Yes
Micro Credit projects	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
Sports					
Social Investment			Yes	Yes	Yes
Environment			Yes		
Others	Yes, Community awareness & involvement youth	Yes, Govt. scheme			

TABLE 8: FOCUS OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ACTIVITIES

This table shows the main focus of Corporate Social Responsibility activities of banks. Public banks mainly focus on education of weaker section. This is further subdivided as education of students of rural areas and as financial literacy. There is lack of initiatives towards arts and sports. No bank had done any activity towards their upliftment. The main focus of private banks is towards social investment and public health. They have taken steps to ensure healthy Children and their proper education. Micro credit projects are common between public and private banks.

Obstacles	Public Banks			Private Banks	
	Bank of Baroda	<b>Punjab National Bank</b>	State Bank of India	ICICI Bank	HDFC Bank
Lack of HR		Yes			Yes
Lack of employee motivation	Yes	Yes		Yes	
Lack of time	Yes		Yes		
Lack of funds					
Lack of know-how		Yes		Yes	Yes
No support from technology					
No benefits expected from CSR					

We analyze from the above table that the major obstacle in the way of Corporate Social Responsibility in both public and private banks is the lack of employees' motivation and also lack of standard guidelines which can make them aware of the areas where Corporate Social Responsibility is needed. Absence of qualified staff and youth is also a problem. Staff of private banks generally has no information regarding Corporate Social Responsibility activities. So some steps should be taken in order to have standard guidelines.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Banks are beginning to recognize that they have a social responsibility to fulfill as they emerge from the shadow of traditional banking. Financial institutions can do a lot to assist efforts for corporate social responsibility and achieve sustainability.

Indian banks are realizing that without socio-economic development of the local communities, there can be no stability and sustainability for doing business so as to compete with the global market. In order to get an edge over the competitors, banks have to take a unique stand. It can be concluded that in today's informative world where information are readily available to general public Corporate Social Responsibility has been an important part of any organization to be successful. Organization in present world cannot be successful without taking into account the social responsibility. Corporate Social Responsibility has been a vital component for any organization to have perpetual success and to create brand.

The study shows that all surveyed banks present themselves as having Corporate Social Responsibility policy and practices. A wide range of Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives ranging from income generation activities for livelihood, mobile health services, education, adult literacy, agricultural development, establishment of credit counseling centers, infrastructure facilities being carried out by these Banks

Many banks promote and implement Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives through Human Resource Department, foundation or in partnership with NGOs, but do not have full-fledged Corporate Social Responsibility department. The main focus of banks is towards imparting education and towards rural benefits by providing micro-credit loans. But the main obstacle which comes in the way is of lack of dedicated human resources towards Corporate Social Responsibility. In future, the Corporate Social Responsibility activities should mandatory by govt. in all banks. Appointment of qualified staff should be made. Also the sectors like SME, sports, arts should also gain banks eyes so that these sectors can also become part of economic development. The training and gainful employment of unemployed youth will become most important in days to come.

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