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Corporate Social Performance and Firm Location:
Empirical Evidence

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ABSTRACT

The study addresses the relationship between firm location and the corporate social performance (CSP) of manufacturing enterprises in India. The study argues that a higher number of multinational corporations (MNCs) at a location leads to higher social performance. An environment and social involvement (ESI) index, based on ISO26000 and National Voluntary Guidelines, has been used to measure the corporate social performance of manufacturing enterprises. The data are obtained through questionnaires from a survey of 121 medium-sized manufacturing enterprises in the national capital region in India and analyzed through one-way ANOVA and linear regression. Results reveal that the presence of MNCs at the location of enterprises is significant to their CSP. The findings of the study aggregate to make original and substantive contributions to the CSP literature on the geography of strategic management. This research is valuable for social responsibility practitioners in developing countries for start-ups and small and medium enterprises who are seeking to enhance their understanding to formulate pragmatic and effective strategies to improve CSP.

KEYWORDS

CSR Performance, Economic Geography, Manufacturing Enterprises, Medium Enterprises, Multinational Corporations

INTRODUCTION

The advancements of global integration of the economy have led to increased competition from the emergence of multinational corporations and rise of small and medium enterprises due to global trade that led to increased economic growth and job creation in the community. It has also contributed to increased environmental and social challenges such as resource depletion, pollution, and inequality. To ensure sustainable development, it is crucial to embrace these changes while considering their potential impact on the environment, society, and the economy. This entails promote responsible

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business conduct, such as support local communities, reducing carbon emissions, promoting social equity, and fostering innovation that promotes sustainable development (Waddock et al., 2002). The location of firms is a key factor in determining their ability to achieve sustainable development through effective CSP practices (Husted et al., 2016). In line with the growing body of research that explores the link between geography and corporate strategy, it has been demonstrated that proximity and geography can account for a significant portion of the differences observed in CSP across companies in developed countries (Ding et al., 2019). Thus, firm location is critical to developing effective CSP.

Geographers, over two decades, explored transformation of social and environmental concerns into drivers of effective CSP (Hamilton, 2011). Geography though believed to be critical, but a widely neglected in the CSP literature (Tang et al., 2018). O'Connor et al. (2021) favoured that geography in CSP can add strategic value to the social responsibility policy and is critical to firm. Jiraporn et al. (2014) argued that CSP is a visible and observable aspect of a firm's operations, it is likely that companies are influenced by their geographic counterparts when devising their own CSP strategies. Di Giuli and Kostovetsky (2014) observed that CSP of firms in each state tend vary with the ideology of the ruling political party in that state. The literature on firm location and CSP is on three lines of enquiry: impact of CSP on firm's headquarters location (Ding et al., 2019), firms operating in the same location share similar CSP (Chintrakarn et al., 2017) and firm in higher CSR density areas tend to exhibit higher CSP (Husted et al., 2016). The literature documents the relationship between firm's geographic location and CSP. Despite the significant impact of geography on corporate policies, the exact mechanism by which it exerts this influence is not yet fully comprehended. Thus, further research is required to address this gap and explore if location influences CSP of enterprises. Also, the extant of literature has advanced the line of enquiry in developed countries and developing countries have received limited scholarly interest. Thus, further research in developing country is needed to further generalise the phenomenon.

The concept of social responsibility has evolved from the responsibility of executives (Barnard, 1938; Bowen,1953), public stewards (Frederick, 1960), pursuing economic growth and profit (Friedman, 1970), the pyramid of social responsibility (Carroll, 1979), Public Responsibility (Preston and Post, 1981), Stakeholder Management (Freeman, 1984), "Corporate Citizenship" (Carroll, 1991) and to strategic CSP creating shared value for shareholders and stakeholders (Heslin and Ochoa, 2008; Porter and Kramer, 2011). The strategic nature of CSP can be understood based on the firm's understanding of social legitimacy (Du and Vieira, 2012), benefiting the firm and community in which it operates (Lantos, 2002). Like other strategies, CSP must be well-designed and implemented to achieve desired outcomes effectively (Dawar and Singh, 2022). A poorly conceived or implemented CSP will not help the community. For CSP to be efficient geographic proximity is crucial (von Weltzien Hivik and Shankar, 2011).

Extensive research into CSP has mainly focused on large firms (Santos, 2011) and in developed countries (Blowfield and Frynas, 2005). However, the emerging body of literature suggests that businesses of all shapes and sizes stand to gain from pursuing socially responsible activities, as highlighted by Zoysa and Takaoka (2020). This study takes a positive stance and directs its attention towards medium-sized manufacturing enterprises (MMEs), a group that has so far been overlooked in CSP literature. Typically, CSP research tends to bundle small and medium-sized enterprises together, with little emphasis on the specific CSP undertaken by MMEs. Businesses in developed countries have greater resources and access to knowledge, enabling them to implement more comprehensive social program (Branco and Rodrigues, 2006). In contrast, firms operating in developing countries may face financial constraints and limited access to information and technology (Perrini, 2006). The previous work of Lamberti and Noci (2012) and Lyons et al. (2016) have explored the CSP of medium enterprises and highlighted the challenges related to CSP execution. In developing countries, MMEs are vital drivers of economic growth and job creation (Ministry of MSME, 2018). According to the MSME report of 2020-21, the MMEs sector comprises 63.38 million enterprises, accounting for 18% of all manufacturing enterprises. These MMEs contribute significantly to the

gross value-added, making up 35.5% of this metric, and provide employment to 110 million people, representing 2% of total jobs. They are growing rapidly in a structured cluster-based format and are emerging as key players in their respective fields. These enterprises possess distinct attributes that differentiate them from larger companies in terms of turnover, asset investments, market share, employee numbers, ownership structure, operational scope, risk management, and CSP, as outlined in the studies conducted by Preuss and Perschke (2010), Lamberti and Noci (2012), and Murillo and Lozano (2006). This highlights the importance of conducting research that specifically examines the social practices of MMEs, given their unique characteristics and growing contribution to the economy. The CSP of medium-sized enterprises are primarily influenced by the value system of owners and managers in their local context, as opposed to larger corporations (Dawar and Singh, 2021). Nonetheless, barriers to CSP, such as limited resources, financial constraints, and lack of knowledge and expertise, have been identified as obstacles that can hinder CSP implementation in SMEs, and potentially impact MMEs negatively (Şerban and Kaufmann, 2011; Welford and Frost, 2006; Dawar and Singh, 2023). However, medium-sized enterprises are often nimbler and more adaptable than larger firms, enabling them to quickly seize opportunities in niche markets by integrating social and environmental considerations into their operations. MMEs, owing to their smaller scale as compared to large enterprises, are particularly sensitive to local factors that can impact their performance and, by extension, their sustainability policies. It is hypothesised that MMEs may be more responsive to the social and environmental needs of their communities and, therefore, more inclined to adopt CSP that align with their unique circumstances. Despite their critical role there is a dearth of literature on CSP MMEs (Amaeshi et al., 2016; Hamdoun et al., 2022). Matten and Moon (2008) argued that CSP in small and medium-sized enterprises such as addressing stakeholder rights and minimizing resource consumption, are not explicitly classified as CSP in certain countries. That limits the attention paid to this sector (Hsu and Cheng, 2012). Thus, there is a pressing need to examine CSP of medium manufacturing enterprises (MMEs) in developing countries, and this study aims to contribute to this relatively unexplored area of research.

The present study aims to explore the impact of firm location on CSP of MMEs operating in a developing country. While CSP has gained significant traction among enterprises in the western world, it remains a relatively less explored domain for medium-sized businesses in India. Against this backdrop, this study seeks to unravel the potential role of location in shaping CSP in MMEs, shedding light on a critical but understudied area in the CSP literature.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the context of global supply chains, manufacturing firms are considered essential contributors to fulfilling societal social expectations (Birch and Moon, 2004; Van Bommel, 2011). However, a lack of comprehensive understanding of social responsibility has resulted in firms adopting a narrow focus on social responsibility (Acutt et al., 2004), and struggling to navigate the complexities of CSP (Zhang and Rezaee, 2000; Darus et al., 2014). A fundamental question is if the social responsibility boom in India has inspired Indian MMEs to excel in their CSP. The current study attempt to fill this gap.

Measuring Corporate Social Performance

Various theories and instruments have been developed to objectively measure firm's CSP (McWilliams and Siegel, 2001; Garriga and Melé, 2004; Lanis and Richardson, 2012). It has also been explored through the lens of triple-bottom-line based on economic, social, and environmental activities (Santos, 2011). The popular CSP framework was suggested by Caroll (1979), social responsibility pyramid, based on economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic responsibilities.

Most Indian enterprises are integrating CSP into their operations after National regulations concerning CSP requirements were introduced in 2014 (Tyagi *et al.,* 2015; Dawar and Singh, 2022). Indian firms publish a separate social responsibility report known as a business responsibility report

(BRR) within annual reports (Aggarwal and Singh, 2019). The increase in the institutionalisation of social responsibility within Indian organisations requires assessment of CSP (Dawar and Singh, 2020). The effective way to measure CSP is using institutional-level indices (Galant and Cadez, 2017).

The stock exchanges across the globe have introduced multiple indices for evaluating CSP initiatives based on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors. These indices facilitate stockholders in comparing the performance of firms and industries. However, the efficacy of institution-developed indices is hampered due to inadequate theoretical grounding of criteria and scarcity of global data (Turker, 2009).

Many studies have noted that most methods for evaluating CSP tend to rely on perceptual assessments of social performance (Brammer et al., 2007; Alvarado-Herrera et al., 2017; Liao et al., 2017). These approaches emphasise on the importance of stakeholders' perspectives in evaluating CSP. These perceptions are based on the views of employees or customers (Shabbir et al., 2018; Sarfraz et al., 2018), managers (Godos-Díez et al, 2011; Pedersen, 2010; Dawar and Singh, 2019) and stakeholders (Madueno et al., 2016; Abraham, 2017). Pradhan and Puranik (2014) and Raju (2014) have employed relative indicators to assess the effectiveness of CSP in promoting sustainable development. The perception based CSP measurement methodologies exhibit certain limitations. These methods focus on the perceptions of stakeholders who may be limited to specific countries or industries. It is important to note that the views of these stakeholders may not be reflective of the broader public's opinions. Therefore, it is crucial to explore alternative and complementary methods to augment the existing CSP measurement approaches.

Spence and Painter-Moland (2010a, 2010b) have underscored the importance of utilizing objective CSP measurement techniques, such as ISO 26000. This all-encompassing instrument facilitates the evaluation of CSP based on engagement in socially responsible activities. This approach offers a valuable alternative to subjective CSP measurement methods, by enhancing the accuracy and comprehensiveness of CSP evaluation. Zoysa and Takaoka (2020) and Hasan (2016) have contributed to the advancement of CSP measurement by developing a social responsibility index based on ISO 26000 to evaluate the extent of social performance in Japan and Bangladesh, respectively. Dawar *et al.* (2023) examines the CSP of manufacturing firm based on ISO 26000 and NVG guidelines. These novel approaches demonstrate the ongoing efforts to enhance the accuracy and reliability of CSP evaluations, thereby promoting greater transparency, accountability, and sustainability in business operations. However, there is a growing need to incorporate objective measures in CSP evaluations to better understand the tangible impact of social initiatives on various stakeholders and society at large. Objective measurement of CSP enables standardised evaluation of social performance of enterprises. However, there are limited tools to examine CSP of Indian manufacturing enterprises. Thus, the current study attempts to fill this gap.

Firm Location, Corporate Social Performance, and Multi-National Corporations

The economic geography theory suggests that companies can use their location and economic power to drive positive change in their communities, which can be an essential aspect of their social efforts (Tandrayen-Ragoobur, 2022; Oliver, 1991). The impact of a firm's location on CSP has gained attention in literature. Varadarajan and Menon (1988) examined effect of firm's social performance location on consumers' brand awareness and found that CSP work in a nearby consumer community is more likely to increase the awareness of brand's efforts as proximity facilitates the flow of information, principles, and social standards.

A comprehensive review of existing literature has revealed that enterprises operating within the same geographical location are subject to isomorphic pressures and tend to engage in similar CSP (Marquis and Tilcsik, 2016; Massoud et al., 2020). These enterprises are bound by a unique social activity that is specific to their respective locations and communities, owing to similarities in economic, regulatory, and legal environments (Ding et al., 2019). Chintrankaran et al. (2017) have further added that enterprises operating in similar locations, sectors, customers, and competitors, are

also likely to engage in similar social practices. Research by Husted et al. (2016) has indicated that enterprises in metropolitan areas exhibit higher levels of CSP compared to rural counterparts, owing to greater diversity and cosmopolitanism in these areas, which may make them more receptive to social initiatives. The enterprises in the same location create mimetic pressures, resulting in similar social practices, as they share common cultural, social, and regulatory norms (Marquis et al., 2007).

Building upon this existing body of knowledge, the present study seeks to advance the theory of economic geography by focusing on the relationship between location and social engagement. Specifically, the study posits that the presence of multinational corporations (MNCs) within a given location may exert a significant influence on the CSP of other firms operating within that area. MNCs, due to their size, resources, and global reputation, often set a high standard for CSP (Momin and Parker, 2013). They may also engage in partnerships or collaborations with local firms to pursue social initiatives, thereby providing opportunities for learning and inspiration (Barin Cruz and Boehe, 2010). Finally, MNCs may indirectly influence the CSP of local firms through their interactions with stakeholders, such as customers, employees, and regulators (Kim et al., 2018). Based on these discussions, the present study proposes to explore the influence of MNCs on the CSP of local firms within a given location and test the following hypothesis:

H1: The mean CSP of Medium Enterprises varies as per presence of MNCs at location.
H2: There is no significant difference between CSP and firm location.

METHODOLOGY

The current research exploratory in nature focuses on the CSP of MMEs in India. The previous studies have collected data about CSP from senior managers, owners and executives (Avram and Kühne, 2008; Williamson et al., 2006; Awan et al., 2019), stakeholders (Kiessling et al., 2016) and from annual reports (Donnelly and Wickham, 2021). For current study, the data is sourced from members of each firm's social responsibility committee (members from top management). The data of medium firms were collected from the directorate of industrial commission from each district, and all the firms were approached for the study. The questionnaire was sent to the member who agreed to share their views. Data was collected from targeted medium enterprises located in selected areas in National Capital Region, namely Haryana (Gurugram, Sonipat and Faridabad) and Uttar Pradesh (Ghaziabad and Gautam Budh Nagar). These are known as being highly industrialised areas in North India. The cities were ranked based on presence of MNCs and same rank were the codes allocated to the cities.

The researchers were concerned with members of the firm's social responsibility committees, that firms must have appointed as per companies act (2013) in India. The key informant method was applied, and member of social responsibility committee were approached as they are the most important people for providing strategic information (Jantunen et al., 2005; Thanos et al., 2017). The survey participants were initially contacted by phone and invited to participate in the study and followed up the initial contacts three times. Potential respondents were told their name, their organisation's name, and any information they provided would be anonymous and only used for research purposes. For the individuals who agreed to participate in the survey a convenient time for a follow-up phone call interview to collect the survey data was organised. The data was collected between November 2018 and October 2020. All 121 medium manufacturing enterprises were approached, and the response rate was 63 per cent. To measure the CSP of medium enterprises in an objective way, researcher adopted the social performance metric, Environment and Social Involvement Index (ESI), developed by Dawar et al. (2023). ESI is developed on ISO 26000 and non-voluntary guidelines (NVG) by the Ministry of corporate affairs. By employing objective measures, CSP assessment can move beyond the mere acknowledgement of social responsibility towards a more rigorous analysis of the outcomes of social initiatives. This enables enterprises to identify areas for improvement and demonstrate their social impact to stakeholders in a more transparent and accountable manner. The final measure

includes seven categories and fifty items. The selection of these seven categories was based on the work of Dawar et al. (2023), as they were deemed highly relevant to manufacturing enterprises. The questions are designed to address issues such as social responsibility as a business strategy (6 items), CSP planning (4 items), environmental activities (6 items), social activities (21 items), monitoring and involvement in social responsibility (6 items), reporting (4 items) and policy deployment (1 item). The index aggregates different indicators into a single measure (Giambona and Vassallo, 2014). It is suggested that an index is an arithmetic tool without any statistical significance basis and is a valuable measurement tool constructed using a transparent, objective process (Paredes-Gazquez et al., 2016). All items in ESI are evaluated based on a dichotomous measure where the value 1 indicates practices within the firm, and 0 indicates the non-existence of the practice within the firm. All items are equally weighted, and such an approach may negate subjectivity (Meek et al., 1995; Cooke, 1991). As such, the ESI varies from 0 to 50. Enterprises with better environmental and social involvement quality will have higher index scores than those with poor involvement. The ESI is calculated using:

$$ESI = \sum_{n=1}^{p} \frac{dn}{P}$$

where *dn* represents the practices (i.e., 0;1) and value *P* indicates the maximum number of CSR practices (i.e., 50).

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The current study assesses the CSP of medium enterprises operating in India in National Capital Region. The industry wise profile of medium firm is presented in Figure 1.

To understand the relationship between firm location and CSP, the current section examines the proposed hypothesis *H1* and *H2*. The CSP of MMEs is estimated through ESI, and location of the firm is five regions in NCR. To test the hypothesis (H1), one way-ANOVA is utilised, treating the location as an independent variable which is categorial in nature and CSP as a dependent variable is continuous in nature. The statistical results and descriptive statistics for location are shown in Table 1. The overall mean value of CSP is 0.42 and median value is less than 0.33. Overall, location I and III CSP score above 0.6 higher than the average value.

Figure 1. Industry wise medium enterprises in percentage (figure was created by author)

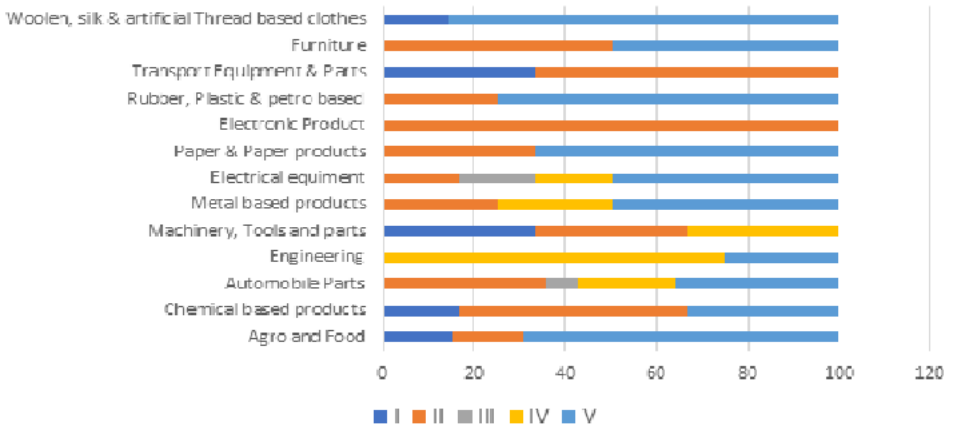

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of CSP overall and Location-wise (table was created by author)

N			**Valid**			**74**	
			Missing			**0**	
Mean						.42	
Median						.33	
Quartiles			**25**			.26	
			50			.33	
			75			.53	
Location	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error**	**95% Confidence Interval for Mean**		**Minimum**	**Maximum**
				Lower Bound	**Upper Bound**		
I	.61	.25	.08	.42	.80	.26	.96
II	.41	.22	.13	-.14	.95	.26	.66
III	.63	.21	.09	.40	.85	.42	.98
IV	.46	.17	.04	.38	.53	.24	.82
V	.34	.14	.02	.29	.38	.26	.72

The *p-value* for Levene's test is at .073, thus, it is concluded that the equal variance among categories on independent variable and Tukey's honestly significant difference (HSD) can be used for post hoc analysis. Table 2 presents the results of one-way ANOVA, and it can be observed that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean CSP scores among groups as determined by one-way ANOVA (F (4, 69) = 7.040, $p = .000$). Hence H1 is rejected.

Table 2. Output of ANOVA and Multiple Comparison through Tuckey's HSD (table was created by author)

		Sum of Squares	**Df**	**Mean Square**		**F**	**Sig.**
Between Groups		.846	4	.211		7.040	.000
Within Groups		2.073	69	.030			
Total		2.919	73				
(I) Location	**(J) Location**	**Mean Difference (I-J)**		**Std. Error**	**Sig.**	**95% Confidence Interval**	
						Lower Bound	**Upper Bound**
IV	III	.17000		.08023	.224	-.0548	.3948
	II	.22333		.12256	.369	-.1200	.5667
	I	.01889		.09135	1.000	-.2370	.2748
	V	.29114*		.07659	.003	.0766	.5057
V	IV	-.29114*		.07659	.003	-.5057	-.0766
	III	-.12114		.04784	.095	-.2552	.0129
	II	-.06781		.10427	.966	-.3599	.2243
	I	-.27225*		.06478	.001	-.4537	-.0908

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 2 presents the output of on-way ANOVA, significance value is 0.00 (i.e., p=0.00) and the F value is 7.04, hence there mean of CSP of medium enterprises vary as per location. Further, post-hoc analysis through Tuckey's HSD was done and results are presented in Table 2. The multiple comparisons through Tuckey's HSD explore the significant difference between the groups. Table 3 analyses a statistically significant difference between location and ESI for location V and location IV (p=*.003*) and between location V and location I (p=*.001*). The interaction plot presented in Figure 2 provides evidence for this differentiation.

In addition, we also examine the relationship between the presence of MNCs at the geographical location and the CSP of MMEs. The number of MNCs operating at each location was taken from the directorate of the industrial commission ministry of micro, small and medium enterprises. The regression analysis considers the presence of MNCs as an independent variable and CSP as a dependent variable, with MNC status and number of employees as the control variable. The result of the linear regression between CSP, location and number of MNCs operating in the region are presented in Table 3. The results were checked for multicollinearity through the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), and no serious multicollinearity issues were found as VIF was below 10. Autocorrelation was checked through Durbin Watson test. The test value between 1.5 to 2.5 is acceptable (Field, 2009), and therefore it is inferred that autocorrelation is not a key issue in our study. Table 3 presents the output of regression

Figure 2. Interaction Plot for CSP as per location (figure was created by author)

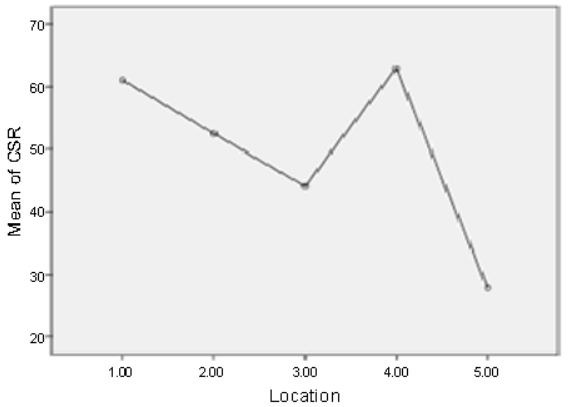

Table 3. Linear regression results

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
(Constant)	0.52**	0.16	0.04
Location	-0.05**	-.003*	-0.03*
MNC_Status	0.12**	0.04	0.03
Employees		0.07**	0.06**
Age			0.04
ANOVA (F, Sig)	(15.01, .00)	(16.58, .00)	(12.5, .00)
R^2	29.7	41.9	47.9
Adjusted R^2	27.7	39.5	44.1

Predictors: Model 1 – Location and MNC Status of firm, Model 2 - Location, MNC Status and Employees and Model 3 - Location, MNC Status, Employees and age. Symbol "** and *" denote statistical significance at 5% and 10 percent level.

analysis considering CSP as the dependent variable and taking independent variables MNC status (0-domestic, 1-international), firm location, size (the number of employees) and age of the firm. The results of regression analysis highlight that there is a significant relationship between CSP and the location of MMEs at 5 per cent significance level. Hence H2 is rejected.

To further investigate the impact of location on CSP, regression analysis was used to test three models. In model 1, the CSP is predicted through location and MNC status of firm. In model 2, we control for number of employees for firms measured as natural log of actual number of employees. The usage of control variable does not have significant impact on results of location of the firm. In model 3, the age of the firm is included and the result of location of firm remain qualitatively similar.

DISCUSSION

The study provides significant insights of social responsibility practices in MMEs in National Capital Region. The article has presented original and robust findings that location of medium enterprises stimulated their CSP. Medium firms located at places with higher density of MNCs likely to have better CSP.

The current study examines the CSP of MME in the National Capital Region through the ESI index. The CSP pattern identified in the study through the ESI index is consistent with those reported by Abu Qa'dan and Suwaidan (2019), based on the GRI standard, and Zoysa and Takaoka (2020), based on the ISO-26000 framework. The ESI scores highlight the extent of CSP involvement. It was found that most of the enterprises are at the beginning stage of their social responsibility lifecycle. The enterprises with higher CSP score are involving different stakeholders, who directly impact business performance, in their social responsibility strategy. This is consistent Freeman (2011) Stakeholder theory. The finding of our study is consistent with previous observations of Antonio *et al.* (2018).

The results highlight that firm location is a significant factor influencing CSP. The result of the CSP is mapped with an assessment framework to identify the nature of social responsibility of medium enterprises. These results hold after controlling for size (number of employees) and other related firm characteristics. Proximity of MME to MNCs is significant to their CSP. By providing the evidence of the relationship between CSP and location of the firm, the study shifts attention from firm to its location and suggests that economic geography complement the integrated theoretical lens to the important issue. Taken together, the hypothesis and findings of the study aggregates to make original and substantive contribution to the CSP literature and emerging stream of research on geography of strategic management.

The results of the study are also consistent with the views of Barney (1991), Carayannis and Campbell (2010), Carayannis et al. (2014), Spector et al. (2009) and Teece et al. (1997) that focuses on firms taking advantage of current resources and knowledge from the local market reconfigure their capability and organisational processes that enable them to innovate and compete and survive in the global landscape.

The current study makes the contribution to the growing literature on geography of organisation and strategy. The study substantiates with evidence that CSP may also be studied through the lens of economic geography using the concept of density. The researchers not only in the field of CSP may now include MNC density as additional factors related to the diffusion of CSP, but also management researchers in general need to think about the practice and its impact on diffusion and firm performance.

The study contributes to literature in identifying the phenomenon of location in CSP engagement, which can be helpful in identifying social responsibility clusters. The study evidenced the effect of location on CSP. The presence of MNCs leads to the development of infrastructure and other facilities to undertake CSP effectively. Medium enterprises located close to MNCs are exposed to their formal approaches. The learning gathered from MNCs and, simultaneously, pressure from local and global factors pressurise smaller manufacturing enterprises to engage in social responsibility (Lund-Thomsen and Pillay, 2012). The existence and importance of such clusters was highlighted by Husted et al.

(2015) in developed country context; however, the current reiterated the importance of such cluster in developing country. These clusters of geographic patterns shape the interaction of firm with their stakeholders and is crucial to CSP.

CONCLUSION

The current study addressed the issue of how presence of MNCs at various location influence the CSP manufacturing enterprises. The results of the study have shown a significant effect of for presence of MNCs on CSP of MMEs. In addition, the finding of the study also indicates that higher presence of MNCs at a location have higher average CSP. Our study imply the presence of CSR clusters and proximity to MNCs has positive impact on firm's CSP performance.

Theoretical Contributions

Building upon prior research, our study makes several notable and original contributions to the literature on CSP and strategic management geography. By examining the relationship between firm location and CSP engagement, our study advances the understanding of the role of geography in shaping firms' social responsibility practices. Our findings highlight the importance of considering location as a critical factor in corporate social responsibility and suggest that firms may benefit from the proximity to MNCs, other socially responsible entities. These findings may be valuable for managers looking to enhance their firms' social and environmental performance. Overall, our study provides an important contribution to the literature on the geography of organizational strategy and social responsibility.

Managerial Implications

The emergence of CSR clusters and the constructive influence of proximity to MNCs hold noteworthy managerial implications, particularly for startups and small firms. For new ventures looking to pursue for-profit business models that address social and/or environmental issues, the location of a CSR cluster could serve as a critical factor in determining where to establish the enterprise. By locating in a CSR cluster, startups can capitalise on the knowledge spillovers and institutional context that comes with engaging in social responsibility initiatives.

Scope of Future Work

The current study has paved the way for further investigation. A similar study can be undertaken at national level to further build the literature of impact of economic geography on firm strategy. The findings of the study promote researcher of other practices to explore the geographic patterns of adoption and its influence on CSR and firm performance.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

The current work is a starting point for scientific investigation and has specific weaknesses. The survey data were drawn exclusively from medium-sized enterprises in the National Capital Region. The questionnaire is the primary source of data collection. Another limitation of the study is that all the indicators in index are equally weighted. Hence, the generalisation of result should be made in the light of same.

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