

# **Chapter 2**

## **Review of Related Literature**

# REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

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The focus of this chapter is essentially to highlight, summarize and review the corpus of literature available on Social Media Communications for branding in general and for CSR branding by Corporates and Central Public Sector companies in particular.

This chapter attempts to explore and derive important learnings from the literature and to critically review it in an attempt to present the research gap and thereby a justification for carrying out the present study. The Literature review serves to gain a comparative insight into the studies carried out in the broad area of Social Media Communications for branding building and reputation management. The review also assists in contextualising the research topic, identifies areas to conduct research and presents a comprehensive view of research carried out in the area of study which will guide the way forward for the current research study. Fink (1998) provides the following definition: “A literature review is a systematic, explicit, and reproducible design for identifying, evaluating, and interpreting the existing body of recorded documents”. The purpose of the literature review is to explore and summarize existing knowledge in the area of research including Corporate Communications, branding CSR communications using social media for CSR branding and the contemporary directives for CSR under the Company Act (2013), to explain the kinds of approaches that have been taken in relation to the problem area, in the discipline to date.

This chapter consists of reviews from varied sources including 51 journal articles and research papers, 10 books, 9 website articles, 5 doctoral thesis, news sources, internet material and other relevant sources, carried out in context of the research objectives of this research study.

The chapter mainly reviews literature in the following areas:

- 1) Brand building through Social Media communications
- 2) CSR branding and
- 3) Social Media Communications for CSR branding

## **2.1 Brand building through Social Media communications**

### **Agenda-Setting Theory**

Agenda setting is the idea that ‘what the public thinks about is set by the media’. Introduced by Dr. Maxwell McCombs and Dr. Donald Shaw in 1972, the agenda setting theory states that the news in various media plays a vital part in influencing political realities. The positioning of the news story and the extent of time spent on a particular issue and the information conveyed in a news story determines how much the audience learns and the amount of importance they give to the issue. The agenda setting theory of McCombs and Shaw states that when the media focuses on the views of a candidate during a campaign, they are also influencing and determining the issues of importance which ultimately leads to setting the agenda for a political campaign.

When analysing agenda setting, there are two basic assumptions to be considered: Media and the press filter and shape reality rather than reflect it. When media focuses on just a few issues and subjects, the public tends to perceive those issues as more important.

### **Social Media and agenda setting**

Advances in technology provide many new avenues for influencing the masses. At the onset of the agenda setting theory, communication was conducted primarily through print and radio, followed by film and television. Today, with the social media, communication sources are nearly unlimited, allowing for greater public engagement and increased focus on agenda setting.

It is well recognized and well documented that news media have great power to focus public attention on a few key public issues and thereby set a nation’s agenda. People get reliable information on public affairs from the news media, but at the same time they also get influenced on how much significance is to be given to a topic on the basis of the importance placed on it in the news.

Walter Lippmann in his 1922 classic, *Public Opinion*, in the chapter “The World Outside and the Pictures in Our Heads”, noted that “the news media are a primary source of those pictures

in our heads about the larger world of public affairs, a world that for most citizens is out of reach, out of sight, out of mind.” He also stated that that “news media is the window to the vast world beyond our direct experience and for that matter defines how we perceive this world”.

During the U.S. presidential campaign and election of 1968, McCombs and Shaw (1972) conducted the first empirical research on agenda setting theory. According to their hypothesis, the content published by mass media determined the leading agenda of the people for each political campaign.

The advent of the social media phenomena got the attention of many scholars. However, social media continues to evolve and is very dynamic. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) social media is “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content”.

Another group of scholars argues that “social media employ mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms via which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content” (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy and Silvestre, 2011).

Kaplan and Haenlein differentiate categories of social media depending on social presence and media richness. First category would be collaborative projects (e.g., Wikipedia), second blogs, content communities (e.g., YouTube), third would be social networking sites (e.g., Facebook) and then forth being virtual game and social worlds such as World of Warcraft or Second Life (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

The theory of agenda setting has four components:

1. Media Agenda - issues discussed in the media (newspapers, television, radio)
2. Public Agenda - issues discussed and personally relevant to members of the public.
3. Policy Agenda - issues that policy makers consider important (legislators)
4. Corporate Agenda - issues that big business and corporations consider important (corporate)

The agenda setting theory is a way to demonstrate the importance of social media for a company's reputation and brand. Social media can influence the press, and the press social media, which in turn can set the agenda for coverage of a company's brand. An audience will not read the discussion in the press or social media and necessarily change their perception about a company, but surely the coverage about a company will affect the perception of a company's brand (Cass, 2018).

## **2.2 Brand Communication in Social Media**

Brand communication in social media is defined as any piece of brand-related communication “distributed via social media that enables internet users to access, share, engage with, add to, and co-create” (Alhabash, Mundel and Hussain 2017). Curran, Kevin and O'Hara, Kevin and O'Brien, Sean (2011) observed that a social networking site can be used to gain new customers, keep in touch with current customers and promote new products, sales/offers and events, creating overall high-quality PR that is specific to a company.

Twitter has become one of the most effective tools for breaking news stories. Its ‘real time’ model is perfect to get news out there quick, and built-in features like retweet, and its trending service enhance the experience and efficiency of this further. The rapid growth of Twitter and its rise in popularity with celebrities and within the business and current affairs sectors are helping to push it further into the main stream and greatly enhances its popularity and the influence that it has (Gill et al., 2007). A perfect example of this was the January 19th 2009 New York plane crash. Janis Krums tweeted the breaking story of the successful water landing of US Airways Flight 1549 on the Hudson River in New York City making it a revolutionary day where a twitter user had broken a story that had the attention of the entire world. Today, News reporting is thriving on Twitter, as ordinary people around the globe break extraordinary news.

Twitter provides an excellent service to promote and sell brands. Twitter enables powerful communities. A loyal community can make a brand. It is important that businesses engage socially with the community and empathize with their needs and concerns. (Curran, Kevin and O'Hara, Kevin and O'Brien, Sean. (2011). An example of brand building is that of Old Spice, who ran a hugely successful social media marketing campaign which started in the more traditional format of television but evolved to engage with their audience. Following the

viral success of the original “The Man Your Man Could Smell Like” advertisement, as a response Campaign, to maintain the momentum and create stronger brand engagement, the Old Spice Guy would respond to questions submitted by fans through a variety of social media channels, including Facebook and Twitter, through a series of YouTube videos. It was a huge success resulting in Old Spice increasing their followers on Twitter by 2700% and Facebook followers by 800%. The campaign increased sales by 107% over one month, 55% over a three-month period and 27% after six months (Creativity-online, 2010). The brand’s YouTube channel more than doubled from 65,000 to 150,000 subscribers with sales up by 125% year on year, and, Old Spice had become the #1 selling brand of body wash for men in the US. The campaign generated media coverage on a global scale. This is a great example of how a company that is over 75 years old can use social media to reinvent and sustain itself, thereby setting a bench mark for social media advertising.

An online brand community is a community on the World Wide Web, and in recent times social media have been added to marketing and brand building activities of companies (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Attracted by the large number of users, companies have created brand communities on social media, such as Facebook. Social media channels are inexpensive, user-friendly, scalable internet and mobile-based technologies that allow for the sharing of user-generated material (Sigala and Marinidis, 2009).

Comm, J. (2009) describes social media as “content that has been created by its audience” while another definition puts social media as “online tools and platforms that allow internet users to collaborate on content, share insights and experiences, and connect for business or pleasure” (Strauss and Frost, 2009)

Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010 describes social media as “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content”. Fischer and Reuber, 2011 identified that the common feature is that these social media allow individuals and entrepreneurs to engage in social interactions, in a manner and magnitude that were earlier not possible.

Tsimonis and Dimitriadis (2014) observed that social media brand channels managers should focus on spreading positive brand communication among social media users. Brand managers can use social media as an opportunity for customers to connect and interact in rich ways

with other customers and non-customers thus giving them the power to influence others in their social networks by agreeing with or countering the brand experiences of others. Customers with strong emotional bonds can become advocates for sellers in interactions with other customers and non-customers. Since engagement is a key benefit for a brand's social media presence, firms should encourage the audience to comment and like the content on their social media pages to ultimately lead to them buying the products and services.

The likes received on the Facebook pages and followers on Twitter and Instagram pages can be considered as an expression of affinity towards the brand. Previous research has attempted to form linkage between social media marketing and brand affinity to measure customer engagement by relating brands that are self-expressive to the likes and followers of an organisation (Wallace, Buil and Chernatony, 2014). The term 'brand love' or brand affinity can be described as the extent of emotional connect that a satisfied customer has towards a specific brand (Algharabat, 2017 as cited in Kurniawati and Siregar (2019)). The dimension of brand love is bounded by emotions, passion, attachment, positive word of mouth and evaluation, and declaration that reflect on an enhanced brand-consumer attachment (Albert N, et al, 2008).

When viewed in the backdrop of digital marketing, likes, shares and retweets on Instagram, Facebook or Twitter are expressions of a strong relationship between the customers and the brand. Social media marketing is used by companies to create brand affinity in the minds of the customers through development of long-term relationship, emotional connect and self-brand integration (Rauschnabel and Ahuvia, 2014).

Positive word of mouth leads to building of a positive image and popularity of the brand. In the age of digital marketing, there is not much locale-specificity, as digital and social media communications reach millions of people instantaneously. The story of Carter Wilkerson who became the author of the tweet with the most retweets in the Twitter history - more than 3.6 million (Business Insider India, 2017) is an example of such massive reach, wherein on April 5th, 2017, Carter had asked Wendy's food chain through a tweet that how many retweets he would need to be eligible for free chicken nuggets for year, to which Wendy's replied 18 million would get him his free chicken nuggets. Soon enough, Celebrities and companies — from Google to Microsoft — retweeted the teenager's bid in an attempt to help. Although, the teenager did not come close to the mark of 18 million, yet Wendy's provided him with free

nuggets for a year. A Twitter plea from a Nevada teen for a year of free chicken nuggets from Wendy's is now the most retweeted post of all time. This one tweet brought people across the globe together to help him on social media. The record retweet also became the biggest viral branding phenomenon for Wendy's. Wendy's handled the request of the "The Nugget Boy" brilliantly and in return, the retweets created a windfall for its public relations (Comcowich, 2018).

On the flip side, organisations need to monitor the local news and related developments regarding branding and product offering and measure the possible impacts of the news on their international brand image. A minor flaw in the local market might cause a global crisis affecting the brand image leading to a dent in its sales performance. Similarly, a successful local campaign can lead to bigger opportunities in international markets for the company. Social media can make local events go global and also make a global event be relooked locally. (Tanha, 2018)

### **2.3 CSR branding**

Drucker in his book, 'The future of Industrial Man' observed that the survival of any business organisation is dependent on the harmony between the company's objectives, objectives of the state system and the people. If there occurs any conflict between these objectives, the business organization's growth will be affected (Drucker, 1946).

Carroll (1999) described Howard Bowen as the "father of social responsibility," and credited him for presenting one of the oldest definitions of CSR in modern times. According to Bowen (1953), "CSR refers to the obligations of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society".

A study by Cortado and Chalmeta showed that (1) companies are using Facebook and Twitter to communicate their CSR issues, (2) Twitter is more frequently used to communicate CSR issues than Facebook, (3) there is a low level of interactivity in companies' CSR posts and tweets and (4) although Facebook is less often used than Twitter to communicate company CSR, interactivity is higher in Facebook.

Therefore, online social networks are playing a key role when it comes to managing the relationship between company and stakeholders. Organisations have realised this and many companies have begun to adopt online social networks as an instrument to use for various purposes in organisations such as strategic management, research and development, marketing/sales, finance, human resources, security, advertising and promotion, branding, public relations, crisis management and many more, with a great impact on the performance of organisations. (Parveen, Jaafar, and Sulaiman, 2015). The increase in CSR communication interactivity leads to higher message credibility and stronger feelings of identification with the company, and also boosts corporate reputation as it is showed in the study carried out by Eberle, Berens, and Li (2013).

### **Triple bottom line concept**

Elkington put forth that companies should be having three different bottom lines. The approach is to measure the financial, social and environmental performance of the corporation over a period of time. The triple bottom line (TBL) thus consists of three Ps: Profit, People and Planet which aims to measure the social, financial and environmental performance of the corporation over a period of time. TBL of the company is taking account of the full cost involved in doing business.

A report by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development stated in its introductory section on corporate social responsibility (World Business Council for Sustainable Development, 1999, p. 5) that: "... business benefits ... accrue from the adoption of a broader world view, which enables business to monitor shifts in social expectations and helps control risks and identify market opportunities". Sustainable development strategy also helps businesses to align corporate and developmental values, thus leading to better corporate image and public goodwill.

The CSR literature also consists of some arguments against adoption of CSR. Market economists suggested that firms should focus their attention only on earning maximum profits, as long as they follow the letter of the law. Neoclassical economists like Friedman (2007) and Henderson (2001) argued that saddling businesses with social responsibility is contrary to the principles of market economy.

Friedman, an ardent proponent of free markets, was of the opinion that management is "to make as much money as possible while conforming to the basic rules of society, both those embodied in the law and those embodied in ethical custom". Friedman and Henderson agreed that companies should operate within reasonable moral and legal boundaries set by the society. However, he feared if the businesses are forced to adopt the triple bottom-line definition of CSR; it may adversely affect their operations with cost increases and diminished performance.

Organizations operating in industries that are perceived as riskier to the social and natural environment are likely to find their CSR activities under higher levels of public scrutiny (Alali, F., and Romero, S. (2011), as cited in Tata, J. and Prasad, S. (2015))

For example, companies in the oil and gas industry are likely to be under close scrutiny and expected to demonstrate social and environmental responsibility because this industry is perceived as linked to environmental and human rights violations (e.g., Shell and Brent Spar, Exxon and the Alaskan oil spill, British Petroleum and the Texas oil refinery explosion, and Chevron and wastewater dumping in the Ecuadorian rain- forests). (Coupland, 2005).

Other industries linked to socially irresponsible behavior such as the mining and extractive, waste management, and food products industries are also likely to be scrutinized for CSR issues. Organizations from industry sectors with high environmental impact have to respond more to external pressures and communicate social responsibility, because these organizations have a higher level of visibility and their actions are more closely scrutinised by the media, advocacy groups, and the public, compared to organisations from other sectors (O' Dwyer, B. 2003).

Mezner, M., and Nigh, D. (1995) observed that organizations that are more visible to the public are more likely to face pressures to adapt to external expectations, and thus have a greater need to manage their images. Such organisations are likely to face external social pressures and engage in actions that influence public perceptions of the organization. Cho, and Patten, 2007 found that public scrutiny can be influenced by the media. The literature suggests that media exposure can shape the relationship between organizations and their stakeholder audiences.

Communicating about CSR can play an important role in organization-stakeholder relations. An understanding of the organisation's CSR philosophies, policies, and activities can allow stakeholder audiences to become more engaged in the issues affecting them and more willing to collaborate with organizations in reaching socially responsible solutions to problems. CSR communication may also be used to maintain legitimacy for the organisation. Such communication, even about unfavorable actions, allows the organization to explain and justify its actions and increases transparency about the social and environmental impact of the organisation and its governance structure; thus, maintaining legitimacy (Tata and Prasad, 2014).

Research on Indian Companies include a case study of public sector undertaking, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. concluded the company has taken a lot of initiatives in order to serve the society (Shah and Bhaskar, 2010). A paper entitled "Emerging trends of Corporate Social Responsibility in India" in KAIM Journal of Management and Research analyzed 30 companies of 11 sectors listed in the Bombay Stock Exchange with the help of their annual reports. The paper considered the nature and areas of society in which the companies are investing. By considering all those areas it was concluded in the paper that today companies are not functioning only to earn profit but also have realized the significance of being social friendly (Bansal, et.al, 2012 cited in Singh, S. (2016)).

Pradhan (2015) studied Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility Intensity on Corporate Reputation and Financial Performance of Indian Firms, 2015, which revealed the significance of effective reputation management. Results of this study indicated that advertising CSR activities provides an edge to firms in enhancing their reputation. The results also suggest that a firm that strategically invests in CSR and communicates it effectively to its stakeholders gets significant results. So, managers not only need to be responsible, but also publicise it to significant stakeholders to reap the long-term benefits.

The study 'Status of Corporate Social Responsibility among PSUs in India' looked into the CSR policies of Indian Public Sector Undertakings and the findings in the research showed that even though Indian PSUs have improved greatly in their CSR dealing as compared to previous years, there is still a long way to go. The CSR practices of these PSUs are generally un-researched which makes their efforts redundant (Dhaneshwar and Pandey, 2015).

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and advertising are strategic complements. If a claim about the environmental or social benefits of a product is unsubstantiated or misleading, this practice is known as greenwashing (GW). A study analysing the authenticity of CSR communication was conducted by Bazillier and Vauday (2013).

The study used 3 sets of data – Vigeo’s CSR ratings, hard (verifiable) information and Soft (non-verifiable) information based on the model given by Dewatripont and Tirole (2005). The researchers put forth two forms of greenwashing - hard greenwashing and light greenwashing. Hard greenwashing refers to environmental communication without CSR, while light greenwashing occurs when the company lowers its CSR efforts and focuses more on advertising claims regarding environment sustainability and socio-economic development. The study found a negative relationship between level of CSR of a company and its greenwashing. Thus, higher the investment done by companies towards CSR activities, lower is the probability of greenwashing practiced by it.

A study by Athma and Yarragorla (2015) observed the major differences between CPSE Guidelines and Section 135 of Company Act 2013. They also studied the impact of CSR as per Section 135 of new Company Act 2013 on Maharatna Companies for the period from 2011 to 2014. The study concluded that CSR liability of Maharatna companies is more or less equal as per both CPSE Guideline and Section 135 of Company Act 2013. They also found that CSR provision of Section 135 is more flexible than the CSR guidelines for CPSE’s.

Petra (2011) studied “Stakeholder Perception of Social Responsibility”. The study explored the link between stakeholder perceptions of corporate social responsibility and its relationship with underlying factors. The finding suggests that age of the corporation, community involvement and cultural diversity have a significant influence on corporate social responsibility perception by stakeholders.

In “Corporate Social Responsibility Practices in India: A study of Top 500 companies”, researchers Gautam and Singh (2010) studied CSR practices in Indian companies from various sectors. The main findings of the study are that CSR is now presented as a comprehensive business strategy, arising mainly from performance considerations and stakeholder pressure. Companies consider their interaction with stakeholders and impact of its business on society as significant issues. CSR policies vary with turnover and profit. The

study suggests that business and CSR strategy appear to be on a convergent path, towards business and CSR integration across the company.

Laura (2014) studied the CSR practices of two Maharatna companies, viz. Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) and National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) and one Miniratna company, viz. Airport Authority of India (AAI) on socio economic development of rural people and concluded that those CSR activities done for rural development had a positive impact on overall development of society and business.

A study of 5 Maharatna companies and 2 Navaratna companies by Gupta and Arora (2014) examined the CSR of these companies and it was found that all the Maharatna and Navratna companies under the study has similar CSR practices and CSR performance was good. The study recommended that collective effort of the Government and private players will enable achievement of the CSR goals by these companies and thereby further socio-economic development.

Bhatt and Sharma (2019) examined “Dynamics of CSR in India: Special Reference to Oil and Gas Industry”. This study aims to provide an understanding of the nature of Corporate Social Responsibility practices in India with reference to Oil and Gas Industry. The objective of the study was to explore the current status and extent of CSR activities undertaken and 6 implemented by the Oil and Gas companies and also if the present CSR policy is capable of companies delivering on this larger issue.

Another study by Das and Mukherjee (2018) on “Corporate Social Responsibility practices in Indian petroleum companies: a case study of selected PSUs, examined the pattern of expenditure for five years of data, i.e., from 2009–10 to 2014–15 of the state-owned companies engaged exclusively in the petroleum business covering before and after of the Companies Act 2013. Padhiyar (2018) studied “A Study of CSR activities in selected companies of Gujarat” examined the corporate social responsibility activities undertaken by Oil and Gas and Textile sector of Gujarat and also measured attitude of managers towards practicing and implementation of CSR. Kundu (2014) explored CSR initiatives and Sustainable Development practices of selected power sector companies in India and their fund allocation for CSR and Sustainable Development and found that the companies have done well in relation to CSR initiatives.

An exploratory study by Mishra and Singh (2013) titled “Corporate Social Responsibility: Interventions of Oil and Gas Central Public Sector Enterprises in India collected secondary data from seven major oil and gas sector companies in India to identify the various social and environmental interventions undertaken as CSR. Study of CSR activities of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation limited (ONGC) and its effect on socio-economic development of rural population in Assam by Das and Halder (2011) found that ONGC has a great value and trust among the rural people where all the ONGC projects have been carried out.

Ghosh (2012) studied “A look in to Corporate Social Responsibility in Indian and emerging economies” correlation between the CSR investment and sales of selected nine companies and found that there was positive correlation between the actual amount of investment in CSR activities made by the companies and the actual annual sales of the companies. Bhaskar (2010) has taken a case study of public sector undertaking i.e., Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. in their research work. The research has discussed that there is a broad relationship between the organization and society. Organization has its existence only with the society. Organization used the resources and inputs of the society like material and manpower. In reverse, the organization provides services to the society. From the case study of the BPCL, it was found that company has taken a lot of initiatives in order to serve the society. In India, public sector enterprises have taken a lot of CSR initiatives which have met with varying needs of the society. There are many case studies available on the CSR initiatives undertaken by the public sector enterprises (Charumathi and Gaddam, 2015).

#### **2.4 Social Media Communications for CSR branding**

Social media is now mature. CEOs do not consider social media as emerging technologies, as experimental or as a trend. They consider social media such as Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn as mature and full-grown communications channels that must be leveraged, monitored, measured and interpreted in the same manner as the traditional / classical ones. Top managements clearly understand that not just the brand, products or services, the organization itself is under scrutiny by all stakeholders, both internal and external. The interplay of corporate character, corporate reputation and corporate values, and their impact on the business plan, has become a primary focus. This new dynamic provides a tremendous opportunity for the corporate communication professionals to help drive corporate culture

and renew and reiterate corporate values to make them relevant, authentic and actionable in the corporation. (Arthur W. Page Society, 2013)

According to an ET blog, 'Building reputation through social media: The CSR context', most companies use CSR initiatives to build reputation and have huge media budgets yet social media forms a limited part of their communication and engagement process around CSR. As per a survey only 34.6% of the organisations said they use social media for thought leadership and 26.9% said they use social media for CSR (Rana and Majmudar, 2016). The blog puts forth that Companies need to think of new ways of engaging stakeholders. Social media and CSR are perhaps the two most important aspects of building and sustaining corporate reputation. It is now clear that doing good alone is not enough, this needs to be communicated as well. Companies typically communicate their CSR activities through sustainability reports, business responsibility reports, annual reports and company website. Other means of communicating include PR releases and advertisements in the print media. Using social media helps companies to communicate frequently rather than at the end of the year. It also acts as a useful feedback mechanism. The intended audience responds in real time. It also allows communicating in very many ways using text, images, multimedia and such others. Companies can leverage social media to provide more engaging and easier to access reporting. This will bring greater interactivity, promote partnership and enhance effective linkage with stakeholders (Rana and Majmudar, 2016).

A study by Cho, Furey and Mohr (2017) explored the communications of corporations having good reputations and based on a content analysis of Facebook pages of 46 corporates from among the Fortune's "World's Most Admired Companies," it was found that corporations communicate non-corporate social responsibility related posts more frequently than CSR posts. It was found that corporations used an 'informing strategy' more frequently than an 'interacting strategy' and also shared more with their internal stakeholder groups than external ones, when they communicated CSR activities. Another finding which may be suggestive of public cynicism of CSR communication, is that people were found to be more engaged with non-corporate social responsibility messages than CSR messages, which may reflect public cynicism of CSR communication.

A study by Etter, 2013 found that the interactivity levels of online CSR communication are typically low. Lee, Oh and Kim (2013) analyzed Fortune 500 companies in the Twitter sphere

which revealed that a higher CSR rating is a strong indicator of an earlier adoption, a faster establishment of online presence (followers), a higher responsiveness to the firm's identity (replies and mentions), and a stronger virality of the messages (retweets). The study findings suggested that socially responsible firms can harvest proactive stakeholders' participation (user-driven communication) without investing more resources (firm-driven communication).

Jedynak (2020) found that "Social media and CSR" is the subject of research in various areas. On the one hand, the research stream related to CSR itself is clearly present and in this context, attempts are being made to explain the role and function of social media as a useful tool for achieving the goals postulated in the concept. On the other hand, issues related to the specifics of social media for achieving marketing goals, communication, building reputation or creating value are being taken up.

Farache Tetchner and Kollat (2018) explored CSR communications on Twitter and examined stakeholder reactions to the communication approaches of global food and beverage brands to gain insights into how companies communicate CSR on Twitter and how stakeholders perceive such approaches. They examined over 3000 Tweets from three companies and their stakeholders and findings suggested that product-related initiatives are well received by stakeholders and that there is a desire for more communication about the responsibility of products. The study however found that all the companies were using a one-way approach when communicating on Twitter instead of have a two-way dialogue with its audience. The researchers concluded that a more open two-way communication approach to CSR communications on Twitter is not only better accepted by stakeholders than one-way communication. Also, insights derived from stakeholders from this social media platform can aid companies in making strategic decisions and actions for their CSR.

Gomez-Vasquez (2017) using quantitative content analysis, studied a random sample of 1,000 public tweets, in which included the hashtag #CSR, was coded and analyzed. Findings showed that social media platforms are important tools for engaging stakeholders in committing to responsible practices, but different users are not employing all the unique elements these platforms have to offer for communication. The research put forth that literature on CSR and social media is still scarce as although there are few studies on CSR and social media, none of them have addressed the importance of social media concepts for CSR communication. This study also explores how companies, NGOs, advocates,

influencers, CSR researchers, professionals and such others, who are interested in CSR issues, use social media for CSR information, discussion, engagement, and mobilization. The author concludes that people use social media for different reasons. Besides serving as a source of information, the social media, which allows for sharing massive amounts of information and resources online, need to offer people with valuable content. If the content is relevant to the users, they will get interested and may also share it with their network. Gomez-Vasquez's study found that the way users in social media including corporates design messages, is the key to effectiveness. CSR messages impact audiences because they contain certain elements to make content more likely to be talked about and shared. However, most of time the internet and social media world is flooded within content that lacks social media concepts or story-telling. The research underlined the need to craft CSR communication messages that are inherently elicit a positively response leading to sharing, opinion formation, and mobilisation to action.

According to Coope (2004) implementing CSR is not enough – it's vital to also communicate those activities to stakeholders. A study, 'Communicating Corporate Social Responsibility at Shell' discussed the CSR communication strategies used at Shell (a leading global oil company) and how the main stakeholders were targeted in the corporate website and similarly in the sustainability reports. The study uses Harold Lasswell's '5W' communication framework in identifying Shell's CSR communication strategies in its sustainability report.

Pavlicek and Doucek (2015) studied how companies use the social media for accomplishing their CSR communication goals. Their paper, 'Corporate Social Responsibility in Social Media Environment', studied the CSR communication of ten global companies on how these companies use the social media - Facebook and Twitter – for accomplishing their CSR communication goals. The paper examined the social media activity such as posts, likes and comments of their customers and observed that the companies on average dedicate about one-tenth of their social media communication content to CSR topics. It is also seen that CSR topics do not seem to be of much interest to the users.

## **2.5 Research Gap**

From the review of Literature undertaken, it is observed that qualitative research into the Content of Social Media communication from the point of view of Public Relations,

Corporate Communications and Branding is not much available with most research looking at the quantitative data such as number of tweets, like, and impressions. In the backdrop of the huge impact of new media on public relations, research on how companies are using corporate websites, intranet portals, and e-bulletins as well as social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube is important. Also, Research in the area of using social media for CSR in the Indian companies, especially the large profit making CPSEs having pan India presence and huge CSR budget (as mandated by CSR company Act) is greatly missing.

In the backdrop of the Contemporary Directives for CSR and the Amendment of January 2021, there is even more felt need to study the implications for CSPEs and stakeholders as well as examine the content of CSR thrust areas and CSR reporting on the Corporate Websites and Annual Report and on their Social Media.

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