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## **Establishment of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Index for Service Sector in Pakistan**

### **ABSTRACT**

As corporate derive wealth from society and create wealth for society, it is the society that actually gives permission to corporate to operate in society and earn profit. Corporate in return pays by sharing profits with society. CSR perception (development) and delivery (reporting) differs from country to country depending upon time, history, ethos, culture, changing societal expectations and socio-economic environment of the country. Therefore, it is not recommended to create a universal rating mechanism. Additionally, the mistake of copying theoretically alike international CSR indices to Pakistan is not suggested due to the stark differences and challenges being revealed among similar-looking CSR practices and frameworks while their implementation on the ground. In order to cope with this issue, the study develops first ever CSR index based

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on the modern, broader and viable perspective of John Elkington's triple bottom line (3BL) perspective accommodating international CSR standards and guidelines on one side and indigenous socio-economic environmental conditions of service sector of Pakistan on the other. CSR index with Management Practices, Environment and Humane as its dimensions has been established based on comprehensive review of international standards, CSR models & relevant research papers. Whereas weights are assigned based on desk review of economic conditions, environmental patterns, legal compliance, indigenous social patterns and CSR practices along with in-depth interviews of twenty CSR practitioners from service sector of Pakistan. Finally, establishment of CSR index for service sector not only stops international raters to rate corporate as per their own standards without considering principle of self-determination in balance with the principle of communion but also leads the government or other independent rating agencies to rate service sector organizations on indigenously developed CSR index.

**Key Words:** Corporate Social Responsibility, Index, Management Practices, Environment, Humane, Index Development, Dimensions, CSR criteria

## **Introduction**

'Society' as defined by Clarkson (1995) is "a level of analysis that is more inclusive, more ambiguous and further up the ladder of abstraction than a corporation itself". Money-making and ethically accepted business activities are not mutually exclusive. Corporate sustainability and growth demands

ethicality in process of dealing with stakeholders. This is the reason CSR has grasped great attention in the last decades (Flammer, 2013; Carroll, 2015; Osagie, Wesselink, Blok, Lans, & Mulder, 2016). 'Corporate' is not just a legal entity for maximizing profit. It is rather a legal device for the attainment of any social or economic end and to a large extent; this is done publically and by being socially responsible. It is, therefore, a combined economic, social, political and legal institution. This leads to the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) as corporate derive wealth from society, create wealth for society, and make profit by dealing with the wealth for society. And in doing so they declare themselves socially responsible, opting into CSR practices, labeling them with the term corporate citizenship and publishing sustainability reports. Thus, in the broader perspective, it is the society that actually gives permission to corporate to operate in society and earn profit. This obviously demands that the business world pays for this permission by a legitimate sharing of the wealth it is earning from society by sharing it with society (Chatterji, 2011).

Though CSR has been more or less controversial over the past 50 years (Carroll, 2015), it has received increasing attention in the past decades (Flammer, 2013, Osagie, Wesselink, Blok, Lans, & Mulder, 2016). Inclusion of concepts from divergent fields like business, economics, anthropology, sociology, law, politics, international relations, history, psychology and philosophy have made CSR more complicated phenomenon (Chatterji, 2011). Even after decades, quote by Votaw (1973) that CSR is a brilliant term with not always the same meaning to everybody is more valid today. CSR still appears to be the most misunderstood. CSR has been variously described as a vogue and ill-defined

concept (Preston and Post, 1975). Individuals and institutes restrict their our own use of the term CSR to refer only to a fuzzy and highly generalized sense of social concern that appears to underlie a wide variety of ad hoc managerial policies and practices. Most of these approaches and actions are well-intentioned and even beneficent; few are patently harmful. Additionally, the concept is always being redefined to serve changing needs and times and this has become the cause of existence of 'no universal definition of CSR' (Chatterji, 2011).

### **Rationale of the Study**

CSR is not a discovery that can be credited to the economically developed countries of today. The economic development and CSR moves in parallel. CSR involves a number of stakeholders with unique demands of their own. The uniqueness of the demands stems from the fact that each actor is important in scenario. CSR needs to be part of the DNA of the socio-economic environment for the organization to understand this dilemma and institutionalize the concept. This requires that the organization be driven not only by rules and regulations, but also by contextual idealism. (Chatterji, 2011; pp143).

To create an environment at the national level that promotes CSR and sustainability, very often the mistake of copying systems is committed. Stereotyping relates bracketing problems and solutions under a common frame because theoretically they look similar. The reality is, when we analyze a problem at the practical level and try to implement solutions, the stark differences and challenges are revealed among similar-looking problems and solutions (Chatterji, 2011, pp 174).

### **Purpose of the Study**

CSR perception (development) and delivery (reporting), differs from country to country depending upon whether the state has an economic system with the potential to learn and absorb new knowledge and an appropriate public policy framework. Therefore, we need to have rational and in-depth understandings, based on contextual understanding of ethos and culture of the country (Taylor, 1871; Geertz, 1973, Ferraro, 2002), changing societal expectations and socio-economic environment of the country (Chatterji, 2011, pp 164), the history (Hodgson, 2001; Simmel, 1908; Sombart, 1982; McCraw, 1986) and CSR's committed integration into the strategy of an organization (Chatterji, 2011, pp 147) for it to succeed. Evaluation of CSR practices also depend upon the specific time and the territory in which companies operate (Sethi, 1979). Only such a logical-based system will permit us to find a framework for CSR measurement.

Since CSR includes the socio-economic and cultural paradigms, it is difficult to create a universal rating mechanism. Therefore, in spite of similarities between different frameworks, we have to provide diversity and heterogeneity for a true rating result. Therefore, indigenous context of CSR while developing its indicators and indexes should be considered on priority (Chatterji, 2011). In the light of above, and keeping in view the diverse and distinct conditions of Pakistani industry, it is imperative that CSR index should be developed which is not only indigenous in its nature but also acceptable to all stakeholders. Thus the purpose of this study is to develop indigenous CSR index for service sector in Pakistan.

In order to achieve the objective to develop a CSR index to position the Pakistani service sector with reference to their contribution for society, following research questions are answered.

- Q.1 To seek what are the main dimensions of CSR?
- Q.2 To identify that what are the most appropriate constructs of each of the dimensions of CSR?
- Q.3 In order to develop CSR index, how each one of these construct may be captured?

### **Significance of a study**

In spite of exponential economic growth and business expansion, the real human issues are still unaddressed. The division between the have and have-nots has become major outcome of trade and commerce. Governments, especially democratic governments like Pakistan have to be careful about the balance between freedom and responsibility. The role of government lies in providing clear guidance to the business world about CSR policies. The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) promulgated CSR general order in 2009, which is the apex regulator of corporate sector in Pakistan. Since then no further development has been taken place at government end till the introduction of 'Voluntary Guidelines for Corporate Social Responsibility' by SECP in 2012 (SECP). These guidelines have been further improved in 2014 with inclusion of areas of interest for CSR practices and brief implementation structure. On such critical juncture, when China has taken initiative of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (C-PEC) based on mutual prosperity and India is about to enhance trade connectivity in the region through International North-South Transport Corridor (NSTC), indigenously developed CSR

index for service sector of Pakistan will served as leading business tool to effectively report and improve corporate impacts on society on one side and will assist government of Pakistan especially SECP and planning commission to develop CSR code and policy guidelines to envisage and standardize the current and desire level of CSR practices of Pakistani corporations. That in return will help to improve and maintain better CSR practices aligned with the international standards and guidelines.

### **CSR Theory and Analysis of Various Viewpoints**

From decades, financial responsibility has been the sole bottom line driving force for corporate. Friedman (1970) makes an argument based on 'the legal recognition view' that the only corporate social responsibility is to earn money ethically in open and free competition without deception and fraud. Proponents strengthen this view by saying business ... like a good war ... should be fought gallantly, daringly and above all not morally (Levitt, 1983) because business is not a creation of society (De George 1990). Whereas, 'the economic perspective' endorses that the greatest social satisfaction occurs when individuals are free to pursue their self-interest. Therefore, as explained by Hirshman (1981) and endorsed by Vogel (1991) and March (1992), it views self-interest and other interest as mutually beneficial; also describes as "moral personhood of others" (Freeman and Gilbert 1988; Donaldson 1989; Boatright, 2003). In today's CSR world, the same concept has been extended through corporate sustainability perspective and is known as enlightened self-interest (Carroll & Buchholtz, 2013; Carroll, 2015). Therefore, while defining its objectives and goals, the firm has to analyze its impact; both long term and short term on the society because the resources required fulfilling

these objectives and goals have to be drawn from society. This argument holds the legitimacy of the stakeholder's theory. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) relates to company obligation towards society to encompass its economic, legal, ethical and discretionary expectations (Carroll et al, 2010). However, to implement this organizations have to be committed towards governance and transparency in their activities. Accountability and integrity are strong brand ambassadors' of a corporate. (Chatterji, 2011). This way, a movement reshaping CSR as broader concept encapsulating internal and external customers, local and global communities and environmental sustainability through maintaining climate change has gathered momentum and taken hold.

Theoretically speaking, CSR has been repeatedly measured on different perspectives of CSR (Pe'rez et al., 2013) including triple bottom line (Panapanaan et al., 2003; Panwar et al., 2006). CSR when described as the corporate triple bottom line encompasses all business concerns related to the environmental, social and economic dimensions of companies (Aguinis, 2011; Pe'rez and Mart'inez, 2013). Carroll (2015) also elaborates John Elkington's 'triple bottom line' as the simultaneous pursuit of economic prosperity, environmental quality, and social equity. This study considers three Ps (planet, people and profit) of triple bottom line perspective as the base for developing CSR index and maps international CSR standards, guidelines, indices, models and frameworks with triple bottom line perspective accordingly.

### **CSR Index**

The reality is that company runs inside the society, and therefore, business has to portray to all stakeholders their intentions and the best way to do that is to provide a



measurement of its impact on stakeholders. This has created awareness that CSR should be rated. The idea of measuring socially responsible behavior is a comparatively new concept. Obviously the idea draws heavily on prevailing credit ratings and securities analysis (Chatterji, 2011). This directs us towards a novel and more stimulating concept of CSR index.

The CSR index is a leading business management and benchmarking tool that enables companies to effectively measure, monitor, report and improve their impacts on society and the environment (Calvert Investments, 2012; DJSI, 2013). CSR rating tools help to stakeholders by providing information and helps in monitoring socially responsible behavior. Moreover, it can be noticeable now that CSR rating agencies have developed international market for specialized information services (Bertelsmann Foundation, 2006).

### **CSR Dimensions and Indicators by Rating Agencies**

With the commencement of CSR practices, it has become important for companies to communicate their CSR practices to public (Holme and Watts, 2000). For that purpose, different CSR related indexes have been developed which covers the different indicators of CSR. For example, Calvert Social Index and Calvert Signature Criteria by Calvert Investments address seven broad areas of CSR practices (Bertelsmann Foundation, 2006). News Week's Green Rankings (News Week, 2012) gives ratings to companies on the basis of environmental performance. Ethical rating model (Birindelli, Ferretti, Intonti, & Iannuzzi, 2015) assigns rating to banks in four different dimensions of CSR. Ethical Identity index (Rashid, Abdeljawad, Manisah Ngalim, & Kabir Hassan, 2013) evaluates the practices of corporate governance. Similarly, Sincerity Index (Fassin, &

Buelens, 2011) measures the disclosure of CSR practices. Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI, 2013) tracks the performance of corporate on economic, environmental and social dimensions. The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) encourages companies to report on their environmental and social impact and systems, and also works with multinational companies to promote reporting by suppliers, many of whom are small and medium enterprises (Leipziger, 2011; 26). FTSE ESG Index rates corporate against environmental, social and governance performance with the help of risk assessment methodology (FTSE, 2012). The UN Global compact seeks to advance labor standards, anti-corruption, human rights and environmental stewardship in business (Deborah Leipziger, 2011; 25). Most of rating agencies give ratings in three main dimensions of CSR i.e. Environment representing Planet, Social representing People and Economic representing Profit (DJSI, 2013; FTSE, 2012; Elkington, 1997; Bagnoli & Watts, 2003). Further in these dimensions, there are criteria and sub criteria sometimes called as indicators (DJSI, 2013; FTSE, 2012). Interestingly, there are some resemblances in dimensions, criteria and indicators in number of indexes such as (DJSI, 2013; FTSE, 2012; News Week's Green Rankings, 2012). Moreover, there are number of other indexes that highlight the role of CSR indexes in global economy e.g. Social Accountability International (SAI)'s SA8000 standard covers employee relations including their Health & Safety (SAI, 2014). But several authors suggest that all of these indexes should be brought under specific dimensions of CSR including but not limited to environmental, social and economic (Elkington, 1999; Bagnoli & Watts, 2003).

### **Development of CSR Index**

The development of CSR index has been carried out through comprehensive literature review including but not limited to prevailing or previously used international standards, CSR models & research papers with context of CSR. Based on this review, constructs for the indicators and indicators for the dimensions of CSR has been developed. Researcher's eye to the literature critically reviews and provides new dimension that positively contributes to new direction in the existing literature and ends at developing new CSR index for service sector in Pakistan.

***Secondary Data Review:***

To build up insight for the development of CSR index, the author has gone through three layers of secondary data review including International Standards, Research papers and CSR Models as mentioned in Figure 1.

***Reviewing International Standards:***

A number of standards and reporting guidelines have been developed previously to serve as frameworks for reporting, social accounting and auditing. These frameworks and standards have provided basic guidelines in the formation of new CSR Index for service sector of Pakistan. Frameworks and standards considered for formulation of CSR index include:

- Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI)
- FTSE4Good Index
- Jantzi Social Index
- Account Ability's AA1000 standard
- Social Accountability International's SA8000 standard
- ISO 14000 environmental management standard
- Global Reporting Initiative G4 Guidelines

- Good Corporation's Standard by the Institute of Business Ethics
- Green Globe Certification / Standard
- United Nations Global Compact
- International Standards of Accounting and Reporting (ISAR)
- Verite's Monitoring Guidelines

***Research Papers' Review:***

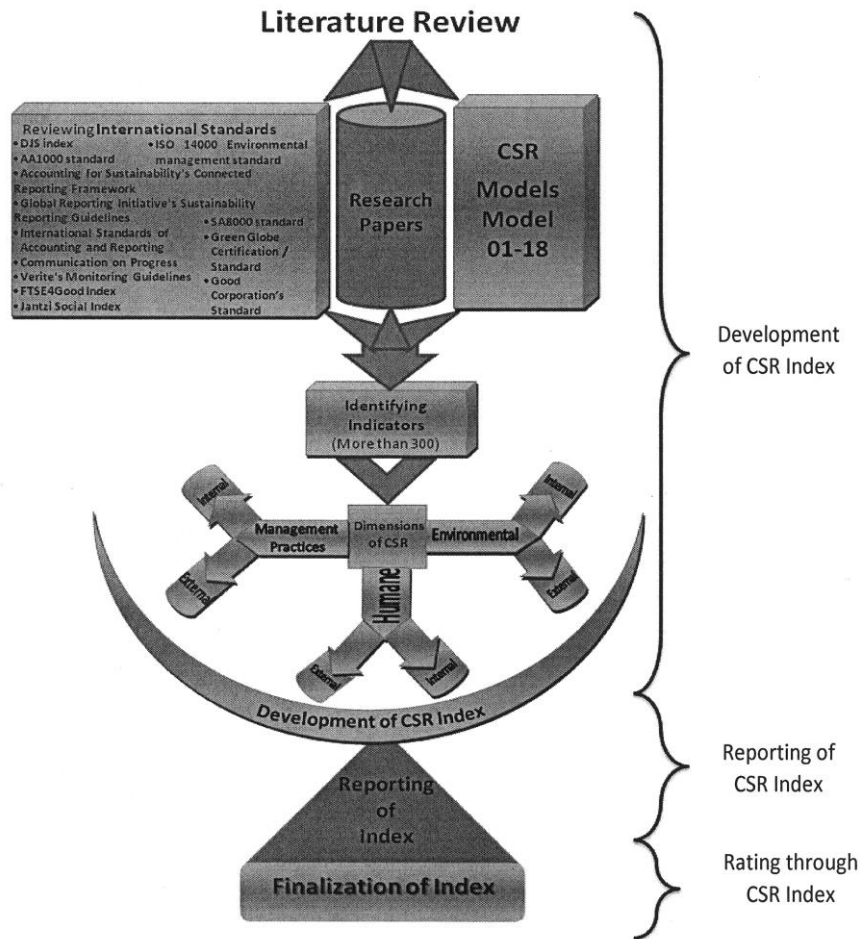
In order to develop deep understanding of CSR dimensions along with the judgment of approaches used by early authors to define and develop multiple CSR indices, the author has gone through the desk reviews of the published research papers. These papers helped author in identification of important indicators having high/considerable contribution to CSR practices. Desk reviews revealed some of the common and overlapping factors that are mostly considered by almost all authors, with which dimensions of CSR came into being along with the packing of different indicators in these dimensions for the development of complete Index for Pakistan. These papers also served as a benchmark for the impact of intra as well as extra-organizational CSR practices in the reporting phase of the study.

***Reviewing CSR Models:***

In complement to above mentioned standards and frameworks with research papers, more than seventy (70) models have been reviewed. In these models there were several repetitions in the factors related to CSR, these repetitions were cleaned and filtered and resulted in to the selection of eighteen (18) models which comprise of all the

indicators mentioned in other models. These models are the representation of CSR in any respect by different authors. Some of these models are mentioned in the following;

- Two dimensional model of corporate social responsibility (Ali M. Quazi and Dennis O'Brien)
- The Pyramid of Social Responsibility (Carroll, 1991)
- CSR Skills and Competencies, Core CSR characteristics (DTV Ashridge 2003)
- The Business in Society (Mallen Baker)
- 5-Basis of Responsible and Sustainable Companies
- Cross Functional Management of CSR Activities
- The Global Operating Environment
- A "business opportunity" Model of CSR for SMEs
- Kai Hockets and Lance Moir
- NEC's seven CSR initiatives to realize an information society friendly to human and earth
- Phases and Steps within the CSR Process
- Stakeholder Engagement Model
- Hierarchical structure of petroleum company CSR decision process (Helene Brice and Trevor Wegner)
- Social Risk managed as Strategic Risk



**Figure 1: Development of CSR Index for Service Sector in Pakistan**

### Identifying & Refining Indicators

After reviewing the above mentioned standards, models and other CSR research papers, more than three hundred (300) indicators have been identified. Later on the identified indicators have been filtered and refined by combining into

similar ones and categorized into their respective dimensions.

### **Identifying Main Dimensions of CSR Standard**

At this stage the identified & refined indicators have been merged into the related indicators and each of the indicators is fitted into its related dimension i.e. *Management practices, Environmental and Humane*. These dimensions according to their respective names clearly show the different aspects of CSR covered by the organizations in different ways and in different dimensions. These three dimensions are further categorized into two sub-dimensions i.e. Internal and External;

- a) Internal: The internal sub-dimension shows the CSR performance of an organization in terms of its contribution towards the betterment of its share holders, employees, internal stakeholders and company as a whole.
- b) External: The external sub-dimension shows the performance of the organization in terms of its contribution towards the betterment of its external stakeholders.

Management practices is an effect, which is caused by the combination of human, technology, finance and nature by the management practitioners who are influenced from the culture; to earn the effectiveness and efficiency of outcome. Environment is the state in which the business gets the input of social needs and gives the output of social satisfaction in the sustain management function, and the place in which

business regulates its plans and actions to utilize, protect and promote the nature physically and abstractly. Humane is the caring and humanitarian dimension of corporate that focuses and takes care of internal and external customers in particular and society at large.



**Table1: Management Practices Dimension of CSR Index**

Dimension	Sub-Dimension	Criteria	Weight (35%)	Sub-criteria
Management Practices (Profit)	External	Marketing Practices	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brand Management</li> <li>• Customer Relationship Management</li> <li>• Value Chain Management</li> </ul>
		Business Codes of Conducts	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reporting Mechanism</li> <li>• Sustainable Social Obligation Procedure</li> <li>• Effective Implementation Mechanism</li> </ul>
	Internal/ External	Corruption and Bribery	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investor Relationship Management</li> <li>• Anti Corruption Mechanism</li> <li>• Anti Bribery Mechanism</li> </ul>
	Internal	Sustainability Programs & Business Performance	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSR Audits and Reporting</li> <li>• Uniform Risk Analysis Framework</li> <li>• Meeting National and International Standards</li> </ul>
		Corporate Governance	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Transparency</li> <li>• Governance Policy</li> <li>• Gender Diversity</li> <li>• Board' s Effectiveness</li> </ul>
<b>Total</b>			<b>35</b>	

**Defining Criteria and Sub-Criteria for each Dimension**

Just after the identification of the main dimensions of the index, these dimensions are further split-up in their criteria and sub-criteria. Those criteria are about the boundaries of a dimension till which a particular dimension is applied and the sub-criteria are both splitting a particular criterion up to its boundaries and respective applications.

### Assigning the weights to each Criterion and Sub-criterion

At this stage, weights to criteria and sub-criteria are assigned dimension-wise. These weights may help further studies in ranking different organizations in the target industries by measuring their performance dimension-wise in each criterion and sub-criterion. Weights are assigned based on desk review of economic conditions, environmental patterns, legal compliance, indigenous social patterns and CSR practices along with in-depth interviews of twenty CSR practitioners from service sector of Pakistan.

**Table2: Management Practices Dimension of CSR Index**

Dimension	Sub-Dimension	Criteria	Weight (%)	Sub-criteria
Environment (Planet)	External	Eco-Efficiency	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy Consumption Mechanism</li> <li>• Pollution Prevention Mechanism</li> </ul>
		Environmental Priorities	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment Management and Waste Management</li> <li>• Local and International Standards Implementation</li> <li>• Special Initiatives and Public Awareness Programs</li> </ul>
	Internal	Employee Environment & Safety Measures	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ergonomics Principles</li> <li>• Equipped and Dressed Labor</li> <li>• Technical Training</li> <li>• Health and Safety Policies</li> </ul>
		Environmental Reporting	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standardization</li> <li>• Clear and Accurate Environmental Information</li> <li>• Non-Financial Reporting</li> <li>• Lawful Reporting</li> </ul>
<b>Total</b>			<b>30</b>	



**Table3: Humane Dimension of CSR Index**

Dimension	Sub-Dimension	Criteria	Weight (%)	Sub-criteria
Humane (People)	External	Community Welfare and Charity Work	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Engagement</li> <li>• Charitable Initiatives</li> <li>• Partnership with NGO</li> </ul>
		Human Rights	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender Equity</li> <li>• Child Labor Exploitation</li> <li>• Labor Rights</li> </ul>
	Internal	Human Capital Development	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Resource Skill Mapping and Developing Process</li> <li>• Personal and Organizational Learning and Development</li> <li>• Human Capital Performance Indicators</li> </ul>
		Employee Benefits	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flex Timing and Family Friendly Policies</li> <li>• Work-Life Balance</li> <li>• Allowances and Insurance Policy</li> <li>• Discrimination Policy</li> <li>• Grievance Policy</li> </ul>
<b>Total</b>			<b>35</b>	

## Conclusion

In today's CSR world where a movement has risen to shift CSR practices from voluntary to obligatory, international raters are rating corporate as per their own standards without considering principle of self-determination in balance with the principle of communion (Marrewijk, 2003). In such a situation, Pakistan's first ever CSR index based on socio-economic indigenous environment of service sector has its own practical and industrial significance. This study may lead to the government or independent rating agencies to rate service sector organizations on indigenously developed CSR index that is also aligned with international standards and guidelines. More importantly and theoretically speaking, this is the first ever academically developed index that is based on the

modern, broader and viable perspective of John Elkington's triple bottom line (3BL) perspective. Moreover, there are multiple methods to report on CSR Indies and there is difference of opinion between academicians and practitioners for reporting CSR index. This study has also provided platform for criticism and further recommendations on best appropriate way to report on develop corporate social responsibility index for service sector in Pakistan. To put into nutshell, the study incorporates the central premises of CSR index, point out appropriate methodologies and guides the further development of CSR index reporting mechanism.

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