Project Report
on
Corporate Social Responsibility Practices in Bangladesh: A Comparative Study on Selected Pharmaceutical Companies

Submitted by:

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ID: BBA2102023038

Program: Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)

Major: Accounting

Sonargaon University (SU)

Submitted to:

Department of Business Administration

Sonargaon University (SU)

Submitted for the partial fulfillment of the degree of

Bachelor of Business Administration



Sonargaon University (SU)

147/I, Green Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215, Bangladesh.

Date of Submission: August 28th, 2025

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Submitted to:

Dr. Md. Masud Rana
Associate Professor & Head
Business Administration
Sonargaon University (SU)

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Date of Submission: August 28th, 2025

Letter of Transmittal

August 28th, 2025

Dr. Md. Masud Rana
Associate Professor & Head
Business Administration Sonargaon
University (SU)

Subject: Submission of Project Report.

Dear Sir,
With most respectfully to state that I am pleased to submit my project report titled **"Corporate Social Responsibility Practices in Bangladesh: A Comparative Study on Selected Pharmaceutical Companies".** This report is an essential part of my BBA degree requirements.

The Project Paper program has given me the opportunity to learn about different aspects of a reputed organization. Before facing the real business world, I have gathered a pre idea about the organization culture. To prepare this Project Paper both the primary and secondary data have been used. A survey was conducted for getting real information from various stakeholders. I have gathered all the facts that I could within a very short period of time & I have tried my best to present them clearly and logically. Despite the limitations, I sincerely hope that my project paper will meet the requirements that you set for me.

I kindly request your assessment of this report. Your feedback would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours Sincerely

Faisal Abdullah Farhan
ID: **BBA2102023038**
Program: Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)
Major: Accounting
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Certificate of Supervisor

I hereby confirm that the project report titled **"Corporate Social Responsibility Practices in Bangladesh: A Comparative Study on Selected Pharmaceutical Companies"** has been created in fulfillment of the BBA program requirements at the Department of Business Administration, Sonargaon University (SU). The report was conducted by Faisal Abdullah Farhan, with ID BBA2102023038, under my guidance. I assure you that the report and its contents will not be utilized for any other intentions.

_____

Dr. Md. Masud Rana
Associate Professor & Head
Business Administration
Sonargaon University (SU)

Declaration of Student

I am Faisal Abdullah Farhan, a student in the Bachelor of Business Administration program with ID BBA2102023038 at Sonargaon University. I want to sincerely state that the report titled **"Corporate Social Responsibility Practices in Bangladesh: A Comparative Study on Selected Pharmaceutical Companies"** has been genuinely created by me. During the preparation of this report, I ensured full compliance with international copyright regulations. I also want to clarify that this report has not been submitted anywhere else for the purpose of obtaining a degree.

Yours Sincerely,

_____

Faisal Abdullah Farhan
ID: BBA2102023038
Program: Bachelor of Business Administration
Major: Accounting
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Letter of Authorization

I hereby confirm that the project report titled **"Corporate Social Responsibility Practices in Bangladesh: A Comparative Study on Selected Pharmaceutical Companies"** is a genuine effort by **Faisal Abdullah Farhan** with **ID BBA2102023038** The research was conducted under my guidance. I also affirm that, to the best of my knowledge, the content presented in this report has not been included in any other project report or dissertation that led to the award of a degree to any candidate earlier, whether in the same context or a different one.

_____

Dr. Md. Masud Rana
Associate Professor & Head
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Acknowledgment

At first I would like to express my gratitude to the Almighty Allah. I would like to extend my gratitude for the invaluable assistance and sincere cooperation provided by various individuals in the preparation of this report. It's impossible to adequately thank all the wonderful people who directly or indirectly contributed to the successful completion of this report. I am deeply appreciative of their kind collaboration and support.

It is the part and parcel of BBA program to submit a Project Paper. And as a student of BBA program of Sonargaon University (SU), Dhaka. I have to submit a Project Paper. My Project Paper topic is **Corporate Social Responsibility Practices in Bangladesh: A Comparative Study on Selected Pharmaceutical Companies.**

I have completed this Project Paper with the supervision of **Dr. Md. Masud Rana**, Associate Professor & Head of Business Administration, Sonargaon University (SU). His cordial assistants and advice influenced me much to complete this task.

Moving forward, I am grateful to Probir Kumar Paul FCA, Partner at M A FAZAL & CO., from whom I gained significant knowledge. I am thankful to my colleagues & the various other individuals for their valuable time and assistance in helping me gather data for this report.

I would like to delivery my special thanks to all of my classmates and all my well-wishers for their inspiration without which I would not be unable to complete this project paper.

Executive Summary

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become an essential aspect of the business strategy for pharmaceutical companies worldwide, including in Bangladesh. This study examines the CSR practices of three leading pharmaceuticals Companies: Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd., Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd., and ACI Pharmaceuticals Ltd. to understand their contributions to healthcare, social development, and environmental sustainability. The research employs a combination of case studies, secondary data analysis, and stakeholder insights to evaluate the impact and challenges of CSR initiatives in the pharmaceutical sector.

Findings reveal that these companies have significantly contributed to improving healthcare access, promoting education, and adopting sustainable practices. Their CSR efforts have enhanced their corporate reputation, customer loyalty, and business performance, demonstrating a strong alignment between social responsibility and commercial success. However, the study identifies challenges in measuring the long-term impact and sustaining these initiatives amid evolving societal and regulatory demands. The research also highlights emerging trends, such as the integration of innovation and technology in CSR, and increasing stakeholder expectations, which will shape the future of CSR in the pharmaceutical industry.

This study offers recommendations for policymakers and companies to enhance CSR practices, emphasizing transparency, collaboration, and sustainable development. It provides valuable insights into how CSR can drive positive change in society while ensuring the sustainable growth of the pharmaceutical industry in Bangladesh.

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Chapter One
Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) refers to the voluntary commitment of businesses to contribute to sustainable economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce, their families, the local community, and society at large **(Carroll, 1999).** Historically, CSR was viewed as an extension of corporate philanthropy, where businesses engaged in charitable donations and welfare programs **(Bowen, 1953).**

Over time, the concept of CSR has evolved to integrate social, environmental, and economic concerns into business operations **(Matten & Moon, 2008)**. The mid-20th century marked a turning point when corporations began recognizing their broader role in society beyond profit generation. Early pioneers such as Henry Ford and John D. Rockefeller integrated social initiatives into business strategy, although these were often limited to philanthropy. With rising global concerns over environmental degradation, inequality, and human rights, CSR expanded to encompass sustainability, ethical governance, and stakeholder engagement as essential components **(Porter & Kramer, 2006).**

In the modern context, CSR is seen as a framework where companies aim not only to comply with legal requirements but also to act ethically, promoting social justice, environmental protection, and sustainable development. The 1990s marked a significant shift, as corporations worldwide began to formalize CSR practices, driven by consumer demand for responsible business behavior and increasing regulatory requirements **(Crane et al., 2008).** The adoption of global CSR standards, such as the United Nations Global Compact (2000) and ISO 26000 (2010), further established CSR as a central business principle.

Today, CSR is a key element of corporate strategy, particularly in industries such as pharmaceuticals, where companies face pressure from stakeholders, including customers, investors, employees, and policymakers to address issues like access to healthcare, climate change, labor rights, and diversity **(Rahman, 2016)**. In Bangladesh, CSR initiatives are increasingly recognized as vital in sectors like banking, garments, and pharmaceuticals, where leading firms such as Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd., Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd., and ACI Pharmaceuticals Ltd. have undertaken CSR projects in healthcare, education, and environmental sustainability **(Uddin et al., 2018; Hossain, 2020**).

Recent studies provide further evidence that CSR practices enhance not only corporate reputation but also financial outcomes. For example, **Afrin and Rahman (2024)** found that CSR directed toward customers, employees, and communities improves investment efficiency. Similarly, **Yousuf (2024)** demonstrated a positive relationship between CSR contributions and firm performance among Bangladeshi pharmaceutical and chemical companies.

Thus, CSR in Bangladesh's pharmaceutical sector represents both a moral obligation and a strategic necessity, making it an important field for academic investigation.

1.2 Problem Statement.

In developed nations, CSR is deeply embedded in corporate strategies, guided by international frameworks such as the United Nations Global Compact and ISO 26000. However, in developing countries like Bangladesh, CSR practices are still evolving and are often perceived as philanthropic activities rather than integrated business strategies **(Uddin et al., 2018)**.

The pharmaceutical industry in Bangladesh plays a crucial role in public health, economic growth, and export earnings. Leading companies such as Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd., Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd., and ACI Pharmaceuticals Ltd. have undertaken various CSR initiatives in healthcare, education, and community development. Yet, there is limited academic research comparing their CSR practices and evaluating the extent to which these efforts align with global standards of sustainability and stakeholder engagement.

Furthermore, while these companies contribute significantly to CSR, challenges remain in terms of transparency, accountability, and long-term impact measurement. A comparative study of their CSR practices is therefore necessary to identify gaps, highlight best practices, and provide recommendations that can strengthen CSR as a strategic tool in the Bangladeshi pharmaceutical sector.

1.3 Rationale of the Study

The growing importance of CSR globally has pushed businesses in both developed and developing countries to re-examine their roles in society **(Jamali & Mirshak, 2007)**. In Bangladesh, where socio-economic challenges such as poverty, inadequate healthcare, and environmental degradation persist, CSR has emerged as a critical mechanism through which businesses can contribute to national development **(Belal & Owen, 2007).**

The pharmaceutical industry holds a unique position in this regard, as it directly impacts public health and well-being. However, despite its importance, there remains a scarcity of comprehensive comparative studies examining how leading Bangladeshi pharmaceutical companies implement CSR. Most existing research treats CSR in Bangladesh as either philanthropic contributions or isolated initiatives, without a holistic analysis of corporate strategies **(Hossain, 2020)**.

This study is therefore important because it:

- Provides insights into how CSR is practiced in one of Bangladesh's most crucial industries.
- Highlights similarities and differences in CSR approaches among leading pharmaceutical firms.
- Bridges the knowledge gap between global CSR standards and local practices.
- Offers recommendations for more impactful and sustainable CSR initiatives in Bangladesh's pharmaceutical sector.

1.4 Objectives of The Study

The primary objective of this study is to examine and compare the CSR practices of three leading pharmaceutical companies in Bangladesh—Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd., Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd., and ACI Pharmaceuticals Ltd., in order to assess their contributions to sustainable development and social welfare.

The specific objectives are as follows:

- To identify and describe the CSR initiatives undertaken by Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd., Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd., and ACI Pharmaceuticals Ltd.
- To compare the CSR practices of these companies in terms of focus areas, strategies, and scope of activities.
- To evaluate how these CSR initiatives, align with global CSR frameworks and stakeholder expectations.
- To analyze the challenges and limitations faced by these companies in implementing CSR activities.
- To provide recommendations for enhancing CSR practices in the pharmaceutical industry of Bangladesh for greater social and environmental impact.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study holds both academic and practical significance. Academically, it contributes to the growing body of literature on CSR in developing countries, particularly within the pharmaceutical sector of Bangladesh—a field that remains under-researched. By comparing the CSR practices of three industry leaders, the study identifies trends, similarities, and differences that can enrich theoretical understanding of CSR implementation in emerging markets.

Practically, the findings of this research can benefit multiple stakeholders.

- Pharmaceutical companies may gain insights into best practices, challenges, and areas for improvement in their CSR strategies.
- Policymakers and regulators can use the findings to develop guidelines and frameworks that promote greater accountability and alignment with global CSR standards.
- Consumers and communities will benefit from a clearer understanding of how pharmaceutical companies contribute to societal development, healthcare access, and sustainability.
- Researchers and academics can use this study as a foundation for further investigation into CSR across other industries in Bangladesh.

By highlighting both achievements and challenges, this research ultimately aims to encourage more transparent, impactful, and sustainable CSR practices in the pharmaceutical industry of Bangladesh.

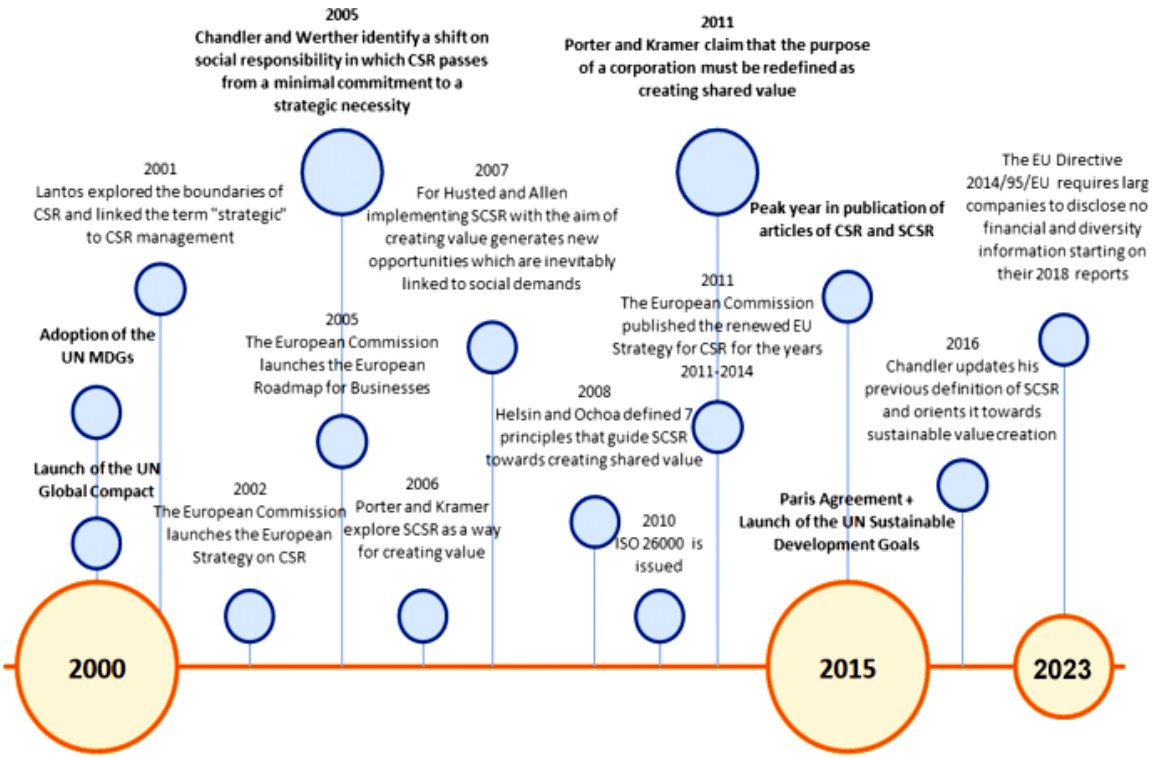
Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews existing literature on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) with a focus on global trends, regional perspectives, and practices in Bangladesh. It also highlights the role of CSR in the pharmaceutical industry and identifies the research gap that justifies this study.

2.2 Concept and Evolution of CSR



CSR has been defined in multiple ways, but it generally refers to the responsibility of businesses to contribute positively to society beyond profit-making. **Carroll (1991)** introduced the CSR Pyramid, which includes four dimensions: economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic responsibilities. Over time, CSR has evolved from being philanthropy-based to becoming an integral part of strategic management and sustainable business models.

In the global context, frameworks such as the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) and the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) provide guiding principles for CSR implementation. These frameworks emphasize human rights, environmental protection, anti-corruption, and fair labor practices.

Recent research emphasizes the strategic and financial significance of CSR. **Afrin and Rahman (2024)** demonstrated that CSR initiatives positively influence investment efficiency, particularly for firms with strong reputations. Likewise, **Yousuf (2024)** examined CSR expenditures across listed pharmaceutical and chemical companies in Bangladesh and confirmed a positive association between CSR and market-based performance indicators. These findings are consistent with international studies that show CSR is no longer peripheral but central to business sustainability **(Jamali & Karam, 2018; Glavas, 2016).**

2.3 CSR in Developing Countries

In developing countries, CSR often emphasizes philanthropy, community development, and poverty alleviation rather than strategic alignment with business goals. Scholars argue that institutional weaknesses, regulatory gaps, and cultural contexts influence how CSR is perceived and practiced in these regions **(Visser, 2008).**

South Asian countries, including India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, have increasingly recognized CSR as a means to balance economic growth with social and environmental sustainability. For instance, India has made CSR expenditure mandatory for large companies under the Companies Act of 2013.

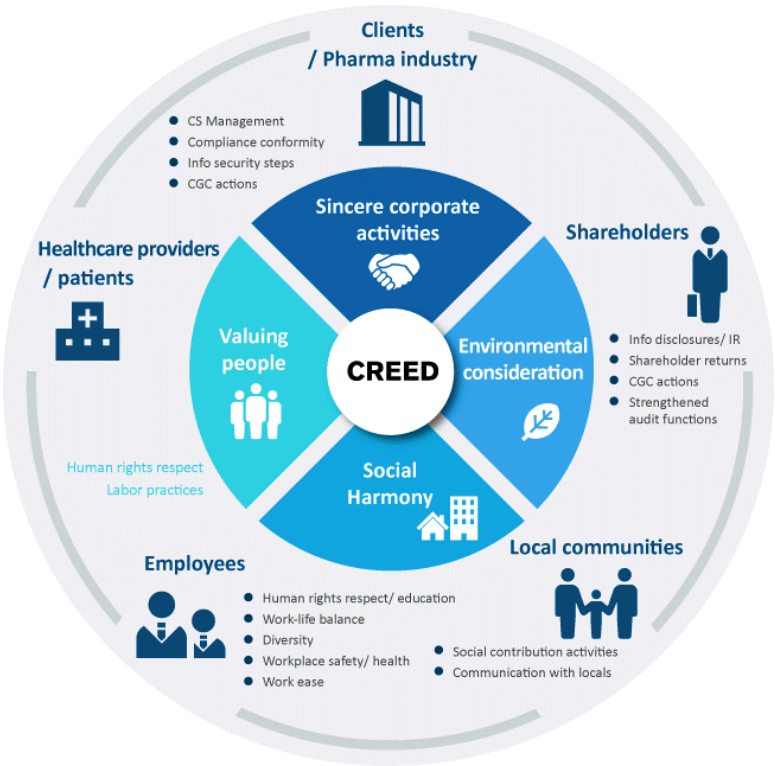
2.4 CSR in Bangladesh

Bangladesh, as a rapidly growing economy, has seen an expansion of CSR activities, particularly in the banking, garments, and pharmaceutical sectors. However, most CSR activities in Bangladesh remain voluntary and philanthropic in nature, focusing on education, health, disaster relief, and environmental protection **(Belal & Owen, 2007)**

Although the Bangladesh Bank has issued guidelines encouraging CSR expenditure in the banking sector, similar regulatory frameworks for the pharmaceutical industry remain limited. Thus, CSR practices vary significantly across industries and organizations.

2.5 CSR in the Pharmaceutical Industry

Pharmaceutical companies have a unique role in CSR because they directly impact public health and well-being. Globally, pharmaceutical CSR initiatives include providing affordable medicines, improving healthcare access, sponsoring medical research, and supporting community health programs **(Smith, 2012)**.



In Bangladesh, pharmaceutical companies such as Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd., Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd., and ACI Pharmaceuticals Ltd. have engaged in CSR activities ranging from donations to hospitals, health awareness campaigns, disaster relief, and environmental initiatives However, there is limited academic research comparing how these companies approach CSR strategically.

2.6 Research Gap

While previous studies have explored CSR in Bangladesh (**Belal & Owen, 2007; Azim et al., 2011)**, few have focused specifically on the pharmaceutical sector. Moreover, existing literature tends to examine individual companies rather than conducting comparative analyses across multiple leading firms. This study fills that gap by comparing the CSR practices of Square Pharmaceuticals, Beximco Pharmaceuticals, and ACI Pharmaceuticals, thereby contributing to both academic understanding and practical policy recommendations.

2.7 Chapter Summary

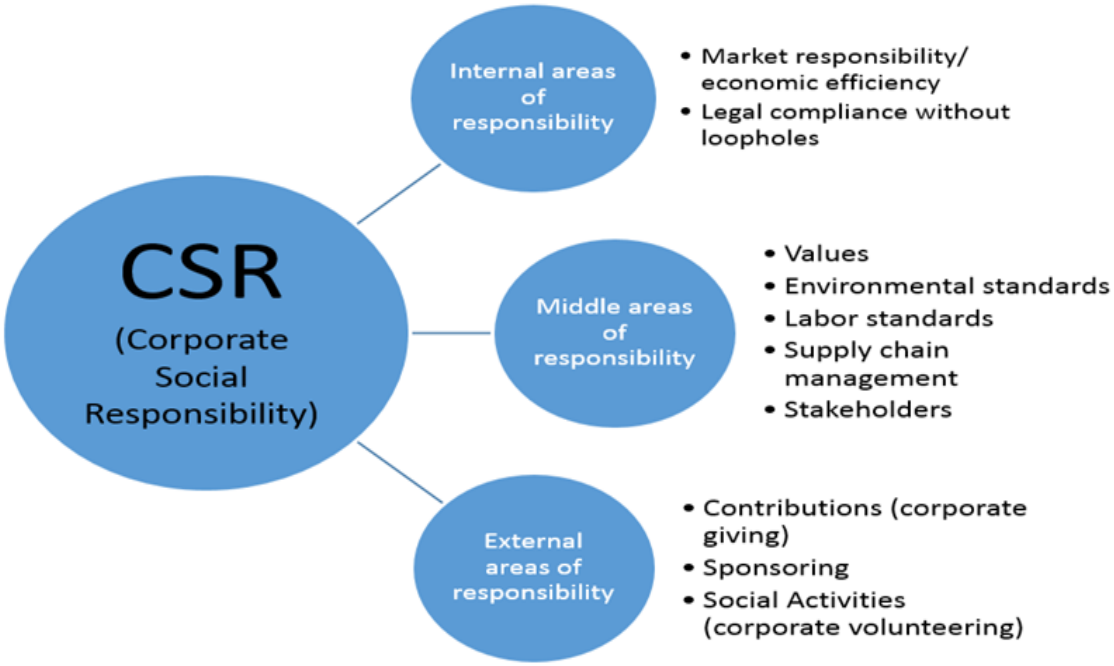
The literature highlights that while CSR is gaining momentum globally and in Bangladesh, its implementation in the pharmaceutical sector remains under-researched. This study will therefore provide a comparative perspective on how leading Bangladeshi pharmaceutical companies approach CSR and how these practices align with both national needs and global CSR frameworks.

Chapter Three
Conceptual Framework and Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the conceptual framework underpinning the study and outlines the research methodology employed. The conceptual framework is based on established corporate social responsibility (CSR) theories, particularly Carroll's CSR Pyramid, and is adapted to the pharmaceutical sector of Bangladesh. The research methodology explains the design, sampling, data collection, and analytical techniques adopted to achieve the study's objectives.

The conceptual framework of this study has been developed based on prior literature on CSR **(Carroll, 1999; Matten & Moon, 2008; Afrin & Rahman, 2024).** It links independent variables (CSR activities in healthcare, education, environment, community development, and employee welfare) with dependent variables (corporate reputation and perceived performance).



3.2 Conceptual Framework

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has been extensively studied in both developed and developing economies. Among the widely used theoretical approaches, **Carroll's CSR Pyramid (1991)** provides a comprehensive model consisting of four dimensions:

- Economic Responsibility – being profitable and sustainable.
- Legal Responsibility – complying with laws and regulations.
- Ethical Responsibility – adhering to moral standards beyond the law.
- Philanthropic Responsibility – contributing voluntarily to community well-being.

This framework is particularly relevant to the pharmaceutical industry in Bangladesh, where companies are expected not only to generate profit but also to ensure access to affordable medicines, comply with strict regulatory standards, uphold ethical marketing practices, and support public health initiatives.

For the purpose of this study, the conceptual framework focuses on the CSR practices of three leading pharmaceutical companies in Bangladesh: Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd., Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd., and ACI Pharmaceuticals Ltd. Their CSR activities were

examined across the four dimensions of Carroll's model to compare and evaluate their contributions to economic, social, and environmental development.

3.3 Research Design

The study adopts a comparative research design with a mixed-method approach. Quantitative data were collected through surveys, while qualitative insights were gathered from interviews and document analysis. This design allows both numerical evaluation and contextual understanding of CSR practices in the pharmaceutical industry.

3.4 Sources of Data

- Primary Data: Collected through structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.
- Secondary Data: Derived from company annual reports, CSR reports, academic journals, government publications, and reliable online sources.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

- Questionnaires: Distributed to employees and customers to capture quantitative data on perceptions of CSR.
- Interviews: Conducted with managers/CSR officers to gain deeper qualitative insights.
- Document Review: Analysis of CSR reports, company websites, and published articles to verify reported practices.

3.6 Data Analysis Techniques

- Descriptive Statistics: Percentages, and graphs to summarize survey data.
- Thematic Analysis: For qualitative interview responses to identify patterns and insights.
- Comparative Analysis: To contrast the CSR activities of Square, Beximco, and ACI across Carroll's CSR dimensions.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The study follows ethical standards by:

- Obtaining informed consent from all participants.
- Ensuring confidentiality and anonymity of responses.
- Avoiding researcher bias in data interpretation.
- Properly acknowledging all secondary data sources.

3.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has outlined the conceptual framework based on Carroll's CSR Pyramid and described the research methodology used in the study. The framework provides a structured lens for analyzing CSR practices, while the methodology ensures reliability and validity in data collection and analysis. Together, they form the foundation for the comparative evaluation of CSR practices in Square Pharmaceuticals, Beximco Pharmaceuticals, and ACI Pharmaceuticals.

Chapter Four
Comparative Analysis of CSR Initiatives

4.1 Square Pharmaceutical Ltd.

- **Overview of the Company**

Square Pharmaceutical Ltd., one of the largest and most reputable pharmaceutical companies in Bangladesh, has been a pioneer in the healthcare sector since its inception in 1958. Founded by Samson H. Chowdhury and three of his friends, the company has grown exponentially to become a market leader not only in Bangladesh but also in global markets, exporting its products to more than 40 countries. With its robust infrastructure, state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities, and a commitment to innovation, Square Pharmaceuticals focuses on producing high-quality medicines, ensuring accessibility to essential healthcare products. The company operates with a vision to enhance the quality of life and consistently ranks as the top pharmaceutical company in Bangladesh in terms of market share, revenue, and consumer trust.

- **CSR Initiatives and Key Projects**

Square Pharmaceuticals has established itself as a socially responsible organization through various Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives aimed at addressing critical social, environmental, and healthcare challenges in Bangladesh. The company prioritizes healthcare development, education, environmental sustainability, and disaster relief as its core CSR focus areas.

One of its flagship initiatives includes the provision of free healthcare services through medical camps and mobile health units in remote and underserved areas. These camps offer free consultations, diagnostic services, and medicines to people who lack access to basic healthcare facilities. Square Pharmaceuticals also collaborates with various NGOs and government bodies to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of these programs.
In education, the company has funded numerous scholarships and infrastructure development projects, including building schools and donating learning materials to

underprivileged children. To address environmental concerns, Square Pharmaceuticals implements green manufacturing practices by adopting energy-efficient technologies and waste management systems. Its projects often include tree plantation drives and awareness campaigns about environmental conservation.

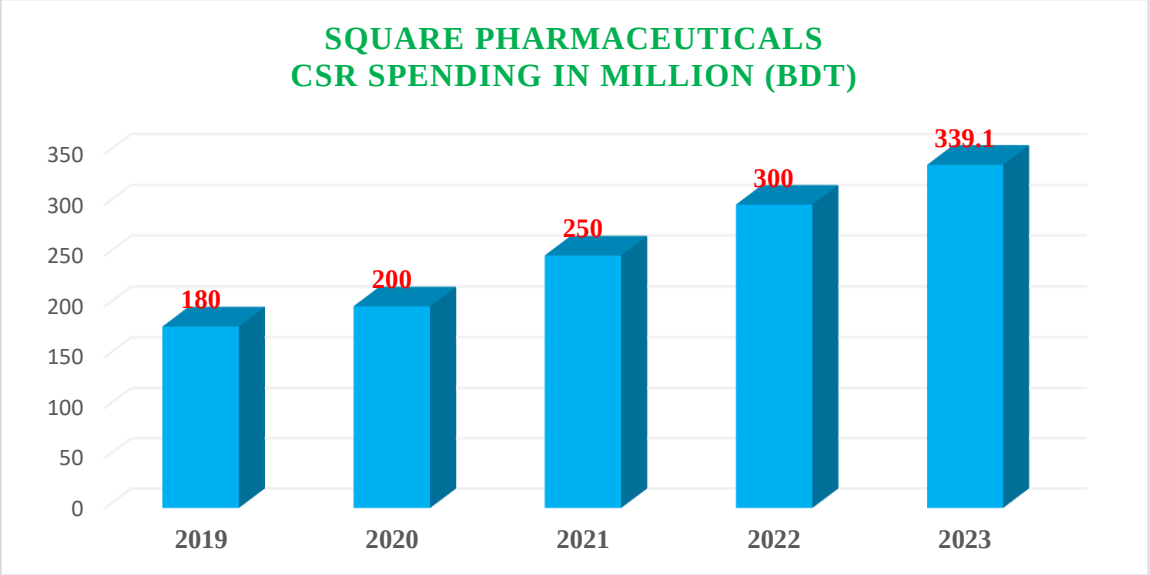
Furthermore, the company has played a significant role in disaster relief, particularly during natural calamities such as floods and cyclones. It provides immediate aid, including food, water, clothing, and medical supplies, to affected communities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Square Pharmaceuticals extended its CSR efforts by donating personal protective equipment (PPE), sanitizers, and essential medicines to frontline healthcare workers and vulnerable populations.

- **Analysis of CSR Impact**

The CSR initiatives undertaken by Square Pharmaceuticals have had a profound impact on various aspects of society and the environment. Its healthcare initiatives have significantly improved access to medical services in rural and marginalized communities, contributing to the overall health and well-being of the population. These efforts align with the company's commitment to ensuring universal healthcare access and reducing health inequities in Bangladesh.

Square's focus on education has fostered greater opportunities for underprivileged children, enabling them to pursue quality education and achieve better socio-economic outcomes. By investing in infrastructure and scholarships, the company contributes to building a more skilled and educated workforce, which benefits the nation in the long run. In the realm of environmental sustainability, Square Pharmaceuticals has set an example by integrating eco-friendly practices into its operations. Its waste management initiatives and energy-efficient technologies have not only reduced the company's environmental footprint but have also inspired other businesses in Bangladesh to adopt similar practices. The company's disaster relief efforts have provided timely support to thousands of people affected by natural disasters. These interventions demonstrate Square Pharmaceuticals' commitment to being a socially conscious organization that prioritizes human welfare. During the COVID-19 pandemic, its rapid response highlighted its adaptability and determination to address unprecedented challenges.

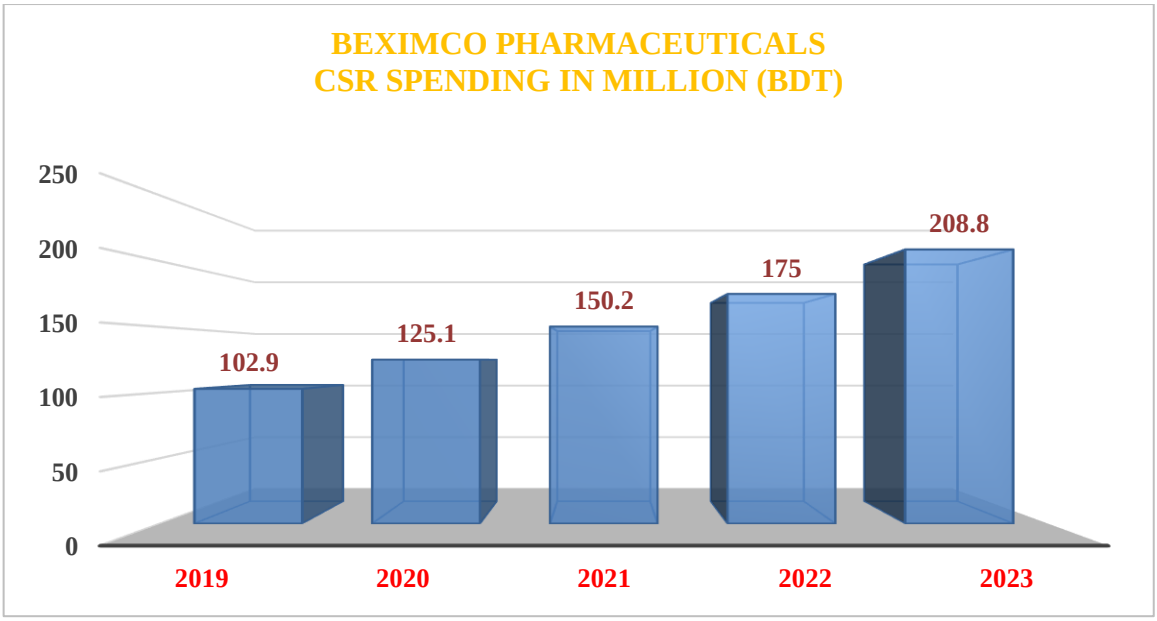
Overall, the CSR initiatives of Square Pharmaceuticals not only enhance its corporate reputation but also build strong community relationships, increase stakeholder trust, and reinforce its position as a leader in the pharmaceutical industry. By focusing on sustainability and inclusivity, the company has set a benchmark for CSR practices in Bangladesh, paving the way for a more socially responsible business environment.



4.2 Beximco Pharmaceutical Ltd.

➢ **Overview of the Company**

Beximco Pharmaceutical Ltd. (BPL), established in 1976, is one of Bangladesh's largest and most prominent pharmaceutical companies. Headquartered in Dhaka, Beximco Pharmaceuticals is a flagship enterprise of the Beximco Group, and it operates with the mission to improve lives by providing affordable, quality medicines. The company is a key player in both the domestic and international pharmaceutical markets, exporting its products to more than 50 countries, including regulated markets such as the United States, the European Union, and Australia. Known for its innovation, the company manufactures a wide range of generic drugs, covering numerous therapeutic areas. Beximco Pharmaceuticals is also recognized for its adoption of advanced technologies and compliance with global regulatory standards, which have established it as a trusted name in the healthcare industry.



➢ **CSR Initiatives and Key Projects**

Beximco Pharmaceuticals has demonstrated a strong commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) by addressing critical social, environmental, and healthcare challenges. Its CSR initiatives span healthcare accessibility, environmental sustainability, education, and community development.

One of the company's standout initiatives is the "Community Healthcare Program," where it provides free medicines and healthcare services to underserved communities. Beximco frequently organizes health camps and collaborates with NGOs to reach rural areas, ensuring that basic healthcare needs are met. Additionally, the company supplies free essential drugs to government hospitals and clinics, particularly during emergencies.

In the field of education, Beximco sponsors scholarships and funds for underprivileged students to promote learning opportunities. It has also contributed to the establishment of educational infrastructure and donated learning materials to schools in rural areas.

Environmental sustainability is another key focus for Beximco Pharmaceuticals. The company has implemented green manufacturing practices, including energy-efficient systems, waste recycling, and reduced emissions. Furthermore, Beximco has undertaken

reforestation projects and environmental awareness campaigns to promote eco-friendly practices.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Beximco Pharmaceuticals played a pivotal role by ramping up the production of critical medicines and personal protective equipment (PPE). The company donated significant quantities of PPE, sanitizers, and essential drugs to frontline workers and vulnerable populations, showcasing its leadership in crisis management.

- **Analysis of CSR Impact**

The CSR efforts of Beximco Pharmaceuticals have had a transformative effect on various societal and environmental domains. The Community Healthcare Program has improved access to medical services in marginalized regions, reducing health disparities and promoting well-being among underserved populations. By supplying essential drugs to government facilities, the company has contributed significantly to strengthening the national healthcare infrastructure.

Beximco's initiatives in education have empowered countless underprivileged students by enabling them to pursue their academic aspirations. The scholarships and educational infrastructure development projects have not only enhanced individual opportunities but have also contributed to the long-term socio-economic development of rural communities. The company's commitment to environmental sustainability has set an industry standard for green practices. Its initiatives in reducing waste, emissions, and energy consumption have minimized its environmental footprint, reflecting its dedication to sustainable development. These measures also align with global efforts to combat climate change and preserve natural resources.

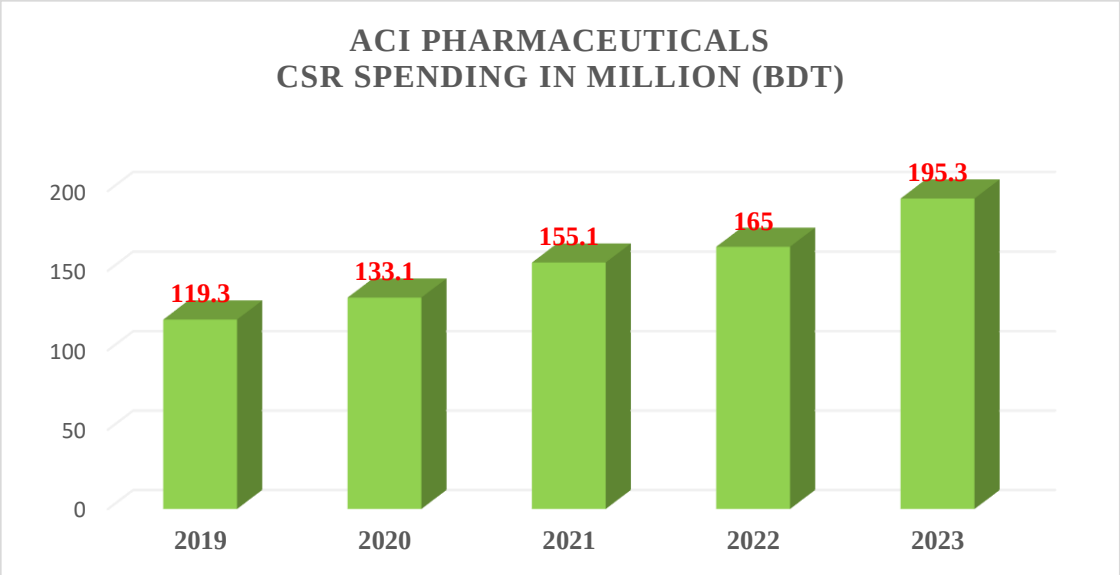
During the COVID-19 pandemic, Beximco's swift and robust response highlighted its capacity to address urgent societal needs. Its contributions of PPE, medicines, and sanitizers not only provided immediate relief but also underscored its role as a socially responsible corporate leader in times of crisis.

Overall, Beximco Pharmaceuticals' CSR initiatives have strengthened its reputation as a socially conscious and environmentally responsible organization. By aligning its business objectives with the welfare of society and the environment, the company has reinforced its brand equity and built enduring trust among stakeholders. Its approach serves as a model for other companies in Bangladesh, demonstrating that corporate success and social responsibility can go hand in hand.

4.3 ACI Pharmaceutical Ltd.

- **Overview of the Company**

Advanced Chemical Industries (ACI) Pharmaceutical Ltd., a leading pharmaceutical company in Bangladesh, is a subsidiary of ACI Limited, a conglomerate with diverse business interests. Established in 1973, ACI Pharmaceuticals has become a trusted name in healthcare, offering a wide range of high-quality medicines, including both generic and proprietary drugs, across multiple therapeutic areas. The company focuses on innovation, research, and compliance with international quality standards, ensuring it meets the evolving needs of patients and healthcare providers. ACI Pharmaceuticals exports its products to several countries, contributing to Bangladesh's growing presence in the global pharmaceutical market. With a mission to improve the quality of life and a vision to be the most trusted partner in healthcare, ACI consistently strives to combine business growth with social responsibility.



- **CSR Initiatives and Key Projects**

ACI Pharmaceuticals is deeply committed to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as an integral part of its mission to contribute to the well-being of society. The company's CSR activities focus on healthcare, environmental sustainability, education, and community development, aligning with its core values of innovation, integrity, and sustainability.

In healthcare, ACI Pharmaceuticals has launched several initiatives to provide medical support to underserved communities. The company organizes health camps offering free consultations, diagnostic services, and medicines to people in remote areas. ACI also collaborates with NGOs and local organizations to run mobile health units that bring healthcare to the doorstep of rural populations.

ACI is actively engaged in educational development projects, sponsoring scholarships for meritorious students from low-income families and supporting the construction of schools in rural areas. It also promotes health awareness campaigns in schools, educating children about hygiene, nutrition, and preventive healthcare.

Environmental sustainability is a major pillar of ACI's CSR strategy. The company has adopted eco-friendly manufacturing processes, including energy-efficient systems and waste management initiatives, to minimize its environmental impact. ACI Pharmaceuticals also participates in reforestation projects and awareness programs to combat deforestation and promote biodiversity.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, ACI Pharmaceuticals demonstrated its commitment to societal welfare by producing and distributing essential medicines, personal protective equipment (PPE), and sanitizers. The company also provided financial aid and medical supplies to frontline workers and low-income families affected by the crisis.

- **Analysis of CSR Impact**

The CSR initiatives of ACI Pharmaceuticals have had a significant and multifaceted impact on Bangladeshi society. Through its healthcare programs, ACI has enhanced access to medical services for vulnerable and marginalized populations, reducing health disparities and contributing to overall community well-being. The company's mobile

health units and health camps have addressed critical gaps in healthcare delivery, especially in rural areas where medical infrastructure is often inadequate.

ACI's efforts in education have empowered countless students by providing them with the resources and opportunities to pursue higher education. These initiatives not only improve individual lives but also foster the development of a skilled and educated workforce, which is essential for national progress. The health awareness campaigns in schools have cultivated a culture of preventive healthcare among younger generations, potentially reducing long-term public health burdens.

On the environmental front, ACI Pharmaceuticals has made noteworthy contributions to sustainability by adopting green practices and advocating for environmental conservation. Its waste management and reforestation projects have helped reduce its ecological footprint, aligning the company's operations with global sustainability goals. These initiatives also enhance the company's reputation as an environmentally conscious organization.

ACI's proactive response during the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated its capacity to address societal challenges effectively. By prioritizing the production of essential medical supplies and providing support to frontline workers, the company played a critical role in mitigating the impact of the crisis. These actions have strengthened ACI's position as a reliable and socially responsible corporate leader.

The CSR activities of ACI Pharmaceuticals have significantly contributed to societal development, environmental preservation, and public health. By integrating social responsibility into its business model, ACI has reinforced its corporate identity as a company that prioritizes people, planet, and prosperity. Its approach serves as an inspiration for other companies in the pharmaceutical sector, demonstrating the importance of aligning business objectives with broader societal goals.

4.4 Comparative Analysis of CSR Initiatives Across the Three Companies

The CSR initiatives of Square Pharmaceutical Ltd., Beximco Pharmaceutical Ltd., and ACI Pharmaceutical Ltd. demonstrate a shared commitment to societal well-being and

sustainable development. While each company tailors its CSR activities to its unique organizational goals and resources, commonalities and differences in their approaches highlight their respective strengths and contributions to Bangladesh's socio-economic and environmental landscape.

The detailed critical analysis and findings of the study on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices in the pharmaceutical sector of Bangladesh reveals the following data. Our focus is on three major companies namely: Square Pharmaceuticals Limited, Beximco Pharmaceuticals Limited, and ACI Limited—which are among the leading firms in the industry. Data has been compiled from their annual reports, financial statements, CSR disclosures, and secondary sources over a span of previous five years (2019–2023). The comparative analysis highlights their CSR expenditure patterns, sectoral focus, and the relative importance of CSR in their corporate strategies.

Sector Wise Allocation

(Approximate Average Percentage over 2019-2023)

Sector	**Square Pharmaceuticals** …… (BDT in millions)			**Beximco Pharmaceuticals** …… (BDT in millions)			**ACI Pharmaceuticals** …… (BDT in millions)		
Healthcare	CSR 1269.1	571.10	**45%**	CSR 762	304.8	**40%**	CSR 767.8	383.9	**50%**
Education		253.82	**20%**		137.16	**18%**		115.17	**15%**
Environment & Sustainability		126.91	**10%**		91.44	**12%**		76.78	**10%**
Community Development		190.365	**15%**		152.4	**20%**		115.17	**15%**
Disaster Relief		63.455	**5%**		38.1	**5%**		38.39	**5%**
Employee Welfare/ Training		63.455	**5%**		38.1	**5%**		38.39	**5%**

******* The percentage is calculated using the formula: (Sector wise expenditures/ Total CSR) *100*

***** Total CSR = Accumulated CSR for five years from 2019-2023***

*****Source:*** *Calculation done by the author. The values were taken from publicly available data such as media outlets, various NGOs and company annual reports.*

Sector-Wise CSR Allocation Analysis:

The distribution of CSR expenditure across different sectors provides valuable insight into the strategic orientation of the three pharmaceutical companies. ***Healthcare*** emerges as the dominant focus area for all three firms, reflecting their core business identity and social responsibility to improve public health in Bangladesh. ACI Pharmaceuticals shows the strongest concentration here, allocating nearly 50% of its CSR resources to healthcare initiatives. This often includes funding for free medical camps, medicine donations, and support for hospitals. Square Pharmaceuticals also invests heavily in healthcare (45%), while Beximco Pharmaceuticals maintains a slightly lower share (40%), though still substantial.

Education is another key sector, though its share varies by company. Square Pharmaceuticals dedicates around 20% of its CSR budget to scholarships, school infrastructure, and literacy programs, which reflects a long-term commitment to capacity building. Beximco Pharmaceuticals contributes slightly less (18%) but supplements its education initiatives with targeted programs such as its notable grant to the JAAGO Foundation. ACI Pharmaceuticals, in contrast, spends a smaller portion (15%) on education, consistent with its stronger emphasis on healthcare.

In the area of ***environment and sustainability***, all three companies demonstrate relatively modest contributions, ranging between 10–12%. These efforts typically include tree plantation, pollution control, and waste management projects, but the relatively low allocation suggests that environmental sustainability is still secondary to immediate social priorities such as healthcare and education.

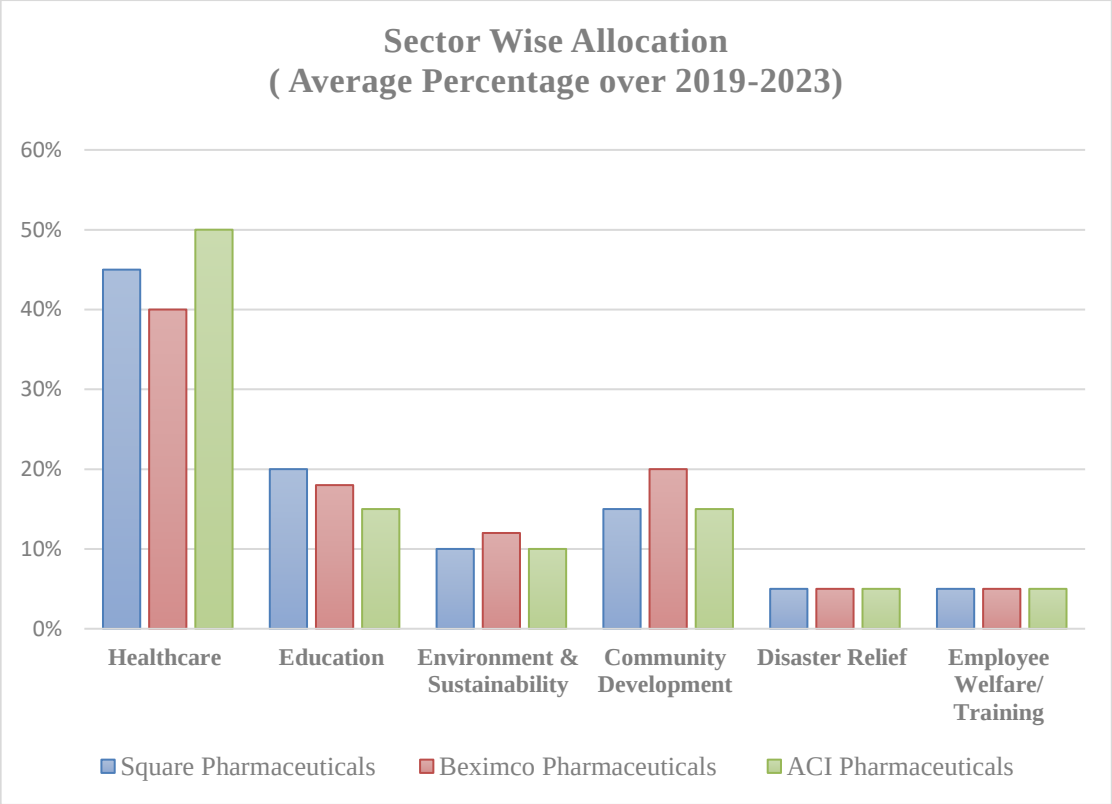
Community development stands out more prominently in the CSR portfolio of Beximco Pharmaceuticals, which allocates 20% of its CSR expenditure here, compared to 15% each for Square and ACI. This reflects Beximco's broader approach to social investment, often targeting rural livelihood programs, safe drinking water projects, and housing initiatives.
Disaster relief is a shared responsibility, with each company allocating approximately 5% of their CSR resources. This reflects Bangladesh's vulnerability to natural disasters and

the role corporations play in emergency aid distribution, including food, medical supplies, and rehabilitation support.

Finally, ***employee welfare and training*** accounts for 5% of CSR spending across all three companies. Though relatively small in proportion, these initiatives focus on skill development, healthcare access, and workplace safety for employees, which indirectly strengthens organizational sustainability.

Overall, the sectoral distribution reflects a pattern where healthcare dominates due to alignment with pharmaceutical business models, while education and community development follow as secondary areas of investment. Environmental and employee-focused initiatives remain comparatively underfunded, indicating potential opportunities for diversification in future CSR strategies.

To better illustrate the comparative CSR practices of Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd., Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd., and ACI Pharmaceuticals Ltd., the following graph present the data from the preceding tables in visual form. Graphical representation helps to capture trends in CSR spending, highlight differences in sectoral allocation, and show how each company's CSR initiatives have evolved over time. By visualizing the data, it becomes easier to identify patterns, compare relative commitments, and evaluate the strategic emphasis placed by each company on different areas of corporate social responsibility.



This graph breaks down how CSR budgets are typically allocated.

Square Pharma places a major focus on healthcare (45%), supporting hospitals, clinics, and public health initiatives. Its next priorities are education (20%) and community development (15%), consistent with its role as a market leader.

Beximco Pharma has a broader CSR strategy, with notable investments in community development (20%), which includes rural livelihood programs and housing projects. It still prioritizes healthcare (40%), but its slightly lower education spending suggests a different strategic outlook.

ACI Pharma directs half of its CSR spending to healthcare (50%), reflecting its strong pharmaceutical identity and alignment with its business core. Education (15%) and community development (15%) are secondary.

Implication: Each company aligns its CSR with its strategic identity:

Square = balanced, diversified CSR portfolio.

Beximco = strong on community initiatives.

ACI = heavy focus on healthcare as its primary contribution.

- **Common Focus Areas**

All three companies prioritize healthcare as the cornerstone of their CSR activities. Square Pharmaceuticals focuses on free healthcare camps and mobile medical units to serve underserved populations. Similarly, Beximco Pharmaceuticals offers community healthcare programs and free medicines to government hospitals, while ACI Pharmaceuticals runs health camps and mobile health units in rural areas. These initiatives address critical healthcare gaps, particularly in remote and underprivileged regions.

Education is another shared focus among the three companies. Square Pharmaceuticals emphasizes scholarships and infrastructure development, Beximco sponsors educational programs for underprivileged students, and ACI provides scholarships and runs school health awareness campaigns. These efforts demonstrate a collective acknowledgment of education as a driver of long-term societal development.

Environmental sustainability is a central theme across all three organizations. Square Pharmaceuticals incorporates green manufacturing technologies and tree plantation programs, Beximco Pharmaceuticals implements energy-efficient systems and waste management practices, and ACI focuses on eco-friendly manufacturing, reforestation, and awareness campaigns. These efforts align with global trends in corporate environmental responsibility.

- **Unique Contributions and Approaches**

Despite their shared focus, the three companies exhibit distinct approaches to CSR. Square Pharmaceuticals distinguishes itself through its disaster relief efforts, providing immediate aid during natural calamities, such as floods and cyclones. Beximco Pharmaceuticals, on the other hand, emphasizes scalability in healthcare support by collaborating with NGOs and distributing free drugs on a larger scale. ACI Pharmaceuticals incorporates health

awareness campaigns within educational programs, fostering a preventive healthcare mindset among younger generations.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, all three companies played vital roles in crisis management. However, their strategies varied. Square Pharmaceuticals focused on distributing PPE and essential medicines, Beximco Pharmaceuticals ramped up production of critical drugs and medical supplies, and ACI Pharmaceuticals prioritized supporting frontline workers and low-income families with medical and financial aid. These responses highlight the agility and resource allocation strengths of each company in addressing urgent societal needs.

- **Impact and Recognition**

The impact of CSR activities from these companies is profound, benefiting millions of people across Bangladesh. Square Pharmaceuticals' efforts have earned recognition for directly improving healthcare accessibility in rural areas. Beximco Pharmaceuticals is widely regarded for its leadership in healthcare and environmental sustainability, setting benchmarks for CSR in the pharmaceutical industry. ACI Pharmaceuticals is celebrated for its holistic approach to community development, combining education, healthcare, and environmental conservation into an integrated framework.

To evaluate the scale and intensity of CSR commitments, it is important to compare the absolute CSR expenditure with the overall revenue of each company. This comparison highlights whether CSR spending is keeping pace with company growth and reveals how much of the financial resources are dedicated to social responsibility. The following graph presents the CSR spending of Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd., Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd., and ACI Pharmaceuticals Ltd. from 2019 to 2023. This approach allows for a clearer understanding of CSR intensity relative to business expansion, providing insights into how strategically each company integrates social responsibility within its financial structure.

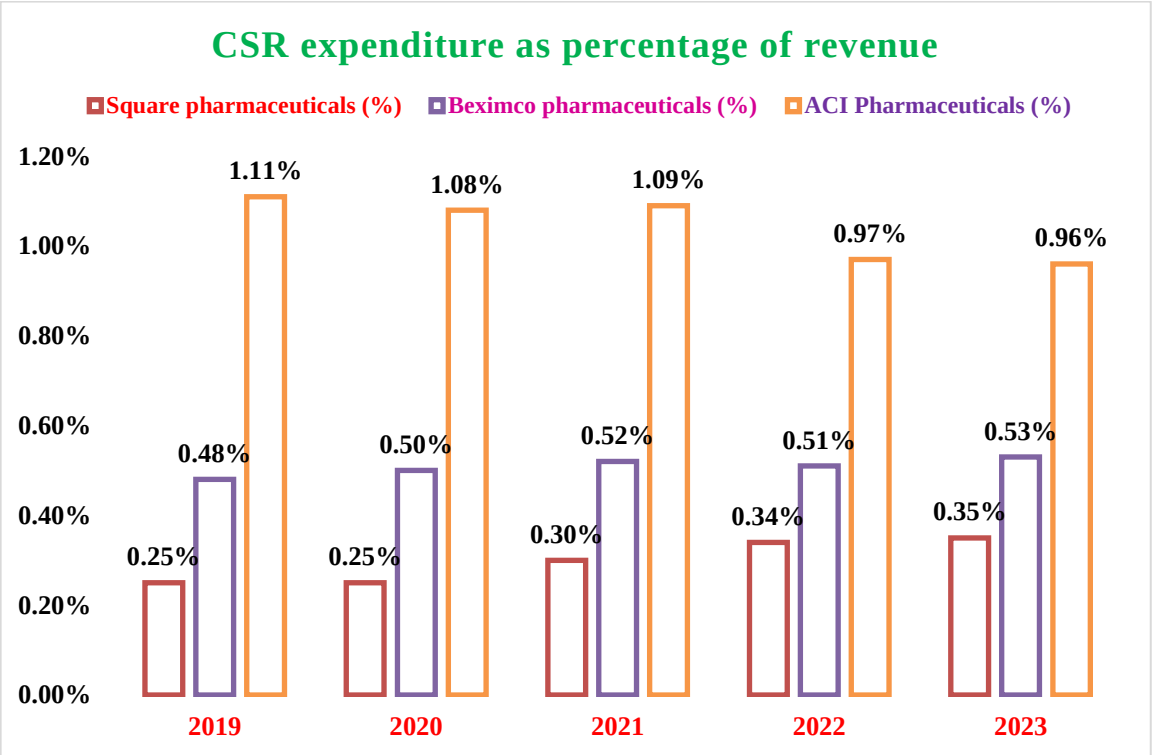
The following table represents CSR expenditure as percentage of revenue for all three companies.

CSR expenditure as percentage of revenue

Year	Square Pharmaceuticals			Beximco Pharmaceuticals			ACI Pharmaceuticals		
	CSR Expenditure In million BDT	Total Revenue In Million BDT	%	CSR Expenditure in Million BDT	Total Revenue In Million BDT	%	CSR Expenditure in Million BDT	Total Revenue in Million BDT	%
2019	180	72750	**0.25%**	102.9	21450	**0.48%**	119.3	10740	**1.11%**
2020	200	80970	**0.25%**	125.1	25150	**0.50%**	133.1	12330	**1.08%**
2021	250	84740	**0.30%**	150.2	28790	**0.52%**	155.1	14210	**1.09%**
2022	300	88970	**0.34%**	175	34220	**0.51%**	165	16980	**0.97%**
2023	339.1	97180	**0.35%**	208.8	39200	**0.53%**	195.3	20250	**0.96%**

Note- The percentages calculated as: (Total CSR expenditure/Total Revenue) *100

** Data Source- Percentage calculation done by the author from audited annual reports submitted to the Dhaka Stock Exchange(DSE).*



This table shows the proportion of revenue each company invested in CSR over five years. A clear upward trend is visible across all three firms.

Over the five-year period from 2019 to 2023, all three leading Bangladeshi pharmaceutical manufacturers demonstrated a clear and increasing commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). This is evidenced by a consistent year-on-year rise in their absolute CSR expenditure. More importantly, the ratio of CSR spending to revenue, a key metric for evaluating philanthropic effort relative to company size. It also showed a stable or increasing trend for each company, indicating that their CSR initiatives are scaling alongside their business growth.

A comparative analysis of CSR intensity (CSR as a percentage of revenue) reveals distinct strategic approaches:

- **ACI Limited** consistently allocated the largest proportion of its revenue to CSR, maintaining a remarkably stable commitment averaging approximately 1.04% annually. This suggests a deeply integrated corporate philosophy where social responsibility is a fixed priority, independent of annual revenue fluctuations.
- **Beximco Pharmaceuticals** exhibited a very steady and deliberate approach, increasing its ratio from 0.48% to 0.53%. Its spending remained tightly range-bound between 0.48% and 0.53%, reflecting a policy of controlled, predictable growth in its CSR contributions in lockstep with its expanding operations.
- **Square Pharmaceuticals**, while contributing the largest absolute sum in Bangladeshi Taka due to its market-leading revenue, allocated the smallest percentage of its revenue to CSR. However, it is notable that Square's ratio increased significantly by 40% over the period (from 0.25% to 0.35%), signaling a conscious decision to enhance its proportional contribution in recent years.

In summary, while all three companies have expanded their CSR programs, their strategies differ. ACI leads in proportional commitment, Beximco demonstrates consistent and controlled growth, and Square, from a lower base, shows the most rapid relative growth. This analysis moves beyond absolute numbers to reveal the relative weight each company assigns to its social mandate within its financial framework.

- **Challenges and Opportunities**

While all three companies face challenges in scaling their CSR efforts, such as resource limitations and regulatory hurdles, they also have significant opportunities to expand their impact. Collaboration among these industry leaders could amplify their collective contributions to national healthcare and sustainability goals. Furthermore, by leveraging technology, such as telemedicine and digital education platforms, they could enhance the reach and effectiveness of their CSR initiatives.

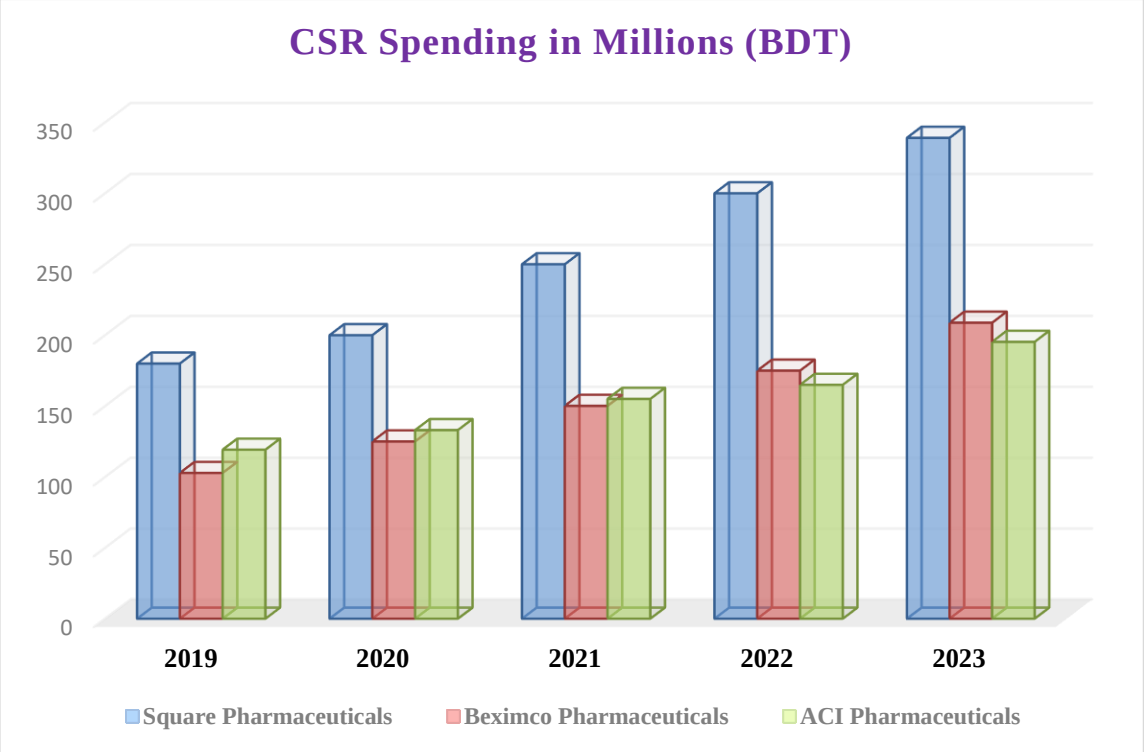
The CSR initiatives of Square Pharmaceutical Ltd., Beximco Pharmaceutical Ltd., and ACI Pharmaceutical Ltd. underscore their shared dedication to societal welfare and environmental stewardship. Each company brings unique strengths to the table, whether through healthcare, education, or sustainability efforts, collectively contributing to the betterment of Bangladesh. Their efforts serve as a model for the pharmaceutical industry and demonstrate that social responsibility and business success can go hand in hand. By continuing to innovate and collaborate, these companies can further advance the impact of CSR in Bangladesh.

The absolute CSR expenditure of the companies provides further perspective on their social commitments. The following graph compares CSR spending in Bangladeshi Taka (millions) for the three companies over the five-year period. This visual representation helps assess growth trends and comparative scales of CSR budgets.

Annual CSR Spending in Millions (BDT)

Year	Square Pharmaceuticals	Beximco Pharmaceuticals	ACI Pharmaceuticals
2019	180	102.9	119.3
2020	200	125.1	133.1
2021	250	150.2	155.1
2022	300	175	165
2023	339.1	208.8	195.3

The figures represent expenditures on social welfare, donations, subscriptions, and disclosures, as reported in the audited annual report



This table and subsequent diagram presents the absolute CSR expenditure in Bangladeshi Taka (BDT million).

From 2019 to 2023, the absolute spending on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) by Bangladesh's leading pharmaceutical companies showed a consistent and substantial upward trajectory.

- **Square Pharmaceuticals** allocated the largest amount in absolute terms each year, increasing its annual CSR expenditure from 180.00 million BDT in 2019 to 339.10 million BDT in 2023. This represents a significant expansion of its corporate citizenship initiatives over the five-year period.

- **Beximco Pharmaceuticals** demonstrated the most pronounced growth in the scale of its CSR spending. The company's allocations rose steadily, starting at 102.90 million BDT in 2019 and reaching 208.80 million BDT by 2023, more than doubling its financial commitment to social causes.

- **ACI Limited** also consistently increased its financial contributions, with its CSR budget growing from 119.30 million BDT to 195.30 million BDT between 2019 and 2023. ACI's spending was notably close to Beximco's throughout the period, particularly in the most recent years.

Implication:

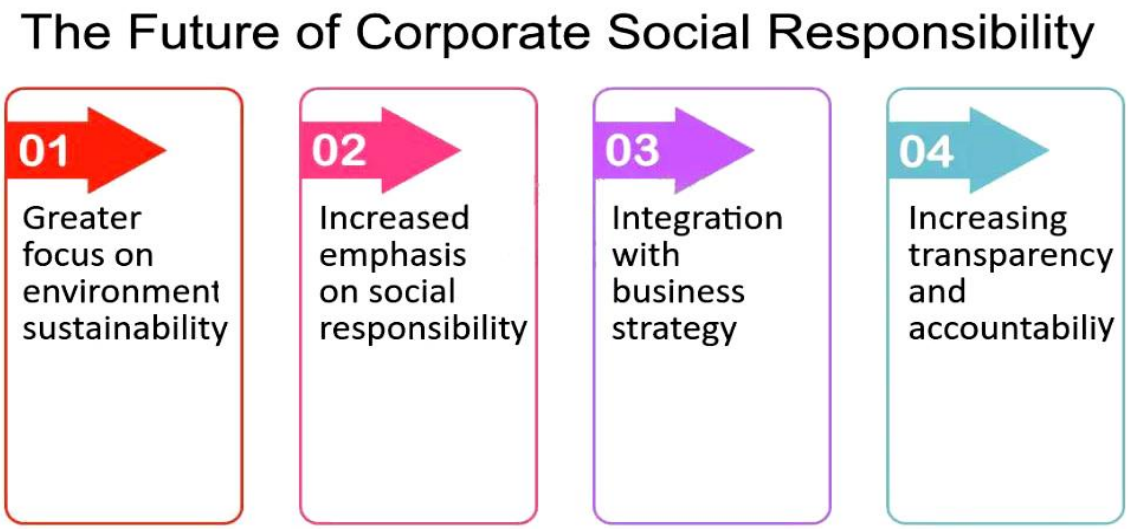
In summary, all three companies exhibited a strong and growing financial dedication to CSR, with Square Pharmaceuticals leading in total monetary contribution, Beximco Pharmaceuticals showing the most rapid expansion in spending, and ACI Limited maintaining a consistently high level of investment in social initiatives.

Chapter Five

Findings of the Study

5.1 Corporate Social Responsibility Practices in Bangladesh

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Bangladesh is on a promising trajectory, driven by increasing awareness, regulatory frameworks, and the evolving priorities of businesses. In recent years, CSR has transitioned from being a voluntary philanthropic activity to a strategic imperative, with companies recognizing its potential to create shared value for businesses and society. The future of CSR in Bangladesh is expected to be shaped by several key trends, opportunities, and challenges.

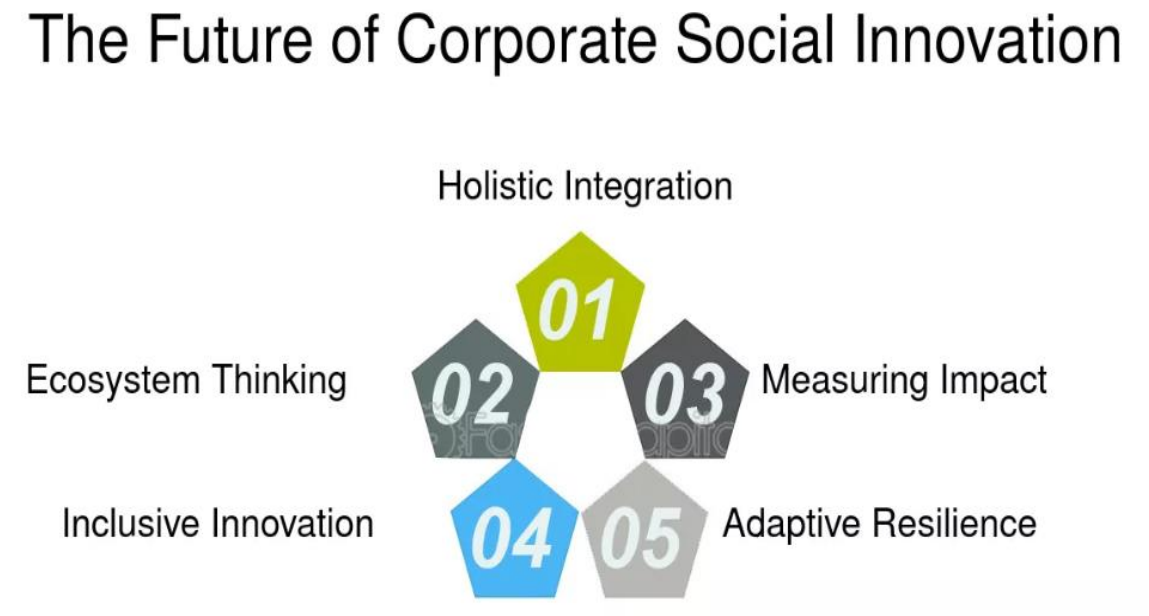


One of the most significant factors influencing the future of CSR is the increasing role of innovation and technology. Companies are likely to adopt digital solutions such as telemedicine, AI-driven healthcare platforms, and green technologies to enhance the efficiency and impact of their CSR initiatives. These innovations will enable businesses to address pressing social and environmental issues more effectively while also aligning with global sustainability goals.

Regulatory frameworks and stakeholder expectations will also play a critical role in defining the future of CSR. The government of Bangladesh has introduced various policies to encourage responsible business practices, and further regulatory developments are anticipated. Stakeholders, including consumers, investors, and employees, are demanding greater transparency, accountability, and alignment with Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria, which will push companies to integrate CSR into their core strategies.

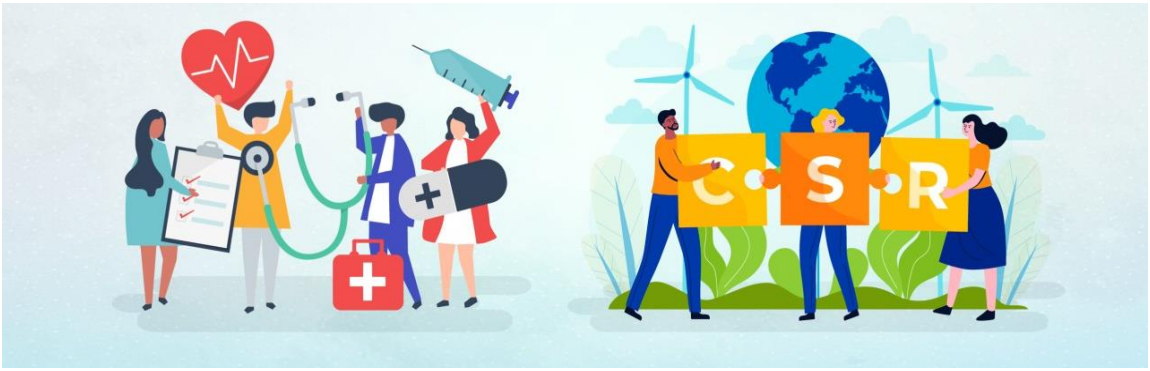
Sustainability will remain a central theme in CSR, with businesses increasingly focusing on environmental conservation, renewable energy, and waste management. The textile, pharmaceutical, and energy sectors are likely to lead in adopting sustainable practices, addressing issues such as carbon emissions and resource efficiency.
However, challenges persist in measuring the long-term impact of CSR initiatives and ensuring their scalability. Many businesses in Bangladesh still view CSR as an optional expense rather than an investment, which limits its potential to drive meaningful change. Additionally, the lack of standardized metrics and frameworks for evaluating CSR outcomes poses difficulties for both companies and policymakers.

Looking ahead, the success of CSR in Bangladesh will depend on collaboration between the private sector, government, and civil society. Companies will need to foster deeper community engagement, invest in capacity-building, and align their CSR activities with national development priorities, such as education, healthcare, and poverty alleviation. Policymakers can play a vital role by providing incentives for responsible business practices and creating platforms for public-private partnerships.



The future of CSR practices in Bangladesh holds immense potential to drive sustainable development and enhance societal well-being. By embracing innovation, adhering to global standards, and fostering partnerships, businesses in Bangladesh can establish themselves as leaders in CSR, contributing to a more equitable and sustainable future for the nation.

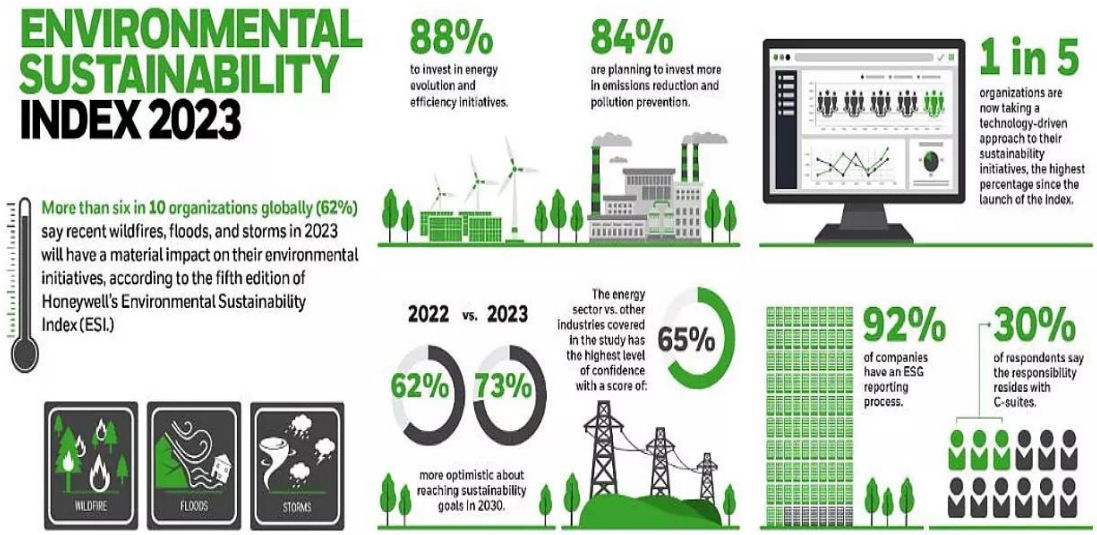
5.2 Impact of CSR on Society and the Pharmaceutical Sector



- **Contributions to Healthcare and Social Development**

Pharmaceutical companies play a vital role in enhancing healthcare and social development through their CSR initiatives. By offering affordable medicines, providing health education, and supporting community healthcare programs, these companies help improve access to essential health services. Programs that focus on disease prevention,

awareness campaigns, and providing medical care in underserved areas contribute significantly to public health. These efforts not only address immediate healthcare needs but also foster long-term social development by empowering communities with better health and well-being.



- **Environmental Sustainability Initiatives**

Pharmaceutical companies are increasingly integrating environmental sustainability into their CSR efforts, recognizing the sector's potential environmental impact. Initiatives such as adopting green manufacturing practices, reducing carbon footprints, and implementing efficient waste management systems help minimize environmental harm. Companies also engage in resource conservation, use of eco-friendly packaging, and renewable energy sources to reduce their ecological footprint. These efforts are essential not only for regulatory compliance but also for demonstrating a company’s commitment to global environmental sustainability.

- **Business Benefits of CSR: Performance and Reputation**

CSR activities offer pharmaceutical companies several business benefits. A strong CSR strategy enhances a company's reputation, fostering trust and loyalty among consumers, investors, and other stakeholders. This positive image can translate into increased sales and market share, especially as consumers become more conscious of ethical and

sustainable business practices. Furthermore, CSR initiatives can improve employee morale, attract top talent, and reduce turnover, contributing to enhanced organizational performance. Long-term engagement in CSR builds a company's credibility and strengthens its position in a competitive market.

- **Challenges in Measuring and Sustaining CSR Impact.**

While CSR initiatives bring significant benefits, measuring and sustaining their impact presents challenges. The complexity of CSR outcomes, which often involve long-term social, environmental, and economic effects, makes it difficult to quantify success. Standardized metrics for assessing CSR effectiveness are lacking, and the resources required for continuous monitoring can strain a company's budget. Additionally, sustaining the impact of CSR activities over time is challenging, especially when faced with evolving societal needs, regulatory pressures, and changing business priorities. Maintaining long-term engagement with stakeholders is also a key challenge, requiring ongoing communication and adaptation of strategies.

5.3 Emerging Trends and the Future of CSR in the Pharmaceutical Industry



- **Role of Innovation and Technology in CSR**

Innovation and technology are rapidly reshaping CSR practices in the pharmaceutical industry, providing new ways to enhance social responsibility efforts. Advances in digital health technologies, such as telemedicine, mobile health apps, and electronic health records, are allowing pharmaceutical companies to reach underserved populations more effectively and efficiently. These innovations enable better access to healthcare services, improved patient monitoring, and personalized treatments. Additionally, technology helps pharmaceutical companies reduce their environmental impact through greener manufacturing processes, smarter supply chain management, and energy-efficient production. The integration of innovation into CSR strategies not only increases the impact of social programs but also enhances the sustainability of corporate practices.

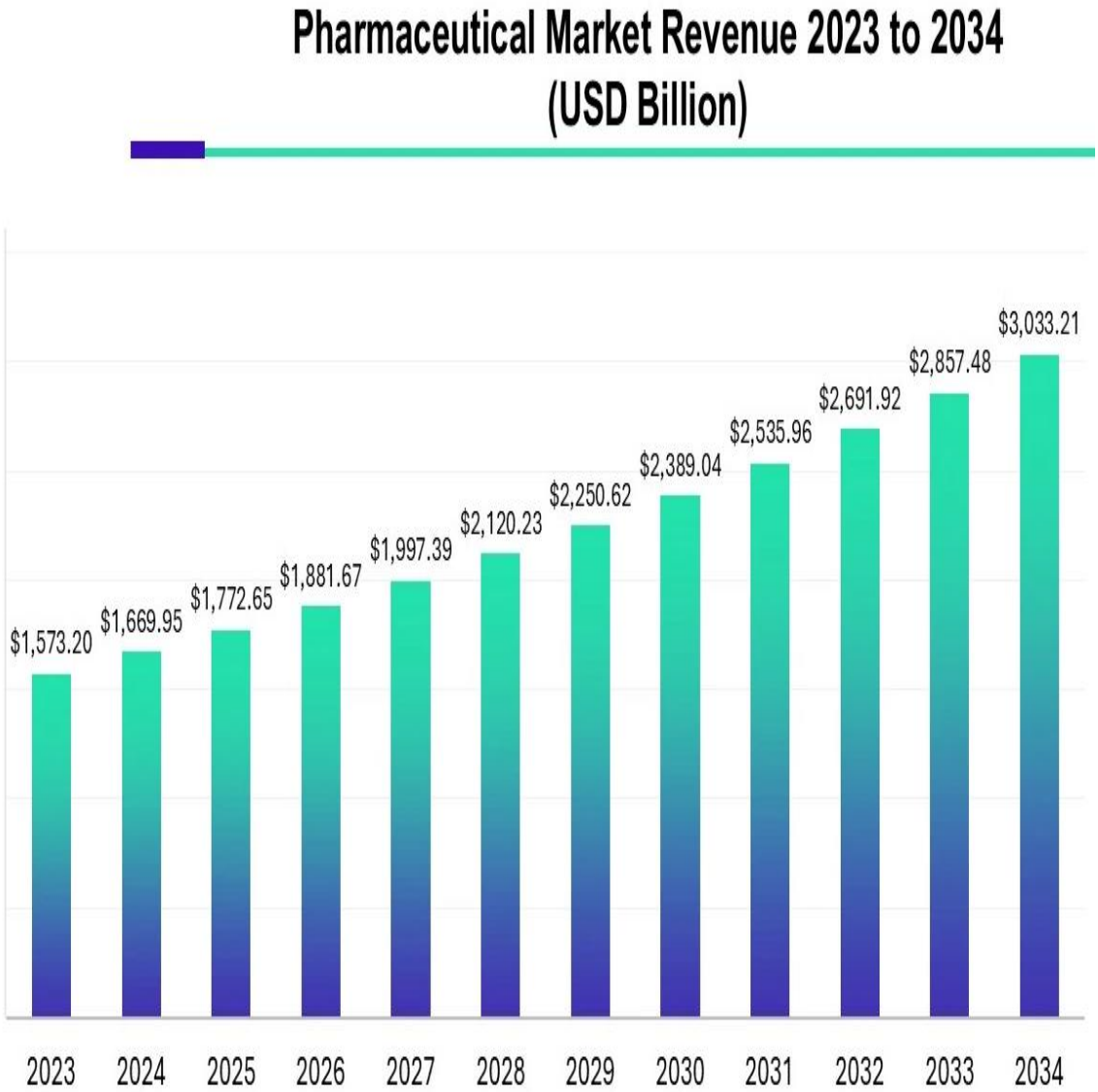
Increasing Regulatory and Stakeholder Expectations

As CSR becomes a more integral part of corporate operations, pharmaceutical companies are facing increasing pressure from regulators, investors, and consumers to meet higher social and environmental standards. Governments worldwide are introducing stricter regulations around environmental sustainability, fair labor practices, and healthcare access, compelling companies to adopt more transparent and responsible practices. Stakeholders, including investors and customers, are increasingly prioritizing Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) factors when making decisions. This shift is driving pharmaceutical companies to focus on not only regulatory compliance but also proactive engagement with social and environmental issues, ensuring that their CSR initiatives align with the expectations of their stakeholders.

- **Projections for CSR Trends in the Pharmaceutical Sector**

The future of CSR in the pharmaceutical sector is expected to be shaped by several key trends. First, there will likely be a continued focus on sustainable development, with companies prioritizing environmental impact reduction through renewable energy, waste management, and eco-friendly packaging. Second, health equity will remain a central theme, as pharmaceutical companies strive to improve access to medicines and healthcare services in underserved regions. Additionally, collaborations with governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other businesses will become increasingly important to tackle large-scale health and environmental challenges.

Finally, technology-driven CSR solutions, such as blockchain for transparency in supply chains and AI for personalized health interventions, will play a crucial role in future CSR strategies. These trends will ensure that the pharmaceutical industry continues to evolve its CSR practices, contributing positively to society while maintaining sustainable business growth.



Worldwide forecasted pharmaceutical market growth size from the year 2023 till the year 2034

Chapter Six
Recommendations & Conclusion

6.1 Findings

CSR has become an integral part of business strategy for Bangladesh's leading pharmaceutical companies. The findings reveal that while Square leads in both scale and diversification, Beximco emphasizes community development, and ACI remains strongly healthcare-focused. Across the board, CSR intensity has gradually increased, showing greater alignment with stakeholder expectations.

From our study we have identified the following regarding the CSR practices of major pharmaceutical companies in Bangladesh.

1. Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd., Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd., and ACI Pharmaceuticals Ltd. have robust CSR programs focusing on healthcare access, education, and environmental sustainability.
2. All three companies have contributed to improving healthcare services, particularly in underserved areas, by offering affordable medicines and establishing healthcare programs.
3. Their CSR activities extend beyond healthcare, with significant investments in education, skill-building, and community development programs.
4. The companies have incorporated green manufacturing practices, waste reduction strategies, and eco-friendly packaging to minimize their environmental impact.
5. CSR initiatives have positively influenced the companies' reputations, building trust with consumers, investors, and other stakeholders.
6. CSR efforts have contributed to improved employee morale, retention, and attraction of top talent by aligning corporate values with employee expectations.
7. Positive correlation between CSR and improved business performance, with CSR initiatives contributing to increased customer loyalty and sales.

8. Despite the positive outcomes, measuring the long-term effectiveness of CSR programs remains a challenge, especially in terms of social and environmental impact.
9. Companies are increasingly aligning their CSR activities with global regulations and standards to ensure compliance and maintain a competitive edge.
10. The companies plan to further enhance their CSR initiatives by focusing on innovation, sustainable practices, and deeper community engagement to address emerging social and environmental challenges.

6.2 Recommendations:

CSR has become an integral part of business strategy for Bangladesh's leading pharmaceutical companies. The findings reveal that while Square leads in both scale and diversification, Beximco emphasizes community development, and ACI remains strongly healthcare-focused. Across the board, CSR intensity has gradually increased, showing greater alignment with stakeholder expectations. CSR in the pharmaceutical sector of Bangladesh holds significant untapped potential. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

6.2.1 Recommendations for Pharmaceutical Companies

1. Strategic Integration of CSR

CSR should not be treated as an afterthought or an occasional philanthropic gesture. Instead, it should be incorporated into the core business strategy. Companies can develop CSR units or departments that design, implement, and monitor projects in a structured way.

2. Standardized CSR Reporting

Pharmaceutical firms should publish annual CSR reports in line with globally accepted standards such as the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) or ISO 26000. This would increase transparency, attract investors, and build consumer trust.

3. Prioritize Healthcare Accessibility

Since the core function of pharmaceutical companies is linked to healthcare, firms should prioritize programs that improve access to affordable medicine and healthcare facilities, especially in underserved rural areas.

4. Strengthening Education and Research

Scholarships, vocational training, and research sponsorship should be institutionalized, ensuring that companies not only donate funds but also create systems that enhance long-term human capital development.

5. Environmental Responsibility

With rising environmental concerns, companies must invest in green technologies, eco-friendly packaging, waste management, and renewable energy. This will reduce environmental footprints and align firms with the global sustainability agenda.

6. Employee-Centric CSR

Beyond external community programs, pharmaceutical companies should also implement CSR directed at employees, such as health insurance, professional development, and wellness programs, ensuring a culture of responsibility internally.

7. Innovation in CSR Initiatives

Companies should move beyond conventional charity. For example, creating mobile health clinics, telemedicine platforms, and partnerships with NGOs can make CSR initiatives more sustainable and impactful.

8. Sectoral Diversification

Companies should strengthen environmental and employee welfare programs, which currently receive minimal investment.

9. Transparency and Reporting

Annual reports should disclose CSR spending more clearly, including sectoral breakdowns, to align with global best practices.

10. Strategic Partnerships

Collaborating with NGOs, government bodies, and international organizations can amplify CSR impact.

11. Long-Term Sustainability

Firms should integrate CSR with long-term business goals, focusing not only on philanthropy but also on sustainability and innovation in healthcare delivery.

6.2.2 Recommendations for Policymakers and Regulators

1. National CSR Guidelines

The government should formulate a comprehensive CSR policy framework for Bangladesh, similar to those in India and Malaysia, to standardize practices and set minimum benchmarks for CSR engagement.

2. Incentives for CSR Leaders

Introducing tax rebates, subsidies, or awards for exemplary CSR activities will encourage companies to adopt more proactive and impactful initiatives.

3. Mandatory Disclosure of CSR

Regulators could make CSR reporting mandatory for publicly listed companies in the pharmaceutical sector, thereby ensuring accountability and preventing tokenistic practices.

4. Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs)

The government, NGOs, and pharmaceutical firms should collaborate on large-scale projects such as national health campaigns, vaccination drives, and disaster relief programs, maximizing resources and outreach.

6.2.3 Recommendations for Future Researchers

1. Expand the study to include other industries (banking, garments, telecom) to provide a comparative cross-sectoral perspective.
2. Conduct longitudinal studies to track how CSR practices evolve over a decade or more.

3. Incorporate stakeholder surveys and interviews (patients, employees, community members) to assess the perceived effectiveness of CSR.
4. Explore the link between CSR and financial performance, investigating whether socially responsible companies in Bangladesh enjoy long-term profitability advantages.

6.3 Conclusion

This study sought to evaluate and compare the CSR practices of three major pharmaceutical companies in Bangladesh: Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd., Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd., and ACI Pharmaceuticals Ltd. The analysis revealed that while CSR in this sector is steadily gaining importance, its nature and focus vary across firms.
Square Pharmaceuticals has developed CSR as an integral part of its corporate identity, prioritizing healthcare accessibility, education, and environmental sustainability.

Beximco Pharmaceuticals has contributed significantly through large-scale philanthropy and relief operations, reflecting a commitment to community support during crises.

ACI Pharmaceuticals stands out for its long-term sustainability-driven CSR, particularly in environmental and agricultural initiatives that extend beyond conventional healthcare.
The comparative study demonstrates that CSR in Bangladesh's pharmaceutical industry is transitioning from traditional charity-based approaches to more strategic, stakeholder-oriented models. However, this transition is uneven, with gaps in accountability, sustainability, and integration with core business functions.

Theoretically, the findings reinforce Carroll's CSR Pyramid and the stakeholder theory, showing that pharmaceutical firms in Bangladesh are gradually expanding their CSR scope from philanthropy toward ethical and strategic responsibilities. Practically, the study illustrates that CSR can serve as a competitive advantage, enhancing brand reputation, community trust, and long-term sustainability.

Moving forward, for CSR to achieve its full potential, pharmaceutical companies must:

- Institutionalize CSR within corporate strategies,
- Ensure transparency through reporting, and
- Focus on sustainable initiatives that directly contribute to national development and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Ultimately, CSR should not be seen as a cost, but rather as an investment in society and in the long-term survival of the business itself. If adopted in a structured and accountable manner, CSR can enable the pharmaceutical industry in Bangladesh to play a transformative role in addressing healthcare challenges, reducing inequality, and fostering sustainable national progress.

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