

# Educational Support: Phenomenological Study Among Industry Focal Person on their Corporate Social Responsibility to Labas Senior High School

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**Abstract**—This study examined the lived experiences and challenges faced by industry focal persons in implementing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives to support education at Labas Senior High School. Employing a phenomenological research design, the study aimed to understand how CSR is experienced, delivered, and sustained within the educational context through in-depth interviews. Findings revealed that industry partners perceive CSR as a values-driven, community-based partnership fostering both educational development and organizational growth. Participants highlighted the importance of authentic, inclusive engagement to achieve meaningful impact. CSR initiatives supported academic enrichment, resource provision, and collaborative learning opportunities for students and faculty. However, challenges emerged, including difficulties aligning CSR activities with organizational and educational goals, internal constraints such as limited manpower and shifting priorities, and the necessity of strategic leadership to sustain CSR commitments. The study underscores the vital role of responsive problem-solving and leadership involvement in enhancing CSR outcomes. Furthermore, it emphasizes continuous collaboration between industry partners and educational institutions to promote sustainable and impactful CSR practices. These insights provide valuable guidance for current and prospective industry partners aiming to strengthen their educational support through CSR.

**Index Terms**— Corporate social responsibility, educational support, phenomenological study, industry partnership, leadership and collaboration.

## 1. Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become an essential driver of educational transformation, especially at Labas Senior High School in Sta. Rosa, Laguna. Through mentorship, scholarships, and internship programs, industry focal persons forged strategic partnerships that helped bridge resource gaps and equip students with vital life and career skills. These efforts not only advanced educational goals but also fostered social responsibility, inclusivity, and community engagement.

Globally, CSR in education has evolved from ethical and philanthropic motivations to strategic approaches aligned with corporate missions and measurable outcomes. Companies like Google have provided digital tools to address the digital divide,

while firms in Europe and Asia invested in vocational training and technology access (Gardner, 2024). In India, mandatory CSR laws led to school infrastructure improvements, such as Infosys Foundation's model schools (Infosys Limited, 2025), while firms in China and Japan focused on sustainability and educational technology (Li & Zhang, 2025).

In Southeast Asia, Malaysia's CSR efforts supported primary schools through infrastructure and teacher training, though sustainability challenges persisted (Azhar, 2021). Philippine higher education institutions also became key CSR beneficiaries through scholarship and outreach programs (Gul Afshan et al., 2024). However, issues such as short-term engagement, misaligned strategies, and lack of impact measurement limited effectiveness (Karmakar, 2022).

In Asia, businesses increasingly align CSR with community needs (Ono, 2022), but many educational institutions regress once corporate support ends, highlighting the need for long-term collaboration (Azhar & Azman, 2021). In the Philippines, recent legislative efforts such as House Bill 451 aim to incentivize CSR by offering tax benefits, acknowledging the private sector's role in national development. Education Secretary Sonny Angara emphasized that private-public partnerships are vital in improving access to education. Despite these advancements, a disconnect remains between CSR intentions and actual outcomes. Many programs lack clear frameworks or understanding of local needs, resulting in disillusionment when expected benefits are not realized (Karmakar, 2023).

This study examines the lived experiences of industry focal persons who implemented CSR programs at Labas SHS. Using a phenomenological lens, it explores their motivations, challenges, and strategies. The research underscores the critical role of sustained collaboration between industries and schools in supporting student development, educational equity, and long-term community impact (Azhar & Azman, 2021).

## 2. Literature Review

This study reviewed literature on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in education, with particular focus on the lived experiences, motivations, challenges, roles, and impacts

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of industry focal persons. Notably, CSR's expanding role in education has been linked to improved school performance and ethical management, as reflected in India's NEP 2020 (Choubey *et al.*, 2024). Supporting this trend, Sharma and Shanthakumar (2022) observed a marked increase in CSR-education studies since 2000, underscoring its significance for sustainable development.

Moreover, implementers reported multiple benefits, including enhanced student motivation, creativity, and strengthened community ties, although challenges such as limited resources and differing sociodemographic perceptions persisted (Labre, 2024). Industry involvement in tailored programs was found to further strengthen these positive outcomes.

In terms of motivations, CSR initiatives combined altruistic intent with strategic objectives, aiming to reduce educational disparities while meeting stakeholder expectations (Banik & Dey, 2024). Cross-sector collaboration additionally supported school governance and sustainability, thereby enhancing brand value and trust (Sterner, 2022). Consequently, effective CSR relied heavily on transparency, mutual value creation, and responsiveness to community needs, fostering civic engagement and ethical leadership (Cruzat *et al.*, 2022). This empowerment extended to institutions and communities alike, improving reputation, teacher well-being, and alignment with sustainability goals (Wu, 2024).

Leadership authenticity emerged as a critical factor, with socially responsive leaders significantly enhancing long-term trust and employee motivation (Xu, 2023). While community-centered CSR advanced social and environmental objectives, balancing these outcomes with profitability remained a notable challenge (Cristobal-Cipriano *et al.*, 2022).

On a global scale, CSR initiatives contributed to improved educational access, infrastructure development, and broader socio-economic progress (Fusheini & Salia, 2021). Inclusive engagement of community stakeholders was essential for legitimacy and better outcomes (Jayiya *et al.*, 2022), while environmental education played a key role in fostering ecological awareness and civic responsibility (Dasgupta, 2019).

Comprehensive CSR support—encompassing financial, technological, and vocational assistance—bolstered community capacity and student success (Azhar & Azman, 2021). However, focal persons encountered challenges such as community skepticism, accountability gaps, and difficulties aligning CSR with overarching business strategies (Gamboa *et al.*, 2020). In this regard, strategic alignment between corporate and educational goals was paramount to achieving sustained impact, especially within complex institutional environments (Bridoux & Stoelhorst, 2022). Nonetheless, CSR integration was often impeded by regulatory diversity, cultural differences, and resource constraints (ElAlfy & Weber, 2021).

Regionally, studies highlighted issues of mistrust and weak institutional support, emphasizing the necessity of leadership agility for effective CSR implementation (Hauser *et al.*, 2023). Furthermore, active employee involvement contributed to the advancement of social and ecological objectives (Kallmuenzer *et al.*, 2023), whereas superficial CSR efforts risked eroding

community trust (Nejati & Shafaei, 2023).

Strong educational partnerships played a pivotal role by providing technical support and fostering sustainable engagement, adapting CSR strategies locally in contexts such as the Philippines, Ghana, and Tanzania (Leong & Yang, 2020). Effective synchronization of CSR with institutional settings required strategic foresight, cultural sensitivity, and authentic leadership, particularly when navigating scheduling and crisis-related constraints (Al-Shammari *et al.*, 2022).

Despite these efforts, leadership responsiveness often faced structural barriers in developing countries, demanding ethical, transformational, and solution-oriented approaches (Mberewere *et al.*, 2024). Moreover, embedding CSR within organizational culture depended on collaboration, sustainability alignment, and robust monitoring mechanisms to ensure impactful outcomes (Cezarino *et al.*, 2022).

At the organizational level, CSR effectiveness was shaped by internal dynamics such as resource allocation and human resource management. Dedicated CSR teams and ethical HR practices enhanced implementation and legitimacy (Jayakani *et al.*, 2024). Nevertheless, cultural inertia and limited leadership commitment hindered CSR institutionalization, particularly in small and medium enterprises (Mahmood *et al.*, 2021).

To maximize benefits, raising business awareness about educational CSR fostered mutual gains for companies and communities, with practical engagement methods improving reputation and sustainability (Barner, 2023). Additionally, rigorous measurement of CSR impact was essential for ensuring accountability and program effectiveness (Gamboa *et al.*, 2020).

Ultimately, CSR initiatives were found to improve student achievement, skills development, and teacher support, thereby enhancing overall educational quality (Azhar, 2021). Recommendations from the literature emphasized the importance of sustained commitment, transparent reporting, community involvement, and cultural alignment (Pollman, 2019). Furthermore, CSR was recognized for bolstering brand reputation and employee morale, thus creating strategic advantages for participating organizations (Jusuf, 2023).

### 3. Methodology

The present study, entitled *“Educational Support: Phenomenological Study on Corporate Social Responsibility among Industry Focal Persons to Labas Senior High School,”* employed a phenomenological research design to examine the lived experiences of industry partners engaged in corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Specifically, this qualitative methodology sought to elucidate participants' perceptions of their environment (Greening, 2019) while applying the principle of bracketing to mitigate researcher bias (Wallace *et al.*, 2023), thereby facilitating the elicitation of rich, subjective insights (Klinke & Fernandez, 2022). Regarding the research site, the study was conducted at Labas Senior High School, located in Barangay Labas, Sta. Rosa, Laguna, Philippines. The site was strategically selected for its heterogeneous socio-economic context and the established collaborative relationship between local enterprises and the

educational sector amidst rapid urban development. Moreover, this mixed urban and semi-urban setting provided a pertinent context for investigating the impact of CSR on educational support. In addition, the school's accessibility and transport infrastructure facilitated industry engagement, rendering the findings transferable to analogous Philippine settings.

Concerning participant selection, purposive sampling was utilized to recruit ten focal persons representing corporate partners actively involved in CSR activities such as donations, Brigada Eskwela support, student immersion, career guidance, STEM training, infrastructure development, feeding programs, and financial assistance. This approach ensured the selection of participants with substantial and sustained CSR involvement, thereby augmenting the study's credibility and rigor (Ahmad & Wilkins, 2024; Ravitch & Carl, 2019; Tracy, 2020). With respect to data collection, formal requests were sent to industry partners and school administrators, accompanied by the procurement of ethical approval. Semi-structured interviews, ranging from 30 to 45 minutes, were conducted in settings conducive to participant comfort, either face-to-face or via virtual platforms, with informed consent obtained prior to engagement. Due to scheduling constraints, some participants provided responses through digital communication channels, including Facebook Messenger and email, submitting voice recordings or written replies which were subsequently transcribed manually. Audio-recorded interviews were supplemented by AI-assisted transcription tools, and data were meticulously organized and coded manually using Microsoft Word. The researcher additionally maintained field notes and memos to document observations and reflections.

Regarding data analysis, thematic analysis followed the systematic procedures articulated by Creswell and Creswell (2023), encompassing detailed transcription, iterative reading, inductive coding, and the synthesis of codes into thematic categories that encapsulate participants' CSR experiences. To ensure analytical rigor, member checking and reflexivity were employed throughout the process. Consistent with the phenomenological framework, analysis further involved the identification of significant statements and their organization into textural and structural descriptions, culminating in an integrated depiction of the essence of participants' CSR engagement with Labas Senior High School (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Moustakas, 1994). Finally, ethical

considerations were rigorously upheld, including the acquisition of informed consent, assurance of voluntary participation and withdrawal rights, anonymization of data in compliance with the Data Privacy Act, and secure data storage. Institutional Review Board approval was duly obtained to safeguard participant rights and uphold the integrity of the research process.

#### 4. Results and Discussions

Presenting the analysis of semi-structured interviews with industry focal persons involved in CSR initiatives at Labas Senior High School. Using a phenomenological approach, the study explored their lived experiences through open-ended questions, with responses recorded and transcribed verbatim. Bracketing was applied to reduce researcher bias. Data analysis followed Creswell and Poth's iterative spiral—organizing, coding, and developing themes through continuous reflection. The following tables summarize responses to six key questions from ten CSR stakeholders.

##### *A. Research Question 1: What are the Lived Experiences of Industry Focal Persons on Corporate Social Responsibility to Labas SHS?*

##### *1) Interview Question 1: What does Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Mean to You Personally in Partnership with Labas Senior High School?*

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the context of Labas Senior High School extends beyond donations or compliance, reflecting a shared moral commitment between institutions and communities. Industry focal persons view CSR as a values-driven endeavor that fosters educational and social development. FP 9 noted that CSR is part of their academic mission, promoting collaboration and teaching students to serve others. FP 8 echoed this, stating that CSR aligns with their core values, while FP 5 emphasized its role in uplifting communities. FP 2 added that CSR addresses gaps in government support, positioning private sector involvement as vital to nation-building. Literature supports this values-based approach, stressing mutual partnerships and community empowerment (Burgos & Carnero, 2020; Smile Foundation, 2024; EUR, n.d.). Focal persons play a key role in building responsive, locally rooted initiatives (Cruzat et al., 2022), which, when grounded in authentic collaboration, lead to educational empowerment

Table 1  
Theme 1: CSR as a Values-Driven Educational and Community Partnership

Participants	Significant Responses	Subordinate Themes
FP 9	<i>"As an academic institution... CSR is part of our goals... We inculcate on our students the value of reaching out,"</i>	Mutual Partnership and Knowledge Exchange
FP 8	<i>"doing good things into our partner schools... that is in line with our core values,"</i>	CSR Philosophy & Values
FP 5	<i>"CSR is framed as a way to directly benefit and uplift local communities,</i>	Community-Centered CSR
FP 2	<i>"CSR... making a positive impact in the community, particularly in Education"</i>	Educational Empowerment

Table 2  
Theme 2: Enhancing organizational growth through authentic and inclusive CSR engagement

Participants	Significant Responses	Subordinate Themes
FP 1	<i>CSR enhances employee engagement... cultivates a sense of pride in the organization's mission.</i>	CSR as a Response to Systemic Gaps
FP 4	<i>"hindi para makakakuha kami ng benefits...para maibalik namin 'yun" (We do this as a way of giving back... we feel proud to be instruments of help)</i>	Not just for company but giving out reciprocity
FP 6	<i>CSR strengthens our ties with the community, improves employee morale, and enhances our brand image</i>	CSR as a Social Investment

and lasting impact (Marian High, n.d.; EBSCO, 2025).

*2) Interview Question 2. What are the Benefits of Having CSR in the Company?*

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) not only uplifts communities but also promotes internal growth within organizations. Industry focal persons noted that CSR involvement with schools like Labas SHS enhances employee morale, institutional pride, and brand reputation. FP1 shared that CSR fosters employee engagement and pride in the organization's mission, while FP6 highlighted its positive ripple effects—boosting community ties, morale, and visibility. FP4 emphasized CSR as a source of pride and compassion, transforming work into meaningful service. These insights align with literature showing that authentic CSR in education benefits both society and organizations. Banik and Dey (2024) and Kazzim (2020) note that CSR increasingly addresses educational inequalities while serving strategic goals. Estimada et al. (2019) and Sterner (2022) also emphasize that such partnerships enhance school administration and corporate reputation. Together, these perspectives affirm CSR's dual impact: empowering communities and strengthening organizational identity.

*3) Interview Question 3. What is Your Role as Industry Focal Person on CSR to Labas Senior High School?*

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in education goes beyond financial aid, emphasizing holistic student development through immersive learning, mentorship, resource access, and support for initiatives like Brigada Eskwela. FP9 shared that their institution offers career talks, training, and access to labs and libraries, bridging the gap between secondary and tertiary education. FP8 emphasized the emotional impact of student immersion, helping students feel a sense of belonging, while FP7 highlighted mentorship and workshops focused on environmental sustainability. FP10 underscored their commitment to leadership development and civic engagement through seminars and community support. These initiatives reflect CSR's role in nurturing both academic and character growth. Literature supports these insights—Labre (2024) noted CSR's role in improving access and reducing dropout rates, while Azhar and Azman (2021) emphasized enhanced motivation and career development. Burgos and Carnero (2020)

further asserted that CSR thrives through sustained partnerships focused on knowledge exchange. Together, these findings affirm that inclusive, sustained CSR initiatives enrich educational outcomes, foster community empowerment, and promote sustainable development.

*B. Research Question 2. How do the Industry Focal Persons Face the Demands and Challenges on their Corporate Social Responsibility to Labas SHS?*

*1) Interview Question 1. Can you Share a Particular Project of CSR in Labas Senior High School that You have Encountered Problems*

Implementing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives with educational institutions like Labas Senior High School requires more than good intentions—it demands strategic planning, adaptability, and collaboration. FP9 noted that timing can hinder implementation, especially when urgent school needs clash with corporate budgeting cycles. FP5 emphasized the value of continuous evaluation and strategy refinement based on feedback to stay effective despite challenges. FP10 shared how their institution adjusted to align with the school's academic calendar, showing flexibility that strengthened the partnership. These insights reflect the need for responsive, well-coordinated approaches to CSR. Supporting this, Sterner (2022) stressed that misalignment between corporate and educational goals can weaken CSR outcomes, while Bridoux and Stoelhorst (2022) highlighted the difficulty of balancing business objectives with stakeholder expectations, particularly in less supportive environments. Effective CSR, therefore, hinges on strategic alignment, adaptability, and strong collaborative relationships that prioritize community needs alongside institutional goals.

*2) Interview Question 2. How did You Address the Problem that You Encountered?*

Challenges in implementing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives are inevitable, but how they are addressed reflects leadership strength and system efficiency. Industry focal persons working with Labas Senior High School emphasized the importance of proactive planning, coordination, and responsive decision-making. FP8 shared their strategy of preparing ahead and empowering department heads, enabling

Table 3  
Theme 3: Enhancing educational and community impact

Participants	Significant Responses	Subordinate Themes
FP 9	"We offer career talks, training programs... teachers from your school can use our labs and libraries."	Student and Community Empowerment
FP 8	"In immersion... they feel they are part of _____ Colleges	Active and Inclusive Community Engagement
FP 7	"We conduct mentorship, educational workshops, and resource donations aligned with environmental sustainability."	Environmental education
FP 10	"We provide training and seminars for student leaders, support Brigada Eskwela,"	Facilitating Development through Multifaceted Support

Table 4  
Theme 4: Challenges in aligning CSR with institutional contexts

Participants	Significant Responses	Subordinate Themes
FP 9	"Sometimes we can't meet the urgency of the program... we request budget, but timing matters."	Strategic Alignment with Societal Goals
FP 5	"We consistently evaluated our progress and adjusted our strategy in response to feedback."	Addressing Challenges in CSR Implementation
FP 10	"We have to align our activities to the school calendar... adjustment came from us."	Adapting to External Constraints Through Strong Partnerships



Table 5  
Theme 5: Addressing CSR challenges through responsive problem-solving and leadership involvement

Participants	Significant Responses	Subordinate Themes
FP 8	"We address ahead, create contingency plans, and manage our own department smoothly."	Scheduling Constraints
FP 1	"We created monitoring sheets... prioritize registered participants,"	Problem-Solving Approaches
FP 6	"We rescheduled the feeding program, reassigned staff, and communicated closely with the school."	Operational Challenge and Need for Flexibility

Table 6  
Theme 6: Navigating internal organizational constraints in CSR implementation

Participants	Significant Responses	Subordinate Themes
FP 7	"We formed a dedicated CSR team and involved employees in planning to foster ownership,"	Risk Mitigation
FP 2	"We coordinate with other departments to allocate staff time... integrated into workflow,"	Problem-Solving and Adaptation
FP 4	"We receive many requests. We evaluate who needs it most... it's a challenge to allocate,"	Prioritizing Transparency, Accountability, and Compliance
FP6	"We assigned dedicated mentors and adjusted schedules so that training would not disrupt operations."	Human Resource Management Challenges, Capacity Building Within Company and Structured Support System

quick responses and smooth program execution. FP1 highlighted the use of monitoring sheets to manage participation, promote fairness, and ensure transparency. FP6 offered an example of adaptive leadership by adjusting schedules and reallocating resources to accommodate a feeding program, underscoring the value of open communication and flexibility. These experiences show that effective CSR relies on decentralized leadership, real-time systems, and collaborative problem-solving. Supporting this, Fox et al. (2020) noted that authentic leadership and flexible business models enhance CSR engagement, especially in times of disruption. Ultimately, such proactive and solutions-oriented approaches strengthen CSR partnerships and ensure their lasting impact.

3) *Interview Question 3. How About in Your Company, have You Encountered Problem/s with Regards to Preparations Such as Resource Allocation or Employee Management? can You Share Something About it?*

While CSR initiatives offer broad benefits, companies often face internal challenges such as limited funding, difficulty in recruiting volunteers, and balancing CSR with daily operations. Focal persons from Labas Senior High School's partner industries shared how these challenges were managed through strategic planning and collaboration. FP7 noted that forming a dedicated CSR team and involving staff in planning fostered ownership and efficiency. FP2 emphasized integrating CSR into existing workflows to minimize disruption and encourage participation. FP4 highlighted the challenge of prioritizing numerous requests, which they addressed by using clear criteria to allocate support fairly. Likewise, FP6 shared that assigning mentors and adjusting schedules helped avoid conflicts with core operations. These experiences illustrate that internal limitations can be overcome with thoughtful planning and team coordination. Supporting this, Jayakani et al. (2024) highlight the role of HR in aligning CSR with organizational goals, while Risi and Wickert (2019) point to the need for strategic resource allocation across departments. By institutionalizing CSR through dedicated teams, integrated workflows, and structured prioritization, organizations can deliver consistent, impactful support to communities.

Textural and Structural Analysis

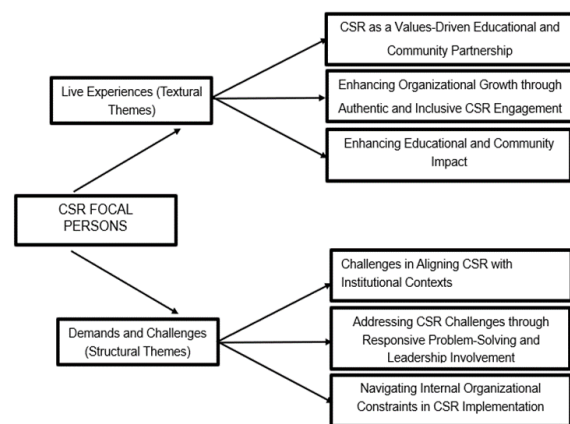


Fig. 1. Thematic variable (Textural and structural themes)

C. *Research Question 3. Based on the Findings of the Study, what Primer May Be Proposed to Promote Awareness Among Other Prospective Industry Partners?*

To encourage industry engagement, a CSR primer should highlight the importance of *strategic flexibility*, *proactive leadership*, and *collaborative engagement* in forging successful partnerships with schools like Labas Senior High School. Companies can overcome common challenges—such as timing conflicts, budget constraints, and evolving educational needs—by aligning activities with school calendars, conducting regular evaluations, and maintaining adaptive systems. Emphasizing open communication, decentralized decision-making, and transparent processes also fosters trust, accountability, and long-term relevance in CSR initiatives.

The primer should also showcase the strategic and operational advantages of supporting education. Partnerships offer companies access to skilled talent pipelines, innovation through school collaborations, and enhanced brand reputation by demonstrating genuine social responsibility. These efforts foster employee pride and engagement, aligning corporate goals with community needs and regulatory expectations.

Moreover, the primer must detail the substantial *tax incentives* available under Philippine law. Donations to accredited public schools and qualified non-government organizations are *fully deductible from gross income* and may

be exempt from donor's tax, provided that documentation and accreditation requirements are met. This means educational CSR initiatives not only contribute to nation-building but also provide tangible financial benefits.

By presenting CSR as a smart investment in both community development and corporate growth, the primer can inspire more industry partners to engage in sustainable, high-impact education programs.

#### D. Textural Descriptions

The lived experiences of industry focal persons involved in CSR initiatives with Labas Senior High School revealed a strong sense of purpose, compassion, and commitment to education. Participants viewed CSR not as a corporate duty, but as a meaningful, values-driven partnership that fostered mutual respect and social impact. They expressed fulfillment from contributing to student development and community welfare through programs like Brigada Eskwela, immersions, and resource support. These engagements enhanced employee morale, built organizational pride, and created emotional connections to the school's mission, leaving participants with a lasting sense of meaning and contribution.

#### E. Structural Descriptions

Industry focal persons experienced CSR implementation within complex organizational and institutional frameworks. They faced challenges aligning company timelines, budgets, and priorities with the school's evolving needs and schedules. To address these, participants used flexible problem-solving, active communication, and leadership coordination. Strategic planning and ongoing dialogue with school officials helped balance conflicting demands. Internally, limited resources and competing priorities required advocacy, cultural integration of CSR, and personal commitment. Overall, CSR was a dynamic, negotiated process shaped by collaboration and adaptability to achieve shared educational goals despite structural constraints.

### 5. Conclusion

The experiences of industry focal persons in CSR with Labas Senior High School reveal a purposeful and values-driven partnership focused on education and community upliftment. They viewed CSR not just as an obligation but as a meaningful commitment motivated by empathy and social responsibility. Despite challenges, they demonstrated adaptability, proactive communication, and collaborative leadership, balancing corporate demands with community needs. Their CSR involvement fostered mutual empowerment, transforming outreach into a reciprocal journey of growth, compassion, and shared impact.

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