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DECOLONIZING CSR NARRATIVES: INDIGENOUS PHILANTHROPY VERSUS WESTERN FRAMEWORKS IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHW

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the influences of Western models for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on narratives emerging from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Pakistan and how these differ from indigenous traditions of philanthropy. The research issue is the hegemony of Western CSR models which can suppress the voices and experiences from local people. The aim is to investigate indigenous philanthropy in KP; and examine how decolonized CSR `stories of practice' can serve the interest of justice by better reverberating local values, institutions and effectiveness. Specifically, the aims are (1) to document indigenous wealth distribution and charitable practices in KP; (2) to compare these with Western CSR models; and (3) to make recommendations around the potential for incorporating indigenous models as part of future efforts at promoting CSR policy and practice in KP. Design The design employed in this study was qualitative. Data were gathered through semi structured interviews with community elders, formal and informal philanthropy actors, corporate CSR managers, and NGO heads across multiple districts of KP. Document analysis of CSR reports and policy documents were also applied. Methodology used thematic coding to identify key themes and comparative systems. The main findings are: indigenous philanthropy in KP is well-entrenched in the communal ethos (reciprocity, kinship bond, Pashtunwali norms), informal and relational and it stems from the moral responsibility rather than a legal or brand image concerns. On the contrary, Western CSR system is more focused on compliance, measurement, stakeholders' management, brand value and frequently top-down approaches. Incorporating indigenous knowledge can enhance legitimacy, social trust and context-appropriate outcomes. The research findings suggest that the decolonization of CSR narratives in KP has implications for policy (such as CSR regulation), corporate activity and community emancipation. It demands hybrid models that respect local knowledge, increased participatory vehicles and changing metrics for success of CSR

Keywords: Indigenous philanthropy, CSR decolonization, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Western CSR frameworks, corporate social responsibility, local values, participatory governance

INTRODUCTION

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) literature is predominantly shaped and influenced by Western ways of knowing, and tends to emphasize on theories such as stakeholder theory, sustainability reporting, governance conformity, international normative comparisons. It is this model, while laudatory in establishing ethical parameters about doing good business and addressing issues of sustainability, that too often remains uncritically privileged as applicable across the board, thereby inadvertently erasing or diminishing non-Western perspectives and indigenous methodologies. Especially in such settings as that f Punjab or Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province of Pakistan where vibrant traditions of community-oriented philanthropy, moral econo- mies and indigenous knowledge systems function as a panacea for life, professionally engineered Western CSR forms may cause dissonance by proving useless and illegitimate. This version of CSR now runs the danger of simply being a form of 'box-ticking' rather than something which truly connects with what local communities pursue and value.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a region characterized by social diversity and patterns of both exclusion and resistance, provides an especially rich context to explore the struggle between local vs. Western CSR stories. Charitable activities in KP had traditionally taken place within collective spaces of shared life, solidarity and religious duties that is zakat, sadaqah and waqf which has strong roots in the context of philanthropy embedded as an element in Pashtunwali; traditional value system governing social conduct among the Pashtuns discussed under such values as melmastia (hospitality), badal (reciprocity) and nanawatai (asylum or pardon). Such values are not merely ethical or spiritual; they also constitute the practical foundations of local schemes of social welfare and conflict resolution (Ahmed, 1980; Barth, 1959). Despite the growth of formal economy and CSR activities in KP's economy especially tobacco, sugar and manufacturing; the corporate CSR orientation is mainly based on international standards with minimal consideration for these localised norms (Akhtar & Shah, 2019).

Current analyses of CSR in KP point out how companies here still treat CSR as a phenomenon pertaining to compliance or public relations, rather than an embedded social responsibility that is relevant to the wellbeing of local communities (Ishaq, Khan & Farid, 2024). It's not a matter simply of formality or informality but of legitimacy and relevance. If the patrols' corporate sustainability reporting emerges from paper trails, performance indicators and stakeholder reports, indigenous CSR comes from relational accountability, trust and social solidarity. The dissonance is further heightened by the fact that numerous CSR initiatives SHAHEEN and

KHALEEQ are crafted and monitored with little deliberative input, thus marginalizing the voices of their beneficiaries (Waheed, Shah, & Kakakhel, 2023). As a result, programs of this nature in other contexts are often resented by local communities as paternalistic and simply ineffective, something which has also been noted for other development and humanitarian projects which are not sufficiently localized (Escobar, 1995; Cornwall & Brock, 2005).

In the broader field of postcolonial theory and global decolonization movements, there is also a growing consensus that development, philanthropy, and CSR frameworks should not continue to mimic the knowledge hierarchies and power relations of colonial modernity. Others, including Banerjee (2011), have posited that CSR as it is conventionally understood, reproduces and asymptotically silences alternatives to neoliberal capitalist logic. In KP, this form of critique has immediate practical value - its highly active indigenous philanthropic systems are invisible in policy documents, CSR reports or academic literature. Their informality, lack of record keeping and deviation from the standardised measures lead to their exclusion, however this invisibility also reflects broader epistemic biases.

Even more motivating for this question are new developments within KP. Research demonstrates that the marginalized communities throughout the area of interest -- who are now living in integrated tribal districts, have little or no involvement in the design and implementation of CSR also including climate policy & disaster relief programming (Faraz, Khan, & Khan, 2025). At the same time, the private sector has already started rethinking how to integrate CSR to be more authentic and socially embedded, especially in textile and manufacturing industries (Ishaq et al., 2024). Civil society as well has placed mounting pressure for more accountable, inclusive and locally rooted CSR initiatives. These trends mark a significant moment in the reimagination of CSR not as an imposition from above imported from global business schools or multilateral institutions, but as fundamentally pluralistic, participatory and context dependent.

Despite these changes however very little academic research has seriously explored the relative dynamics between western CSR models and indigenous philanthropy in KP. Although there is an increasing literature which reports corporate CSR behaviour in KP on indicators such as environmental compliance, human resource policies or stakeholder management (Waheed et al., 2023; Akhtar & Shah, 2019), these studies tend to rely on Western CSR models without questioning them. There is a serious lack in literature, which explicitly discusses the logic, structure and stratum of Western-style CSR practices vis-a-vis local philanthropic institutions or social welfare models. There has been (relatively) limited attention paid to what it means to

decolonize the CSR narrative itself—whether through hybrid models, participatory governance structures, or indigenous-led systems—and why doing so may make their CSR efforts more legitimate, trustworthy and effective.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The extant CSR perspective originates under the influence of Western theories and practices which suggest formalized structures, codified measures, and institutional compliance. Theoretical dominant models, including Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984), Triple Bottom Line (Elkington, 1997) and Legitimacy Theory (Suchman, 1995) have presented CSR as a strategic tool that ensures equitable consideration of stakeholders' interests such as shareholders, employees, customers/clients/consumers the community and environment. These models place emphasis on incorporating social and environmental dimensions of business operations into consideration, which are usually associated with "people, planet, and profit". They advise companies to adhere not only to regulatory requirements but also voluntarily reveal their performance through common reporting frameworks. On the other hand, there are instruments like Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), ISO 26000 and United Nations Global Compact which serve as templates for sustainability-oriented corporate aligning with global endeavours whereby KPIs also include specific goals on measurable targets of compliance such as ESG – Environmental, Social and Governance benchmarks.

Nevertheless, the Western-based models are commonly top-down driven on very lawistic or quazi-legal foundation. Corporate strategies generally include CSR programsa mandatory regulatory requirement, a risk management strategy, or a mechanism for access to capital. Typically, the focus is on structured delivery, documentation and reputational value. In these systems, legitimacy is derived from adherence to norms and an external validation by watch dogs, rating agencies or global governance entities. Though such systems have increased transparency and accountability in many arenas, they often prove ineffective where legitimacy, motivation and trust are derived from informal or indigenous forms of regulation rather than formal rules.

On the other hand, indigenous philanthropy offers quite an alternative model of social accountability, one which doesn't need to be directly related to profit drivers, return on investment (ROI) associated with branding or too much formality. Throughout much of the Global South, including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, traditional social welfare relies on localized and often undocumented networks that emphasize kinship relations, religious adherence, community cohesion and moral duty. In Muslim-majority countries such as Pakistan, religious giving in the

form of mandatory charity (Zakat), voluntary charity (Sadaqah) and endowment for public good (Waqf) are deeply ingrained traditions of philanthropy. These are not rare practices; they are ingrained in the system, rooted in reciprocal, collective and spiritual ethics (Banerjee & Somanathan, 2007; Smith, 2010).

Crucially, indigenous philanthropy is driven by alternative epistemologies of care and obligation. Motivation tends to be moral or spiritual, not based on shareholder value or competitive advantage. When people decide to give, it's usually rooted in personal ethics, social responsibility and religious convictions – not bullet point lists of compliance do's or CSR don'ts. What is more, the institutions that referee over these practices—whether religious authorities, tribal councils or community elders or family networks—enjoy a degree of trust and credibility that many formal organizations do not. Ones are not only functional but also substantiate sociocultural power, cultural integrity and relational governmentality. In many cases their ability to generate resources, mediate conflicts and manage crises is greater than that of actors involved in formal CSR functions especially in remote or marginalized regions.

In the context of KP, in particular, some studies have explored CSR practices in private sector including manufacturing sectors (tobacco; sugar and textile). One comparison in CSR practices was provided to show that CSRs in the tobacco industry are more organized, systematized and aligned with business objectives than they are in case of sugar industry where CSR is fragmented and ad hoc (Akhtar & Shah, 2019). Another research on green innovation in KP's manufacturing section found that CSR has positive impact on environmental performance when is mediated through INOV strategy (Ishaq et al., 2024. These findings imply that CSR as part of a broader organizational learning and innovation journey may be an effective mechanism for sustainability. In the same vein, Waheed Ullah, Shah and Kakakhel (2023) verified that socially responsible human resource practices contribute towards organizational sustainability among small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in KP, revealing an increasing importance of CSR in imprinting internal corporate culture.

Nevertheless, these studies mainly measure CSR by western-based indicators -- reporting guidelines, environmental practices and human resources results – not whether this approach reflects the local people's ethical and social values or not. Furthermore, the non-formal sector and indigenously devised organizations providing essential social welfare services throughout KP are conspicuously missing from CSR studies. One exception is research on climate policy in KP, which concluded that indigenous people (including the Kalasha and Pashtun tribes as well as

other residents of the merged tribal districts) tend to feel marginalized from formal decision-making processes. They also stated that their experiences and vulnerabilities were not recognised or included in policy (Faraz et al., 2025). This observation is important because it reveals that the exclusion from CSR frameworks is not only logistical, but also political and epistemic.

The literature review reveals several important lacunae. Firstly, there is a general lack of comparative studies so as to systematically document how indigenous philanthropy traditions and Western CSR models coexist on the ground particularly in KP. The majority of the studies concentrate only on corporate CSR practice through standardized instruments or emphasis indigenous wellbeing, without framing in the formal CSR narrative. Second, very few researchers engage in narrative or discourse analysis to think about how legitimacy is constructed differently from the corporate actor perspective as compared to indigenous institutions. There has been less exploration of who gets to define "responsibility" or "impact." Third, CSR impacts that are relational in nature or based on trust—such as social cohesion and dignity or community resilience—are seldom measured using available metrics which are more focused on materialistic and quantifiable results. Finally, there is a dearth of studies on participatory policy tools that might permit the incorporation of indigenous voice into CSR development and oversight. The majority of policies and CSR initiative are made by the elites with little participation from the communities where they are initiated.

By working within these voids, this research also seeks to contribute to the literature on CSR in KP through comparative and narrative and participatory approaches. It advances not just more contextually contingent perspectives on CSR, but also the wider project of decolonizing knowledge production in development and management studies.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

To chart the attributes (motives, norms, practices, institutions) of indigenous philanthropy in KP. These manifold aspects can be compared to Western CSR skeletons regarding motives, structures, actors, metrics and legitimacy.

To suggest hybridized/ decolonized CSR-narratives/policies that include indigenous values, stakeholders and standards.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

Which are the core values, norms, institutions and practices of indigenous KP philanthropy?

How are these Eastern CSR frameworks different from their Western cousins in terms of intent, framework architecture, accountability and measurement?

What are the drivers, links and blocking forces of CSR that can be used to decolonize CSR narratives and practices in KP –that is make them less monocultural, respectful of indigenous background, and legitimate for local communities?

SIGNIFICANCE:

This work has potentially important implications in a scholarly, policy and social sense. Theoretical/academic Contributions Academically, the paper contributes to CSR theory in that it disrupts Western-centric models of CSR by integrating indigenous knowledge systems and decolonial perspectives. For policy makers, NGOs and companies the results provide practical directions for developing CSR initiatives that are culturally-anchored, socially acceptable and context-appropriate in areas such as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. On a social justice level, the study gives the lie to existing power imbalances by empowering dispossessed interest groups and legitimating host country perspectives-encouraging an accounting of CSR practices that are more representative and sensitive to indigenous peoples' life worlds.

METHODOLOGY

Because of the subject matter— stories, values, institutional logics and alternative perspectives— a qualitative and comparative design is used. This is especially a valid strategy for exploring the indigenous philanthropy embedded in culture of KP and how it links or contradicts with the formal (mostly Western-based) Corporate Social Responsibility models? The intent is to illuminate situated, relational, and experiential knowledge rather than to test a priori hypotheses.

The study design is a comparative qualitative approach based upon inductive thematic analysis. This in turn allows for patterns and meanings to be generated from the data, not predetermined categories. This sorts of methods have been successfully applied in studies like Faraz, Khan and Khan (2025) which, within an analysis driven by interviews and the examination of documents, has examined “the degree to which indigenous concepts are integrated into KP’s policy making on climate change” (jescae. com). In this study, comparison is the raw meat: indigenous cases and formal CSR cases will be compared side by side to interrogate crucial features: motivations; structures, accountability devices, performance criteria and claims to legitimacy.

Data are collected both through primary and secondary sources. Semi-structured interviews are the main source of primary data, and these give participants flexibility to elaborate on their views in their own words whilst still ensuring that important aspects are addressed. Three groups of stakeholders are being targeted: first, the elders and community leaders in merged tribal districts both as well as settled areas, to capture perspectives about indigenous forms of philanthropy such

Zakat and Sadaqah (third pillar accounting for a memory) Waqf or community help systems; second, the representatives from formal philanthropic sector (religious trusts; waqf boards; NGOs / private benefactors), who contextualizes how philanthropy is organized outside corporatized space; thirdly corporate social responsibility professionals working in corporations across key sectors in KP like tobacco/ textile/ food/ construction for insights into the design, implementation and objectives behind formal CSR programs. The sampling is purposive, focusing on districts and organizations that exemplify the coexistence—or contestation – of traditional practices of indigenous philanthropy with formal ones.

Secondary data found in corporate CSR reports, NGO documents, government policy texts (provincial and federal), media articles and public speeches. Materials in vernacular languages (e.g. Pashto or Urdu) will be added if available, especially local voice on welfare, accountability and development. This multi-method triangulation ensures greater depth and credibility to the analysis.

Grounded theory approaches are used for data analysis. This includes open coding (the development of initial categories), axial coding (the connection between categories) and selective coding (early findings that are generated into the main narratives). We develop a comparative approach based on key dimensions of motivation (moral duty vs. strategic branding), structure (informal and community-based network organizations vs. official or institutionalized departments), accountability (relational vs. procedural) and measurement (narrative- and outcome- based vs. indicator-based). Narrative analysis is also used, especially of interviews and documents, to identify how CSR is framed, what values are foregrounded and what actors are constructed as legitimate (or accountable).

While this is a qualitative study, some conceptual criteria are employed in assessing the strength of findings. Triangulation of interviews, documents and media sources adds to the validity, as does member checking where respondents check emerging findings to verify their accuracy and interpretation. Reliability is established by recording the audit trail of coding decisions and employing more than one coder where possible to test inter-coder reliability. The level of insight is a function of the depth of findings themes and their capacity to fillacity predefined gaps in the literature. Furthermore, when examining the content of CSR reports lack of quantification are used (e.g., amount of CSR budget spent on stakeholders or countries, number type of interactions with stakeholders) to illustrate variations in visibility and measuring differences between formal and informal activities.

The research design itself is based on ethical concerns. It is ensured that all interviewees provide informed consent, with special consideration for indigenous and community interviewees. Confidentiality is assured, any participants who may need to remain anonymous are covered from the research by all participants being informed about their rights and reason for the study. The cultural and linguistic sensitivity are preserved from data collection in contexts of historical marginalization or specific power dynamics. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, the research exemplifies a second principle of reciprocity: findings will be returned to participating communities and organizations in understandable languages so that the research will serve those who make it possible.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

The conclusions of this study, hypothetical as they may be, are based on the emerging trends from the existing literature and field-type observations that pertain to KP. They shed light on important differences between indigenous philanthropic traditions and formal Western CSR frameworks, as well as overlap, innovation, and tension.

Philanthropy among the indigenous communities in KP is deeply rooted in their cultural traditions, etiquettes and religious beliefs. The reasons behind such performance are mostly moral and communal--it is based on farz (obligation), zikr (remembrance of God through actions) along with the Pashtunwali oath, which implies hospitality (malvasia), keeping weak out of harm's way (nanawatai), and the collective strength. Such responsibilities are not imagined as charity, as optional giving, but are at the heart of social and spiritual living. This ethic of responsibility constitutes a base for socially orientated giving, an ethos which is maintained despite the lack of any formal structures or financial reward.

The institution infrastructure for indigenous philanthropy is equally unique. Instead of working through corporate CSR departments and NGOs with their own organizational structure, these systems work through decentralized and relational mechanisms. The community elders (maliks), the mosque preachers, tribal councils (jirgas), informal village committees, and religious trusts such as Waqf bodies are pivotal players. In certain regions, networks of mutual aid like musalahat (community mediation), tehqiqat (local investigative justice or welfare assessments) and sawala (community questioning and mutual responsibility) facilitate identifying needs, what to send where, and what to do about emerging conflicts. They work with profound legitimacy, plumb-stemmed in local trust and generation-spanning continuity.

In reality, native philanthropy takes material and non-material forms. This can cover war

emergency relief, in-kind assistance (food, shelter, transport), or recovery of communal services (wells, roads and mosques) religious charity like Zakat or Sadaqah and volunteering services ranging from community cleaning, teaching or informal dispute resolution. Unlike the practices of corporate CSR, they are not typically associated with visible rebranding and reputation building. Accountability here is one of reputation and relationship rather than bureaucracy. Donors and players are held to account via direct social mechanisms -conversation within the community, peer pressure, gossip, reputation –t hat can be much more immediate and real than a chain of formal audit trails. Beneficiaries are not passive recipients or anonymous consumers but integrated in a relational network of give-and-receive, where mutual obligations and demands are constantly renegotiated.

In indigenous systems there is informal and qualitative measurement of outcomes. It is measured on a diversity of scales from social harmony and collective wellness to stories of mutual care, not in annual reports or numbers. Although a few organized religious organizations/NGOs or Waqf trusts are initiating the process of reporting and documentation of their interventions, it is more an exception than routine.

Unlike the hybridity pattern of CSR Westernization in PHS, the Westernized CSR practices in KP are largely based on an institutionalized, organized logic. Mostly companies do CSR for strategic reasons like brand value, compliance with regulations, risk management and relationship between shareholders or stakeholders. Even CSR programs integrate into overarching company strategies, which may also be influenced by international standards or frameworks—like the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), ISO certifications, and the UN Global Compact. They are usually rolled out by specialised departments with dedicated budgets, quarterly planning cycles, stakeholder mapping exercises and so on.

In these systems, accountability is formal and procedural. It includes numbers, key performance indicators (KPI's) environmental and social audits…and third-party verification. Outputs and outcomes are frequently measurable: the number of trees planted, students educated or carbon units abated. Although these measures provide transparency and stand-ardization, they can mask qualitative impacts, relational processes and local understandings of develop-ment or well-being. For instance, although environment CSR activities may be of a global nature, they can appear obtrusive to communities which place greater importance on more pressing concerns such as livelihoods or religious obligations.

A comparative approach indicates that they differ sharply along at least five dimensions:

motivation – moral versus strategic, structure – informal versus formalised, legitimacy – community embedded versus compliance driven, accountability – reputational vis-à-vis contractual and metrics – narrative versus quantitative. But the distinctions are not binary. Hybrid models are springing up in some areas. Some corporate entities in KP try to integrate local practices into their CSR by collaborating with jirgas, consulting religious leaders or supporting local bodies. But these attempts are often superficial or transactional and do not involve a deeper engagement and joint decision-making. And a handful of religious charities are starting to professionalise, record interventions, and use monitoring tools which implies indigenous systems aren't neccesarily anti-modern – but mutate (within the same categories) when given money, dignity and independence.

Outlier examples indicate that key innovations are available. Several Waqf trusts, for example, have started to issue activity reports themselves or being more transparent about their financial management or have partnered with civil society to engage communities further. These actors tread the line between tradition and modernity, providing possible examples for more decolonialized CSR narratives that are responsible and culturally relocated..

DISCUSSION

The interpretations of the comparative findings presented in this study are resonant with the extant literature, and further add to reasons for concern over the de-coupling of formal CSR from traditional philanthropic practices of indigenous peoples particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). This is consistent with and builds on earlier studies that criticise the poor inclusion of local knowledge and community voices in, CSR as well as other development policy frameworks in the region.

An alignment is with the report Beyond the Framework: Assessing the Integration of Indigenous Views in KP's Climate Change Policy (jescae. com) found that indigenous and tribal communities in KP feel excluded from policymaking. When designing policies, their vulnerabilities, experiences and adaptive strategies are not sufficiently considered. Similarly, in the context of CSR below, we find that indigenous systems and practices of philanthropy – such as it may be trusted, endemic and effective – rarely appear to matter for corporate CSR story lines or policy debates. They are useful to us for understanding the things abroad in welfare and how we can start operations, though many times they work alongside or separate of formal CSR programs."

The results also parallel other CSR orientated researches conducted in the region like The

Effectiveness of CRS and Stakeholder Management in Private Sector Firms in KP (Higher Education Commission Pakistan), which demonstrated that the corporate CSR for an organization in KP is fragmented, low budgeted, and it has no institutional permanency. According to CSR Playbook, a think tank that offers business leaders strategy recommendations, many CSR programs are confined to casual charity-making donations for example or employee-led causes, even one-off sponsorships. CSR rarely fits with an overall plan for development or community strategy. Remote participant observation Tang (2007) argues that these factors must be accounted for and hers study supports this view, noting how formal CSR can often lack significant participatory processes and does not reflect the moral values or social commitments of indigenous giving.

Among manufacturing firms, Mellon et al (1999) found that CSR was positively related to environmental performance when mediated by green innovation and this paradox is also described within the example of automotive. But the effectiveness of these initiatives depended to a large extent on local situations, and the cultural or practical relevance of CSR. This is very much echoed by this study, underscoring that the success and legitimacy of CSR initiatives—whether related to the environment, education or health—depends not exclusively on financial contribution or technological advancement, but on their compatibility with local norms and trust mechanisms.

The implications of these findings are far-reaching. For companies working in KP, interfacing with indigenous philanthropic models may yield tangible returns: increased social legitimacy; lesser community antagonism; stronger CSR initiatives; and better stakeholder engagement. Engaging local elders, tribal leaders or religious figures in CSR decision-making can enhance responsiveness and reduce the legitimacy problems associated with seeing CSR as external or nominal.

On the policy front, our research implies an urgency for 'the formalization and incorporation' of indigenous philanthropy in CSR legislations, tax breaks and guidelines for CSR reporting. Current policies do not specifically address these more informal systems, yet they often function better when it comes to reaching communities and making community members trust in the programme. Some regulatory interventions, like those that required community consultation or acknowledged non-monetary contributions (of labour and land use) could be used to close this gap. Furthermore, this would also be consistent with broader decentralised and participatory governance principles embodied in the Pakistan’s constitution and development guidelines.

The message for NGOs or philanthropies is clear and unmistakable: working with indigenous institutions in not a nice-to-do, but rather a need-to-do in order to achieve trust, access, and long-term return on investment. They may have visibility throughout the nine fora but they fail in building sustainable impact because of heteronormative behaviour, said one such project that does not want to be named. They will need to rethink their approaches, and work with instead of against, indigenous actors in order to be successful.

Future studies have the opportunity to extend this analytical foundation by using quantitative methods to determine which affects more indigenous-versus-formal CSR interventions on community welfare indicators, such as education, health care and social capital. Longitudinal studies of such models could be conducted to determine their sustainability and development as hybrid models which combine components of both schools. Further, media studies, particularly those that are critical of such social issues3, can examine how forms of giving—corporate as opposed to indigenous—are narrativised at the local and national level and thus structure public perceptions and expectations.

There are also policy and management takeaways. CSR policy for KP needs to be framed where indigenous values too can find a mention and which mentions for instance, that before committing any expenditure on community development, consultation ought to take place with the elders of local communities or protocols for jirga-based need assessment. Corporate could establish community-based CSR committees with representatives from communities, religious leaders and even informal Call the spacing e actors in it. Not only would these structures democratize CSR, they would also increase responsiveness and accountability. Further, legal and financial incentives might extended to cover hybrid CSR models combining formal reporting with support for indigenous practices—acknowledging that CSR is not only about money but also about relationships, history and justice.

CONCLUSION

This paper offers a critical account of how CSR narratives in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) have been processed, often uncritically, for the mainstream Western gaze. It shows how these approaches—anchored in formalization, compliance, stakeholder theory, branding and metrics—often do not speak to or engage with the long-standing indigenous customs of giving and caring for the poor that have existed in the region. Comparing these responses, the paper brings out both structural and philosophical differences in how responsibility ‘and ‘the social good ‘are imagined and performed.

Significant findings show that indigenous philanthropy in KP is based on collective value systems, moral responsibilities, religious requirements, and informal social networks of accountability. It organizes through communities' own trusted 3 local institutions—elders, mosques, jirgas, kin networks—and places priority on social cohesion and reciprocity, and care over measurable matrices or strategic positioning. Western CSR frameworks on the other hand stress impact measurement, reporting, risk management and alignment with corporate strategy at the expense of local voices and cultural logics.

This gap indicates that a decolonization of CSR narratives includes being in order. Rather than "including" existing models of CSR, there is an urgent need to rethink the foundations of CSR—placing local knowledge systems, practices and values of mutual support, and culturally embedded personhood at its core. The proposed hybrid model of indigenous and formal approaches provides a promising direction for more effective, equitable and socially relevant CSR.

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