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ABSTRACT

In an era where sustainability shapes the future of commerce, firms from developing economies find themselves at the crossroads of opportunity and challenge. Navigating the demands of ethical business practices and global market dynamics requires not only resilience but also strategic innovation. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has risen as a powerful lever, enabling firms to transcend resource constraints, regulatory hurdles, and shifting consumer expectations. This study investigates how CSR-based differentiation strategies influence export performance, with a focus on product-level and firm-level CSR initiatives.

Utilizing data from 329 responses across various industries, the research employs the strategy tripod framework to assess how innovation capabilities, institutional pressures, and international market exposure influence the adoption and outcomes of CSR. The findings reveal that product-level CSR, such as eco-certifications, plays a crucial role in opening new markets and building brand equity, while firm-level CSR strengthens organizational resilience and stakeholder trust. Despite challenges like technological turbulence and competitive intensity, firms leveraging CSR effectively can overcome institutional voids and the liability of foreignness.

This study underscores the strategic importance of CSR in aligning with global market demands and creating competitive advantages. By embedding socially and environmentally responsible practices into their core strategies, firms can not only enhance export performance but also position themselves as leaders in an era where sustainability and ethics define success in global trade.



1. Introduction

Global trade accounts for approximately 46% of the world's GDP, making it a vital driver of economic growth (World Bank, 2021). For firms in developing countries, exports provide a gateway to integrate into global value chains, adopt advanced technologies, and boost competitiveness. As of 2022, developing economies contributed nearly 44% of global merchandise exports, reflecting their growing influence in international trade (UNCTAD, 2023). However, stringent environmental regulations, shifting consumer demands, and fierce competition pose significant challenges for these firms. To address these complexities, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has emerged as a critical strategy, enabling firms to align with global sustainability standards and capture premium market opportunities (Porter & Kramer, 2006).

Besides, despite the benefits of CSR, its adoption in export strategies remains limited in developing economies due to structural barriers. Firms in these regions often face accusations of social and environmental dumping, damaging their reputations and restricting access to high-value markets (Perrini et al., 2007). Furthermore, the liability of foreignness (LOF)—caused by cultural and regulatory differences—creates additional obstacles, making it difficult for firms to comply with global standards and compete effectively on the international stage (Zaheer, 1995).

Moreover, exporting firms encounter multiple challenges when attempting to integrate CSR into their strategies. Resource constraints, such as limited financial and technological capacity, hinder their ability to develop sustainable products (Husted & Allen, 2006). Fragmented institutional frameworks and varying regulatory requirements across markets exacerbate compliance difficulties. Additionally, intense competition and technological turbulence within industries further complicate the implementation of CSR initiatives, particularly for SMEs striving to maintain profitability (Bansal, 2005).

This study examines how CSR-based differentiation enhances the exporting performance of firms in developing economies. At the product level, it focuses on integrating sustainable attributes like eco-labeling and ethical sourcing, while at the firm level, it emphasizes practices such as ethical governance and community engagement. Anchored in the strategy tripod framework, the analysis considers internal capabilities like innovation, external factors such as competitive intensity and technological turbulence, and institutional influences including regulatory pressures and government support (Oliver, 1997).



In addition, this study explores the dynamics between CSR and exporting performance by addressing critical questions:

1. How do innovation capabilities, international market exposure, and institutional pressures influence CSR adoption at the product and firm levels?
2. How do external factors like technological turbulence and government support shape the effectiveness of CSR strategies?
3. What is the relationship between CSR initiatives and export success?

These questions aim to provide actionable insights for firms integrating CSR into their exporting strategies effectively.

Specifically, the findings emphasize the importance of strategic resource allocation, enabling firms to develop sustainable products that align with global standards. Tailoring CSR initiatives to meet the specific regulatory and cultural expectations of target markets is critical. Furthermore, leveraging government support, such as subsidies or incentives, can enhance the feasibility of CSR adoption, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). By integrating CSR into their strategic frameworks, firms can not only enhance their exporting performance but also contribute to broader sustainability goals and establish themselves as competitive players in the global market (Kolk & van Tulder, 2002).

To effectively adopt CSR in export strategies, firms should focus on building innovation capabilities to create sustainable, CSR-compliant products such as biodegradable packaging and energy-efficient technologies. CSR initiatives must also be tailored to meet the cultural and regulatory expectations of target markets. Leveraging government support, such as subsidies and technical assistance, can offset implementation costs, especially for SMEs. Furthermore, collaboration with industry stakeholders and addressing institutional voids can help firms navigate challenges, secure competitiveness, and achieve sustainable exporting success.

Through its exploration, this study unveils fresh perspectives on the nuanced interplay between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and export performance, shedding light on a vital yet underexplored aspect of global trade. It offers insights into how firms can overcome barriers to CSR implementation and enhance their competitiveness in international markets. Additionally, it provides a comprehensive framework for integrating CSR into export strategies, with practical implications for policymakers and businesses. The research is structured to highlight both the theoretical foundations and empirical findings, offering a balanced and holistic view of the challenges and opportunities that CSR presents in the dynamic landscape of global trade.



2. Context background

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has evolved from a voluntary effort into a strategic necessity, particularly in today's fast-paced and competitive industries. Anchored in the Strategy Tripod framework—which encompasses firm-specific resources, industry competition, and institutional influences—CSR serves as a powerful tool for businesses to gain a competitive edge (Peng et al., 2008). This perspective is further enriched by complementary theories such as Porter and Kramer's Creating Shared Value (CSV) and Freeman's Stakeholder Theory. While CSV underscores the synergy between business success and societal progress, Stakeholder Theory emphasizes the critical role of meeting stakeholder expectations to ensure sustainable growth.

In Vietnam, leading enterprises like Vinamilk, FPT, Biti's, Minh Phu Seafood, and VinFast have seamlessly integrated CSR into their core strategies. These companies tackle essential factors, including competitive intensity (CI), government support (GS), knowledge creation capability (KC), and dysfunctional competition (DC). By aligning CSR initiatives with digital marketing and social media tools, they not only address pressing societal needs but also reinforce their market positions, demonstrating how CSR can be both a moral obligation and a strategic advantage.

To begin with, Vinamilk's "Stand Tall Vietnam Milk Fund" is a notable example of CSR that addresses societal needs while building brand loyalty. By providing over 40 million glasses of milk to underprivileged children, Vinamilk aligns its nutritional expertise with community health (Vinamilk, 2023). Furthermore, the initiative addresses institutional pressures, such as health regulations, while building KC through community education on nutrition. Importantly, digital platforms like Facebook and Zalo amplify the program's reach, enhancing visibility and mitigating CI in the competitive dairy sector.

Similarly, FPT's "Hope Schools" project illustrates the synergy between GS and technological innovation in addressing educational challenges. By investing over 80 billion VND per school, FPT creates transformative learning environments for marginalized children (FPT Corporation, 2023). Moreover, public-private partnerships have played a pivotal role in scaling the initiative, with over 90% of stakeholders providing positive feedback. Additionally, digital platforms like FPT Play extend the project's visibility, showcasing how CSR, technology, and marketing reinforce each other. As a result, FPT successfully addresses DC in the educational sector, positioning itself as a leader in systemic change.



In a different industry, Biti's "Canvas of Pride - Tự hào Made in Vietnam" program emphasizes cultural preservation while enhancing KC. By incorporating traditional Vietnamese patterns into footwear designs, Biti's differentiates itself in a saturated market and builds emotional connections with consumers (Biti's Hunter, 2020). Furthermore, institutional support for cultural heritage has contributed to a 20% increase in sales. Notably, digital storytelling campaigns on platforms like Lazada and Facebook extend the program's reach, demonstrating the strategic use of CSR and digital marketing in meeting both market and societal needs.

Meanwhile, Minh Phu Seafood showcases how CSR can align with environmental goals and market demands through sustainable aquaculture practices. Specifically, by adopting eco-certifications and community-based shrimp farming, the company reduces its environmental footprint while boosting export competitiveness (Vietnam Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2022). Additionally, transparency efforts on digital platforms build trust, while GS ensures compliance with global standards. A reported 25% increase in customer confidence highlights the role of CSR in mitigating DC and enhancing reputation in a highly competitive industry.

Finally, VinFast's focus on technological innovation and sustainability underscores the role of GS and KC in achieving industry leadership. Through initiatives like electric vehicle production and battery recycling programs, VinFast addresses global environmental challenges while appealing to eco-conscious consumers (VinFast, 2023). Moreover, government incentives for renewable energy adoption and active social media engagement amplify its green messaging. In an industry characterized by CI and technological turbulence, VinFast effectively leverages CSR for differentiation and sustainability.

In conclusion, the integration of CSR with digital marketing has proven to be a pivotal success factor for businesses. Platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and Zalo play a vital role in enhancing transparency, building trust, and enabling precise, targeted engagement (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Moreover, real-time feedback mechanisms empower firms to continuously refine their CSR strategies, ensuring alignment with societal expectations and institutional demands.

By leveraging the Strategy Tripod framework in conjunction with CSV and Stakeholder Theory, businesses can unlock a holistic understanding of CSR's strategic significance. The success stories of Vinamilk, FPT, Biti's, Minh Phu Seafood and VinFast highlight how CSR can drive meaningful societal impact,



create market differentiation, and address critical business challenges. Through their efforts to tackle factors like competitive intensity (CI), government support (GS), knowledge creation capability (KC), and dysfunctional competition (DC), these firms exemplify CSR's potential to serve as a catalyst for sustainable growth in today's fiercely competitive global economy.

3. Research Design and Methodology

3.1. Explanation of measurement

In total, approximately 63 survey questions were developed, capturing both demographic data and the key variables relevant to CSR-based differentiation strategies and firm exporting performance. Most of the survey items were adapted from pre-validated research scales to enhance construct validity, with the exception of specific items designed to measure export intensity and e-commerce integration, which were tailored for this study. Seven-point Likert scales (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) were employed to evaluate constructs such as export intensity, investment in e-commerce, knowledge creation capability, technological turbulence, competitive intensity, and dysfunctional competition. While the other variables use a 7-point Likert scale, Firm Performance (FP) employs a 12-point scale, offering a more detailed assessment of the impact of CSR activities on export success. As a key indicator, Firm Performance measures the success of CSR initiatives, reflecting their influence on revenue, market share, and corporate reputation.

3.2. Data collection

The dataset consist of 329 responses from firms across various industries, was collected through structured online surveys to ensure diversity and representation. Key data points included export intensity, e-commerce investment, firm size and employee engagement. Following data collection, a comprehensive data cleaning and preprocessing phase was undertaken. This involved removing incomplete responses, encoding categorical variables such as ownership type and industry, and calculating composite variables to measure constructs like CSR capacity and employee collaboration. These steps ensured the dataset was both reliable and ready for analysis.

Category	Attribute	Brief Description
Export Intensity	EI1, EI2	Share of export value in total sales in 2020
Investment in E-commerce	IE1, IE2, IE3, IE4	Investment, costs, and training related to e-commerce
Knowledge Creation	KC1, KC2, KC3, KC4	Level of idea exchange and collaboration among employees
Technological Changes	TC1, TC2, TC3, TC4	Characteristics and opportunities from rapid technological changes
Competitive Intensity	CI1, CI2, CI3, CI4	Level of price competition and industry responsiveness
Dysfunctional Competition	DC1, DC2, DC3, DC4	Concerns about unfair competitive practices
Government Support	GS1, GS2, GS3, GS4	Awareness and benefits from government e-commerce policies
Firm Performance	FP1, FP2, FP3, FP4	Growth in revenue and costs related to e-commerce
Digital Platforms	DA1, DA2, DA3, DA4, DA5, DA6, DA7	Challenges and capabilities in using digital platforms
Benefits of Joining Digital Platforms	BP1, BP2, BP3, BP4	Advantages of participating in e-commerce
CSR-based Differentiation	CSP1, CSP2, CSP3, CSP4	Product features based on CSR certifications
Corporate Social Responsibility	CSF1, CSF2, CSF3	Projects and recognition for maintaining CSR practices
Firm Characteristics	Age, Ownsh, Indtr, Indt_o, Size, Size_re, Gen, Ma_Sta, Edu	Information on age, ownership type, industry, size, gender, marital status, and education

Figure 1: Attribute overview of dataset

3.3 Mechanism (SPSS or Excel)

This study will utilize SPSS for statistical analyses to explore the impact of CSR practices on exporting performance. Key methods include factor analysis and reliability testing to validate constructs, independent sample t-tests to compare CSR engagement levels, and ANOVA to assess differences across various industries. Multiple regression will analyze the relationships between independent variables like innovation capabilities and dependent variables such as exporting performance. Optional qualitative methods, such as interviews, may complement the quantitative findings by providing contextual insights into CSR adoption challenges. This integrated approach ensures robust and actionable insights for managerial decision-making.



4. Data Analysis and Results

4.1. Data analysis

4.1.1. Descriptive statistics

First, the variable *Gender* was recoded from string to numeric format, assigning "1" to Male and "2" to Female.

Next, descriptive statistical analysis was conducted on *Gender*, *Firmsize*, and *Firmage* to provide an overview of the data and lay the foundation for addressing the research questions.

gender_code					
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	1.00	247	75.1	75.1	75.1
	2.00	82	24.9	24.9	100.0
Total	329	100.0	100.0		

Figure 2: Descriptive statistics of Gender variable

Of the 329 companies surveyed, the majority of managers were male (75.1%), while women accounted for 24.9%. This suggests that management roles in exporting companies may be gender-biased, which may influence how companies approach CSR strategies.

Firm size					
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	<50	70	21.3	21.3	21.3
	>1000	25	7.6	7.6	28.9
	201-500	100	30.4	30.4	59.3
	501-1000	38	11.6	11.6	70.8
	51-200	96	29.2	29.2	100.0
	Total	329	100.0	100.0	

Figure 3: Descriptive statistics of Firm size variable



In terms of company size, companies with 201-500 employees accounted for the largest proportion (30.4%), followed by companies with 51-200 employees (29.2%) and those with less than 50 employees (21.3%). Meanwhile, larger companies (501-1000 and >1000 employees) accounted for only 11.6% and 7.6%, respectively. This distribution reflects the data sample focusing mainly on small and medium-sized companies, which may affect their innovation capability (KC) and how they implement CSR at the product level (CSP) and company level (CSF).

Firm age					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<3 years	41	12.5	12.5	12.5
	>12 years	99	30.1	30.1	42.6
	3-6 years	122	37.1	37.1	79.6
	7-12 years	67	20.4	20.4	100.0
	Total	329	100.0	100.0	

Figure 4: Descriptive statistics of Firm age variable

In terms of company age, companies with 3-6 years of operation accounted for the highest proportion (37.1%), followed by the group of companies with more than 12 years of experience (30.1%) and the group of 7-12 years (20.4%). Young companies, operating for less than 3 years, accounted for only 12.5%. This shows that the majority of companies in the sample have long enough operating experience to develop CSR strategies and have better innovation capabilities (KC) or access to international markets (EI).

4.1.2. Independent t-test and ANOVA

To test the clearer difference of variables affecting CSR (specifically CSF and CSP), we continue to use T-test and ANOVA methods.

- *Gender*

	Independent Samples Test								
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
CSP	Equal variances assumed	.166	.684	-1.179	327	.239	-.16810	.14254	-.44852 .11231
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.210	145.134	.228	-.16810	.13889	-.44261 .10640

Figure 5: Independent Samples T-test between Gender and CSP

The analysis indicates no significant difference in CSP levels between male (mean = 5.10, SD = 1.13) and female managers (mean = 5.27, SD = 1.08). Levene's Test ($p = 0.684$) confirms homogeneity of variance, and the t-test ($p = 0.239$) shows the difference is not statistically significant, with a 95% confidence interval of [-0.45, 0.11]. This indicates that the gender of the manager does not significantly affect CSP.

Independent Samples Test									
CSF	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						-11264	.14451	-.39692	.17165
Equal variances assumed	.002	.968	-.779	327	.436				
Equal variances not assumed			-.767	134.889	.445	-.11264	.14692	-.40320	.17793

Figure 6: Independent Samples T-test between Gender and CSF

Similarly, the analysis results show that there is no statistically significant difference in firm-level CSR (CSF) between male and female managers. Specifically, male (mean = 5.04, SD = 1.12) and female managers (mean = 5.15, SD = 1.16). The Levene's Test value ($p = 0.968$) shows that the variance between the two groups is homogeneous, and the t-test value ($p = 0.436$) is greater than the threshold of 0.05, proving that this difference is not statistically significant. The 95% confidence interval for the mean difference (-0.39692 to 0.17165) also includes the value of 0, indicating that there is no significant effect of manager gender on CSF.

- Firm size

We code the firm size variable, <50 is 0; 51-200 is 1, 201-500 is 2.

Descriptives								
CSP	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
.00	70	4.7321	1.31761	.15748	4.4180	5.0463	1.00	7.00
1.00	96	5.2526	1.06159	.10835	5.0375	5.4677	1.00	7.00
2.00	100	5.2425	1.01470	.10147	5.0412	5.4438	2.00	7.00
Total	266	5.1118	1.13684	.06970	4.9746	5.2491	1.00	7.00

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

CSP			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
2.597	2	263	.076

ANOVA

CSP	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	13.701	2	6.851	5.480	.005
Within Groups	328.784	263	1.250		
Total	342.485	265			

Figure 7: ANOVA analysis between Firm size and CSP



The ANOVA analysis reveals a significant difference in CSP levels among firms of different sizes. Small firms (<50 employees, mean = 4.73, SD = 1.32) exhibit lower CSP compared to medium-sized firms (51-200 employees, mean = 5.25; 201-500 employees, mean = 5.24). Levene's Test ($p = 0.076$) confirms variance homogeneity, and ANOVA ($F = 5.480$, $p = 0.005$) indicates that the factor of enterprise size has a significant influence on CSP.

Descriptives								
CSF	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
.00	70	4.6048	1.22151	.14600	4.3135	4.8960	2.00	7.00
1.00	96	5.0868	1.07197	.10941	4.8696	5.3040	1.00	7.00
2.00	100	5.2067	1.11190	.11119	4.9860	5.4273	1.00	7.00
Total	266	5.0050	1.14996	.07051	4.8662	5.1438	1.00	7.00

Test of Homogeneity of Variances				
Levene Statistic				
.700	2	263	.497	

ANOVA					
CSF	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	15.923	2	7.961	6.259	.002
Within Groups	334.515	263	1.272		
Total	350.438	265			

Figure 8: ANOVA analysis between Firm size and CSF

Similarly, the analysis results show a significant difference in CSF levels across firms of varying sizes. Small firms (<50 employees, mean = 4.60, SD = 1.22) have lower CSF compared to medium-sized firms (51-200 employees, mean = 5.09; 201-500 employees, mean = 5.21). Levene's Test ($p = 0.497$) confirms variance homogeneity, and ANOVA ($F = 6.259$, $p = 0.002$) confirmed that the mean difference in CSF between groups was statistically significant, the larger group of enterprises (201-500 employees) showed a higher level of CSR.

- *Firm age*

Similarly, we recode firm size age variables: 3-6 years: 1; 7-12 years: 2; >12 years: 3;

Descriptives								
CSP	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
	1.00	122	5.1578	1.08388	.09813	4.9635	5.3521	1.00
2.00	67	5.2425	1.09577	.13387	4.9753	5.5098	2.00	7.00
3.00	99	5.1389	1.14465	.11504	4.9106	5.3672	1.00	7.00
Total	288	5.1710	1.10473	.06510	5.0429	5.2991	1.00	7.00

Test of Homogeneity of Variances								
CSP	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.				
					.009	2	285	.991
ANOVA								
CSP	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.			
Between Groups	.466	2	.233	.190	.827			
Within Groups	349.799	285	1.227					
Total	350.265	287						

Figure 9: ANOVA analysis between Firm age and CSP

The ANOVA results showed no significant difference in CSP between enterprise groups by years of operation ($F = 0.190$, $p = 0.827$). Average CSP: 5.1578 (3-6 years), 5.2425 (7-12 years), 5.1389 (>12 years). Levene's Test ($p = 0.991$) confirmed homogeneity of variance. The between-groups sum of squares (0.466) is minimal compared to the total (350.265), indicating that the number of years in operation does not have a significant effect on CSR at the product level.

This result shows that the number of years in operation of the enterprise is not the main factor affecting CSR at the product level.

Descriptives								
CSF	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
	1.00	122	5.0956	1.13746	.10298	4.8918	5.2995	1.00
2.00	67	5.2090	1.08841	.13297	4.9435	5.4744	2.00	7.00
3.00	99	5.0842	1.11203	.11176	4.8624	5.3060	1.00	7.00
Total	288	5.1181	1.11476	.06569	4.9888	5.2473	1.00	7.00

Test of Homogeneity of Variances								
CSF	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.				
					.004	2	285	.996
ANOVA								
CSF	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.			
Between Groups	.729	2	.364	.292	.747			
Within Groups	355.924	285	1.249					
Total	356.653	287						

Figure 10: ANOVA analysis between Firm age and CSF

Similarly, The ANOVA analysis results show that the level of CSR at the enterprise level (CSF) has no statistically significant difference between the enterprise groups classified by the number of years of operation.

The analysis shows that firm size significantly influences CSR performance, with medium-sized enterprises (201-500 employees) demonstrating higher levels of CSR at both the product (CSP) and firm level (CSF) compared to smaller firms. However, gender and firm age do not have statistically significant impacts on CSR outcomes, indicating that these factors are not critical in shaping CSR practices. These findings suggest that organizational resources and capacity, rather than demographic or temporal factors, are key drivers of effective CSR implementation.

4.2 Research Objective

Research Objective 1: How do innovation capabilities, international market exposure, and institutional pressures influence product-level and firm-level CSR?

- **Method:** Multiple Regression
- **Rationale:** To determine how innovation capabilities, international market exposure, and institutional pressures/government support influence product-level and firm-level CSR.

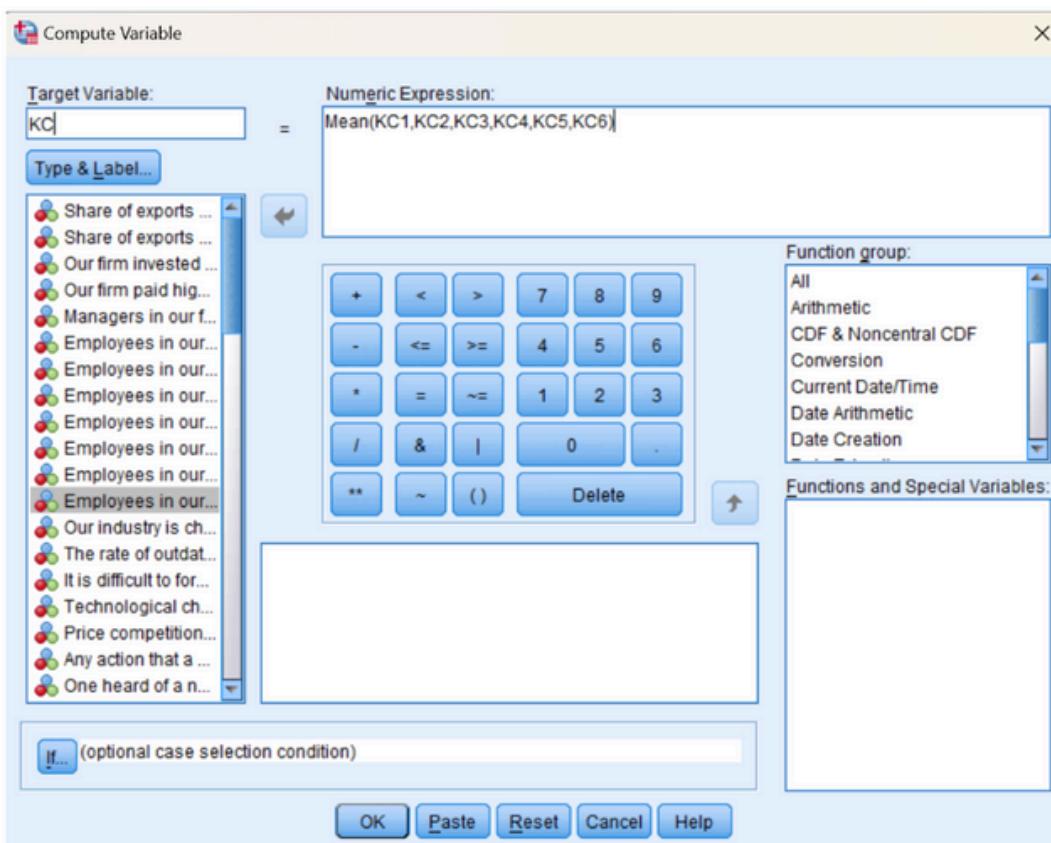


Figure 11: Example of calculating KC variable



We chose computed variables like 'KC' for Knowledge creation capability and 'CSP' for Product-level CSR (the other variables are similar) because they bundle related questions into a single, clear measure. This simplifies our model by reducing redundancy and ensuring our analysis remains stable and interpretable. By averaging the related items, we reduce the total number of variables, making the model less complex and easier to manage. In short, using these computed variables helps us streamline our analysis and focus on the core relationships in a reliable and straightforward manner.

Model	Coefficients ^a				
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.722	.275		2.625	.009
KC	.394	.065	.344	6.031	.000
EI	.050	.020	.107	2.498	.013
GS	.397	.064	.348	6.199	.000

a. Dependent Variable: CSP

Figure 12: Regression Analysis between KC, EI, GS and CSP

$$\text{CSP} = 0.722 + 0.394\text{KC} + 0.050\text{EI} + 0.397\text{GS}$$

Model	Coefficients ^a				
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.370	.267		1.387	.167
KC	.389	.063	.335	6.139	.000
EI	.043	.019	.092	2.249	.025
GS	.461	.062	.400	7.421	.000

a. Dependent Variable: CSF

Figure 13: Regression Analysis between KC, EI, GS and CSF

$$\text{CSF} = 0.370 + 0.389\text{KC} + 0.043\text{EI} + 0.461\text{GS}$$

The regression analysis provides insights into the relationship between the independent variables Knowledge Creation Capability (KC), Export Intensity (EI), Government Support (GS) and the dependent variable product-level CSR (CSP) and firm-level CSR (CSF).

1.1. Innovation capabilities influence product-level and firm-level CSR

Innovation capabilities, measured by Knowledge Creation Capability (KC) have a strong positive effect on both product-level CSR (CSP) and firm-level CSR (CSF). Higher innovation capabilities are associated with improved CSR at the product level (standardized coefficient $\beta = 0.394$, p-value < 0.001) and at the firm level ($\beta = 0.389$, p-value < 0.001), indicating that firms with greater



knowledge creation capabilities are better at integrating sustainability into their products and overall business strategies.

1.2. International market exposure influence product-level and firm-level CSR

Export Intensity (EI) has a positive but relatively modest impact on CSR. It significantly influences both CSP ($\beta = 0.050$, p-value = 0.013) and CSF ($\beta = 0.043$, p-value = 0.025), suggesting that exposure to international markets encourages firms to adopt better CSR practices to meet global standards and stakeholder expectations.

1.3. Institutional pressures/government support influence product-level and firm-level CSR

Government Support (GS) is the most influential factor affecting CSR at both levels. It strongly impacts CSP ($\beta = 0.397$, p-value < 0.001) and CSF ($\beta = 0.461$, p-value < 0.001), highlighting the critical role of government incentives and support in fostering CSR. This underscores the importance of institutional frameworks in enabling businesses to achieve higher sustainability standards.

In summary, the analysis demonstrates that innovation capabilities and government support are key drivers of CSR at both the product and firm levels. International market exposure also contributes positively, though its influence is comparatively smaller. These findings suggest that firms aiming to enhance their CSR performance should focus on strengthening their innovation capabilities and leveraging institutional support, particularly from the government.

Research Objective 2: How do technological turbulence, competitive intensity, government support, knowledge creation capability, and dysfunctional competition influence firm exporting performance?

- **Method:** Multiple Regression
- **Rationale:** To determine which variables include: technological turbulence (TC), competitive intensity (CI), government support (GS), knowledge creation capability (KC) and firm exporting performance (FP).

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.365 ^a	.133	.120	2.27199	1.936

a. Predictors: (Constant), DC, KC, TC, GS, CI

b. Dependent Variable: FP

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
	(Constant)	.897	.814			.704	2.498		
1	TC	-.003	.194	-.001	-.016	.988	-.384	.378	.446
	CI	-.122	.203	-.048	-.601	.548	-.520	.277	.424
	GS	.245	.192	.099	1.277	.203	-.133	.622	.444
	KC	.257	.188	.104	1.368	.172	-.113	.627	.467
	DC	.541	.132	.271	4.102	.000	.282	.801	.614

a. Dependent Variable: FP

Figure 14: Regression Analysis between TC, EI, GS, KC, DC and FP

The regression analysis provides insights into the relationship between the independent variables (Technological Turbulence (TC), Competitive Intensity (CI), Government Support (GS), Knowledge Creation Capability (KC), and Dysfunctional Competition (DC)) and the dependent variable Firm Performance (FP).

$$FP = 0.897 - 0.003TC - 0.122CI + 0.245GS + 0.257KC + 0.541DC$$

2.1. Technological Turbulence (TC) influence firm performance (FP)

The regression coefficient for TC ($B = -0.003$, $p\text{-value} = 0.988$) indicates no statistical significance. The negative coefficient, though very small, suggests that Technological Turbulence does not have a meaningful impact on firm performance in this model. In practical terms, fluctuations or changes in technology do not appear to significantly influence the firm's exporting performance.

2.2. Competitive Intensity (CI) influence firm performance (FP)

The regression coefficient for CI ($B = -0.122$, $p\text{-value} = 0.548$) shows that CI is not a significant predictor of firm performance. Although the coefficient is negative, its lack of statistical significance indicates that higher competitive intensity does not have a measurable impact on firm performance in this analysis.



2.3. Government Support (GS) influence firm performance (FP)

The regression coefficient for GS ($B = 0.245$, p-value = 0.203), which means it is not statistically significant. Although the positive coefficient suggests that government support might have a positive relationship with firm performance, this result is not strong enough to confirm its impact. Therefore, government support does not significantly influence firm exporting performance in the current model.

2.4. Knowledge Creation Capability (KC) influence firm performance (FP)

The regression coefficient for KC ($B = 0.257$, p-value = 0.172) indicates it is not statistically significant. Despite the positive coefficient, the analysis does not provide sufficient evidence to conclude that Knowledge Creation Capability has a significant impact on firm performance. This suggests that while knowledge creation is relevant, it does not strongly drive performance in this context.

2.5. Dysfunctional Competition (DC) influence firm performance (FP)

The regression coefficient for DC ($B = 0.541$, p-value < 0.001) making it the only statistically significant predictor in the model. The positive coefficient and its large magnitude indicate that dysfunctional competition has a strong positive impact on firm performance. Specifically, an increase in dysfunctional competition significantly enhances firm performance, possibly because firms adapt and innovate to survive in such environments.

In short, the regression model explains 13.3% of the variance in firm performance ($R^2 = 0.133$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.120$). Among the five independent variables: Dysfunctional Competition (DC) is the only significant predictor ($B = 0.541$, $p < 0.001$), showing a substantial positive impact showing a significant positive impact which means that as the level of non-functional competition increases, export performance also increases. In contrast, the remaining factors such as Technological Turbulence (TC), Competitive Intensity (CI), Government Support (GS), and Knowledge Creation Capability (KC) are not statistically significant predictors although GS and KC have positive coefficients indicating their minimal impact on firm performance in this model.

This analysis highlights that unfair competition plays an important role in affecting the export performance of the company, while other factors do not show significant impact.



Research Objective 3: What is the relationship between product-level and firm-level CSR and firm performance?

- **Method:** Linear regression
- **Rationale:** To explore the relationship between product-level CSR (CSP), firm-level CSR (CSF), and firm performance (FP). We employed computed variables like CSP and CSF by averaging related items to reduce redundancy and streamline the analysis.

3.1. To what extent firm performance may enhance product-level CSR?

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	,349 ^a	,122	,119	1,05025	1,951

a. Predictors: (Constant), FP

b. Dependent Variable: CSP

Model	Coefficients ^a								
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95,0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	4,251	,145			3,967	4,536		
	FP	,161	,024	,349	,000	,114	,208	,1,000	,1,000

a. Dependent Variable: CSP

Figure 15: Regression Analysis between CSP and FP

In these models, the independent variable: FP and the dependent variable : product-level CSR (CSP).

$$\text{Regression equation: } \text{CSP} = 4.251 + 0.161\text{FP}$$

From the regression results, FP ($\beta = 0.349$, p-value < 0.001) has a positive impact on Product-Level CSR (CSP) shows that FP has a positive impact on Product-Level CSR (CSP). This result reflects that businesses with good firm performance will invest more in product-level CSR. These initiatives include improving product quality to meet social/environmental standards, obtaining sustainability-related certifications, and increasing product value through CSR initiatives.



Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	,349 ^a	,122	,119	2,27258	1,807

a. Predictors: (Constant), CSP

b. Dependent Variable: FP

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	95,0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant) 1,653	,590		2,799	,005	,491	2,814	1,000	1,000
	CSP ,755	,112	,349	6,737	,000	,535	,976		

a. Dependent Variable: FP

Figure 16: Regression Analysis between FP and CSP

The reverse test results show that the standardized regression ($\beta = 0.349$, p-value < 0.001) (statistically significant). The results show that product-level CSR also has a positive impact on firm performance.

This proves the two-way relationship between FP and CSP. Businesses with good performance will increase investment in product CSR. Conversely, product CSR helps increase brand value, attract customers and improve business performance.

3.2. To what extent firm performance may enhance firm-level CSR?

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	,314 ^a	,099	,096	1,07743	1,860

a. Predictors: (Constant), FP

b. Dependent Variable: CSF

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	95,0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant) 4,255	,148		28,658	,000	3,963	4,548	1,000	1,000
	FP ,147	,025	,314	5,984	,000	,099	,195		

a. Dependent Variable: CSF

Figure 17: Regression Analysis between CSF and FP



In these models, the independent variable: FP and the dependent variable: firm-level CSR (CSF).

Regression equation: CSF = 4.255 + 0.147FP

From regression results, shows that FP ($\beta = 0.314$, p-value < 0.001) has a positive effect on Firm-Level CSR (CSF). When FP increases by 1 unit, CSF increases by 0.147 units. While $R^2 = 0.206$ means that about 20.6% of the variation in CSF is explained by FP. This means that businesses with good performance often expand Firm-level CSR activities, such as protecting community interests, improving working conditions, and committing to sustainable social responsibilities.

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	,314 ^a	,099	,096	2,30237	1,807

a. Predictors: (Constant), CSF

b. Dependent Variable: FP

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	95,0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics		
	B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF	
1	(Constant)	2,136	,583	,314	3,665 5,984	,000	,989 ,451	3,282 ,892	1,000	1,000
	CSF	,671	,112			,000	,451	,892		

a. Dependent Variable: FP

Figure 18: Regression Analysis between FP and CSF

When testing the inverse relationship, the results Standardized Regression Coefficient ($\beta = 0.316$, p-value < 0.001) (statistically significant)

This shows that Firm-level CSR also has an inverse impact on corporate performance. This proves the bidirectional relationship between FP and CSF. Companies with better performance will invest more in Firm-level CSR activities. At the same time, organizational CSR helps build corporate reputation, increase trust from stakeholders and improve business performance.

In short, the research results show a two-way relationship between FP and CSP, and FP and CSF with high statistical reliability. This emphasizes that corporate social responsibility (CSR) is not only a consequence of business performance but also an important strategic factor, contributing to promoting sustainable development and long-term efficiency of enterprises.



This interaction forms a positive development loop, for CSR and business performance support and reinforces each other. When business performance improves, enterprises have the conditions to invest more heavily in CSR activities. In turn, CSR brings great value through enhancing brand reputation, strengthening relationships with stakeholders, and meeting increasingly high standards of the global market.

These findings affirm the important role of CSR in orienting enterprises towards sustainable development. Businesses need to focus not only on short-term benefits but also on building long-term value, through integrating social responsibility and environmental protection into business strategy.



5. Conclusion

This study explores the intricate relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and export performance, focusing on the context of developing economies. Utilizing the "strategy tripod" framework, the research highlights the critical role of CSR initiatives at both the product and firm levels in enhancing export competitiveness.

The findings indicate that factors such as innovation capabilities, institutional pressures, and government support are pivotal in the adoption and success of CSR strategies. Specifically, the study establishes the bidirectional relationship between CSR and firm performance, affirming that investments in CSR not only create competitive advantages but also generate a sustainable growth cycle.

In terms of practical implications, the study provides recommendations for businesses to strategically allocate resources to develop environmentally friendly products, build internal innovation capabilities, and leverage government support policies. Policymakers are advised to expand subsidy programs and simplify regulations to promote CSR, especially among small and medium-sized enterprises.

However, the study has certain limitations, including a sample skewed towards medium-sized enterprises, potential biases in self-reported data, and a narrow focus on export performance without considering other dimensions such as innovation or employee satisfaction.

To address these limitations, future research could examine the impact of CSR in different cultural and economic contexts or conduct longitudinal studies to deepen the understanding of the relationship between CSR and firm performance. Integrating qualitative methods, such as interviews and case studies, could also provide a more comprehensive perspective. Notably, exploring the role of technology, such as artificial intelligence or blockchain, in improving the efficiency and transparency of CSR practices is another promising direction. These research avenues have the potential to further uncover the strategic value of CSR in global trade and foster sustainable development.



INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTION

No.	Student name Student ID	Tasks	Contribution
1	Nguyễn Thị Ngọc Lan 20070943	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research objective 1• Paper design	20%
2	Hoàng Thị Lan 20070942	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research objective 2• Data analysis• Inforgraphic	20%
3	Lê Thị Huyền Trang 20070992	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Abstract• Introduction• Research design and methodology	20%
4	Vũ Diệu Huyền 20070938	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research objective 3	20%
5	Lường Thị Bích Ngọc 20070962	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Context background• Conclusion	20%



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