

Corporate Social Responsibility Law and the Prevention of MSMEs Bankruptcy in the Digital Era

Atika Sunarto¹⁾, Nestiani Gulo²⁾, Putri Anggraini³⁾ & Muhammad Ali Adnan⁴⁾

¹⁾Faculty of Law, Universitas Prima Indonesia, Medan, Indonesia; Email: atikasunarto@unprimdn.ac.id

²⁾Faculty of Law, Universitas Prima Indonesia, Medan, Indonesia; Email: nestiani58@gmail.com

³⁾Faculty of Law, Universitas Prima Indonesia, Medan, Indonesia; Email: putrianggraini210204@gmail.com

⁴⁾Faculty of Law, Universitas Prima Indonesia, Medan, Indonesia; Email: muhammadaliadnan@unprimdn.ac.id

Abstract. *The digital era poses bankruptcy risks for MSMEs in Medan City due to low digital literacy, weak financial management, and limited market access. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) implemented by Bank Sumut Berkah plays a strategic role in preventing bankruptcy and enhancing the competitiveness of MSMEs. This study analyzes the implementation of CSR, the challenges encountered, and the impact of the program on business resilience in the digital era using a normative juridical method through literature review, policy document analysis, and semi-structured interviews. The findings indicate that the implementation of Corporate Social Responsibility by Bank Sumut Berkah significantly contributes to improving managerial capacity, financial literacy, business digitalization, and market access for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises. The program is able to reduce bankruptcy risk and strengthen business competitiveness in the digital era. The main challenges identified include limited understanding of digital technology, the short duration of mentoring, and uneven access to program information. Therefore, continuous assistance, broader program dissemination, and the establishment of business networks or communities are necessary to enhance program effectiveness.*

Keywords: Bankruptcy; Corporate; Prevention; Responsibility; Social.

1. Introduction

The digital era brings new challenges for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Indonesia. Digitalization creates opportunities to expand markets, accelerate production, and improve distribution efficiency (Soegiastuti, 2024). However, this transformation also generates significant risks, such as intense global competition, the need for technological capabilities, and increasing digital

capital requirements. Many MSMEs that are unprepared for these changes risk losing competitiveness, suffering financial losses, and even facing bankruptcy. This condition highlights the need for external support to ensure the sustainability of MSMEs (Oktaria & Yusda, 2020).

Large corporations and financial institutions hold a strategic position in supporting MSMEs. Beyond profit-oriented objectives, companies are required to assume social and moral responsibilities toward society (Effendi, 2009). Corporate social initiatives can enhance the economic capacity of MSMEs and strengthen a fair business ecosystem. Therefore, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) becomes relevant as a form of business ethics that promotes social welfare. CSR is not merely charitable in nature, but a structured instrument designed to create synergy among corporations, communities, and government (Azheri, 2012).

The implementation of CSR plays a strategic role in empowering MSMEs in the digital era. CSR programs can assist MSMEs in developing product innovation, expanding market access, and enhancing technological adaptability. These initiatives may include digital literacy training, business mentoring, working capital assistance, and facilitation of digital platforms. In this context, CSR functions as a mechanism for bankruptcy risk prevention and strengthening MSME competitiveness. Proper implementation of CSR also supports national economic stability through the empowerment of small enterprises (Sunarto, Ompusunggu, & Adnan, 2025).

Constitutionally, Indonesia's economic system is grounded in the principles of kinship and social justice. MSMEs play a strategic role in economic equity and public welfare. Corporate CSR support represents a tangible means of realizing equal economic opportunities and reinforcing microeconomic stability. CSR helps bridge the gap between large and small economic actors. Thus, empowering MSMEs through CSR is not only economically beneficial but also fulfills social and moral mandates.

From the perspective of modern business ethics, CSR reflects both the moral and legal responsibility of corporations toward all stakeholders. Stakeholders include employees, consumers, communities, the environment, and business partners, including MSMEs. CSR should be integrated into corporate management strategies and reflect the principles of distributive and procedural justice. By positioning CSR within the framework of bankruptcy prevention, companies not only promote MSME financial growth but also safeguard microeconomic stability and social welfare (Adnan, Sunarto, & Gultom, 2024).

The legal foundation of CSR in Indonesia is regulated under Law Number 40 of 2007 concerning Limited Liability Companies and its implementing regulations. Although sanctions for non-compliance are not always explicit, sectoral regulations and government policies provide legal consequences for neglecting

CSR obligations. This framework encourages companies to implement CSR concretely, including MSME empowerment initiatives. The government, through relevant ministries, also provides supporting programs for MSME digitalization. Synergy between public policy and corporate CSR becomes essential in mitigating bankruptcy risks in the digital era (Iskandar, 2024).

Well-planned and well-documented CSR practices enhance compliance with good corporate governance principles. Sustainable CSR programs can function as instruments for mitigating socio-economic risks that affect MSME stability. Digital mentoring, business management training, and access to digital markets strengthen the capacity of MSME actors. In Medan City, MSMEs serve as the backbone of the local economy and a major source of employment. Therefore, effective CSR plays a vital role in maintaining social and economic sustainability within the community.

Corporate CSR programs can improve digital literacy and managerial capacity among MSMEs. Examples include digital marketing training, access to e-commerce platforms, and the use of non-cash payment applications. CSR also strengthens business networks and entrepreneurial communities, forming an inclusive digital ecosystem. With such support, MSMEs are better equipped to adapt to market changes and reduce bankruptcy risks. CSR is therefore not merely an ethical or legal obligation, but also a preventive instrument for the sustainability of small enterprises (Zikrullah, Nuringwahyu, & Hardati, 2022).

The implementation of CSR aligns with Law Number 20 of 2008 concerning MSMEs and Government Regulation Number 7 of 2021. Both regulations emphasize the role of government, business entities, and society in MSME development. CSR support constitutes a concrete realization of these mandates. CSR programs assist MSMEs in improving human resource capacity, partnerships, technology utilization, and access to financing. This is particularly relevant in addressing global economic pressures and digital transformation that may trigger bankruptcy risks.

A concrete example is the program initiated by Bank Sumut Berkah, which supports MSMEs in Medan City. The program provides business capital, financial management training, digitalization mentoring, and access to online platforms. Collaboration with partner institutions further strengthens MSME capacity to compete in digital markets (Darsih & Putra, 2025). This initiative helps prevent bankruptcy risks, enhances digital literacy, and supports the triple bottom line (profit, people, planet). Thus, CSR serves as an instrument of empowerment and economic risk mitigation for MSMEs in the digital era (Halo Medan, 2025).

2. Research Methods

This study employs a normative juridical approach with an analytical nature. The focus of the research is on written legal norms, legal doctrines, and relevant court

decisions concerning the implementation of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in preventing MSME bankruptcy in the digital era. The study examines the legal obligations of companies to implement CSR, as well as the effectiveness of mentoring programs, digital training, market access facilitation, and resource support for MSMEs as part of the national economic ecosystem (Sugiyono, 2016).

The research data sources are divided into primary and secondary legal materials. Primary legal materials include the Kitab Undang-Undang Hukum Perdata, Law Number 40 of 2007 concerning Limited Liability Companies, and Law Number 20 of 2008 concerning MSMEs. Secondary legal materials consist of legal literature, books and scientific journals, expert doctrines, as well as articles and previous studies discussing CSR, MSME empowerment, risk management, and the implementation of an inclusive digital economic ecosystem (Ansori, 2020).

Data collection was conducted through library research, emphasizing relevant written sources. The systematic steps include reviewing statutory regulations, examining civil law doctrines and legal literature, and analyzing court decisions or case studies related to CSR. This method enables the researcher to obtain legal foundations, principles of social responsibility, and practices of MSME empowerment including mentoring programs, training initiatives, and access to technology thereby ensuring that the research analysis is carried out comprehensively and in depth.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. The Implementation of Corporate Social Responsibility in Preventing MSME Bankruptcy

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a concept that integrates social, economic, and environmental responsibilities into a company's overall strategy and operations. CSR is not merely philanthropy or charitable activity, but a corporate commitment to supporting sustainable economic development while considering the social and environmental impacts of every business decision. Internationally, CSR is recognized as part of good corporate governance, which places broader stakeholder interests—including communities, employees, the environment, government, and local society—alongside shareholders (Sunarto, Adnan, & Zulkifli, 2024).

In Indonesia, CSR has a normative legal foundation under Law Number 40 of 2007 concerning Limited Liability Companies, particularly Article 74, which obliges companies engaged in natural resources to implement social and environmental responsibility. This provision affirms that CSR is no longer voluntary but constitutes a legal obligation that must be incorporated into corporate planning and budgeting. With this legal basis, CSR becomes an integral part of business practice that balances economic objectives with social welfare and environmental

sustainability (Isnuyati, 2026).

The implementation of CSR in Indonesia emphasizes three main pillars: economic, social, and environmental responsibility. Companies are not solely profit-oriented but must also be accountable for the social and environmental impacts of their operations while promoting community welfare. Principles of accountability and transparency are essential, requiring companies to report fund allocation, performance indicators, and the tangible impact of programs to stakeholders and the public. This approach strengthens public trust and social legitimacy (Romadona et al., 2023).

CSR is also directed toward local economic empowerment, particularly through strengthening Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). CSR programs may provide capital access, technical and managerial training, business mentoring, and market development support. Through such initiatives, MSME actors can manage resources more efficiently, expand distribution networks, increase sales volume, and build consumer trust. This creates an inclusive and sustainable economic ecosystem while reducing business failure risks (Hamim, 2020).

Furthermore, CSR supports MSMEs in building financial and managerial resilience. Assistance in the form of working capital, credit facilities, financial management training, and cash flow mentoring enables small enterprises to survive economic fluctuations and market competition. Risk management training, performance evaluation, and business networking development help MSMEs address external challenges and improve adaptability. Thus, CSR functions as a stabilizing mechanism that strengthens business resilience and local economic communities (Hanim & Noorman, 2018).

CSR also plays a crucial role in enhancing business literacy and financial management capacity among MSME actors. Many small enterprises fail due to weak capital management, cash flow mismanagement, and inadequate business planning. Through training and mentoring programs, CSR equips entrepreneurs with data-based decision-making skills, efficient capital allocation strategies, proper bookkeeping practices, and regular performance analysis. This reduces managerial errors that may lead to bankruptcy.

Beyond financial aspects, CSR introduces MSME owners to digital technology and modern management practices. Training in accounting applications, digital payment systems, and e-commerce platforms enhances operational efficiency, enables real-time performance monitoring, and supports strategic data-driven decisions. Mentoring programs also provide access to mentors, consultants, investors, and broader business networks, fostering collaboration and expanding market opportunities.

CSR programs focusing on business diversification and digital innovation further

strengthen resilience. Through technological training and business incubation, MSMEs are encouraged to develop product variations, adopt modern production methods, and expand digital marketing strategies. This approach enables adaptation to market changes, improves profitability, and reduces dependence on a single product line or local market, thereby minimizing bankruptcy risks.

Strategic innovation support through CSR enhances the dynamic capabilities of MSMEs, including identifying market opportunities, adjusting business models, and optimizing resources. CSR empowerment is not merely social assistance but a strategic instrument for increasing competitiveness, business sustainability, and long-term economic resilience. In this sense, CSR acts as an agent of change in MSME development and local socio-economic stability (Fajar, 2016).

However, CSR implementation faces several obstacles, including limited MSME understanding of program benefits. Many entrepreneurs perceive CSR solely as financial assistance, resulting in reluctance to participate in training, mentoring, or coaching initiatives. Low business literacy, reliance on experiential practices, and ineffective communication between corporations and beneficiaries hinder optimal program impact (Putri & Sisdiyanto, 2025).

Another challenge lies in the lack of synergy between corporations and beneficiaries. Limited participation often stems from the perception that training and mentoring do not provide immediate financial returns. Cultural factors, education levels, and business experience influence entrepreneurs' readiness to maximize program benefits. Consequently, CSR may become merely an administrative formality rather than a substantive capacity-building initiative. Internal corporate bureaucracy, complex administrative procedures, and inadequate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms further constrain effective implementation. Without continuous evaluation, companies struggle to measure the impact of CSR on business capacity strengthening, financial management improvement, and bankruptcy prevention. Therefore, simplifying procedures, integrating monitoring systems, and establishing structured evaluation mechanisms are essential to ensure CSR contributes meaningfully to MSME resilience, sustainability, and economic stability, while supporting inclusive economic development in Indonesia (Gupita, 2025).

3.2. Challenges Faced by Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises in Utilizing Corporate Social Responsibility to Enhance Competitiveness in the Digital Era

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) face significant obstacles in utilizing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs, one of which is low digital literacy. Many business actors are not accustomed to using accounting software, e-commerce platforms, or social media as marketing tools. Consequently, their ability to optimize online market opportunities, expand consumer reach, and improve operational efficiency remains limited. This condition causes CSR training

and mentoring programs to be less effective, as business actors struggle to apply the material in practice (Rachmawati, Afrianti, & Lianardo, 2022).

Low digital literacy also affects MSMEs' ability to access information regarding relevant CSR programs. Businesses that are unfamiliar with internet use often find it difficult to identify opportunities for training, mentoring, and business incubation. This information gap reduces the effectiveness of CSR interventions in strengthening business resilience. Furthermore, limited digital literacy hinders the adoption of innovations such as digital payment systems, application-based inventory management, and online marketing strategies. Many business actors are reluctant to adopt technology due to learning difficulties and the time required to adapt, resulting in reduced competitiveness (Siagian & Keliat, 2025).

In addition, low digital literacy affects the management of business data and information. MSMEs that still rely on manual record-keeping encounter difficulties in monitoring sales, inventory, and consumer demand trends in real time, leading to slow and inaccurate strategic decision-making. This underscores that improving digital literacy is not merely about technological skills but also about applying technology in daily business management. Strengthening digital literacy through CSR must be sustainable, combining practical training, intensive mentoring, and technology transfer to enhance business competitiveness in the digital era (Nur'ainni & Priantilianingtiasari, 2024).

Another challenge lies in weak financial and administrative management. Many MSME actors do not maintain proper transaction records, cash flow planning, or systematic working capital management. As a result, decision-making tends to be intuitive rather than data-driven, reducing the effectiveness of CSR as a means of strengthening financial literacy. These limitations affect cost management, pricing strategies, and business development planning, thereby increasing the risk of managerial errors and business failure.

CSR-based mentoring is often underutilized because business actors fail to implement training materials in their daily practices. Weak administrative management also limits access to additional resources, such as business loans or government programs, due to the absence of formal financial documentation. This issue becomes more complex in the digital era, where intense competition and online transactions require systematic financial management. Therefore, strengthening financial and administrative capacities through CSR must be practical and sustainable.

Low digital literacy and weak financial management directly increase the risk of MSME bankruptcy. The inability to leverage digital technology and manage finances systematically weakens managerial foundations, making businesses vulnerable to operational errors, declining revenues, and failure to meet financial obligations. This risk is exacerbated by the inability to utilize digital platforms for

marketing and operational efficiency, causing businesses to lag behind competitors and face increasing financial pressure.

Limited access to productive CSR programs is another significant constraint. Insufficient information and socialization efforts result in many MSMEs being unaware of existing programs. Corporate communication patterns that are predominantly one-directional and do not directly engage business communities mean that only a small portion of MSMEs benefit. Low digital literacy further widens the information gap, allowing CSR to be utilized mainly by digitally prepared actors, while others are left behind (Anggoro, 2024).

A lack of coordination among CSR-implementing companies also constitutes an important factor. Programs carried out independently, without synergy with other companies, government institutions, or mentoring organizations, tend to be fragmented, short-term, and unsustainable. Program overlaps targeting certain groups while leaving others unserved indicate weak collaborative planning. Consequently, the effectiveness of CSR in strengthening digital literacy, financial capacity, and business innovation remains limited (Sugiyanto, Widowati, & Wijayanti, 2017).

The disparity between assisted and non-assisted MSMEs further widens the competitiveness gap. Assisted enterprises gain greater access to training, mentoring, capital support, and business networks, while non-assisted enterprises often remain excluded. As a result, non-assisted MSMEs remain vulnerable to business failure due to managerial limitations, low digital literacy, and restricted access to mentoring (Suharto, 2014). This condition demonstrates that the principle of equitable distribution in CSR implementation has not been fully realized.

The mismatch between CSR programs and the actual needs of MSMEs in the digital era constitutes a structural problem. The dominance of philanthropic approaches in the form of direct assistance without long-term capacity building leaves businesses vulnerable. Charitable assistance positions MSMEs as passive recipients rather than empowered actors, preventing the achievement of economic independence. Digital transformation and adaptability, which are essential in today's competitive environment, are often overlooked (Tambunan, 2019).

Inaccurate targeting of CSR programs further reduces their effectiveness. Many initiatives are designed through a top-down approach without proper needs assessment, resulting in training materials that do not align with MSMEs' real conditions, particularly in digital literacy and technology-based financial management. Consequently, such programs fail to significantly enhance competitiveness and lack sustainability, leaving the risk of business failure high. The absence of post-program mentoring constitutes a fundamental weakness.

Many training sessions or assistance programs end once the formal program concludes, preventing consistent application of knowledge and skills. Without continuous guidance, MSME actors often revert to previous practices, hindering competitiveness and diminishing CSR effectiveness. The sustainability of CSR programs depends greatly on intensive follow-up mentoring to ensure business independence and reduce dependence on corporate assistance (Nufzatutsaniah, Nurismalatri, & Anas, 2025).

3.3. Bank Sumut Berkah Implements Corporate Social Responsibility Programs to Support Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises in Medan in Surviving the Digital Era

Bank Sumut Berkah implements its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program as a reflection of its awareness that the sustainability of MSMEs constitutes the economic foundation of Medan City. Most MSMEs operate within informal and semi-formal sectors that are vulnerable to economic fluctuations, particularly in the digital era, which demands technological adaptation and improved business management. The CSR initiatives of Bank Sumut Berkah are designed not merely as financial assistance but as efforts to strengthen the adaptive capacity of business actors through digital literacy training, technology-based marketing management, and expanded market access to enhance business resilience (Kuncoro, 2014).

This program also functions as a risk mitigation strategy, considering that MSMEs unable to adapt face a high risk of business failure, which may negatively affect the regional economy. By positioning empowerment as a preventive instrument, Bank Sumut Berkah's CSR strengthens the bank's role as a development agent, focusing not only on profit generation but also on the creation of sustainable economic and social value. The integration of social responsibility aligns with Law No. 40 of 2007 concerning Limited Liability Companies, which emphasizes corporate obligations toward society (Sumarsono, 2017).

The CSR program of Bank Sumut Berkah takes the form of integrated empowerment activities, including financial management training, banking literacy, digital technology utilization, business mentoring, and market access facilitation. This approach positions MSME actors as active subjects of development rather than passive beneficiaries, thereby generating long-term impacts in the form of business independence and enhanced internal capacity. The focus on digital literacy and technology expands market share and operational efficiency, in line with modern economic empowerment principles (Purba, Amelia, Aliyyah, & Sintia, 2023).

The implementation of CSR demonstrates tangible impacts in preventing MSME bankruptcy. Business actors become more disciplined in transaction recording, cash flow management, and the application of digital marketing strategies.

Continuous mentoring enhances data-based decision-making and preparedness to face market fluctuations, thereby reducing the risk of business failure. The program gains legal legitimacy through Undang-Undang No. 20 Tahun 2008 tentang Usaha Mikro, Kecil, dan Menengah, which emphasizes economic empowerment and guidance for MSMEs (Hakim, Hermanto, & Fikri, 2019).

The Government of Medan City plays a strategic role in strengthening the legal and institutional foundations of CSR, ensuring that programs operate effectively and correspond to the real needs of MSMEs. Strengthening local regulations and establishing coordination forums enhance accountability, transparency, and integration with local economic development policies, including digitalization and inclusive financing initiatives. Through this synergy, CSR becomes not merely a social activity but a strategic instrument to foster inclusive economic growth and reduce bankruptcy risks.

The “Medan Berkah” program serves as a coordination platform among the government, corporations, and MSMEs, creating a productive and sustainable business ecosystem. This platform facilitates information exchange, access to training, mentoring, capital, and digital technology, making empowerment efforts more effective. Cross-sectoral integration ensures that the skills, networks, and resources of business actors are optimally utilized, thereby strengthening competitiveness and local economic resilience.

The government also provides incentives and recognition to companies implementing productive CSR programs in the form of formal acknowledgment, administrative facilitation, or fiscal incentives. This mechanism encourages corporations to design capacity-building-based programs rather than routine social activities. Incentives further stimulate program innovation, ensuring that MSMEs gain access to knowledge, technology, and sustainable mentoring, effectively reducing the risk of bankruptcy.

Digitalization constitutes a primary strategy to enhance MSME resilience, including digital marketing training, e-commerce platforms, application-based inventory management, and digital payment systems. The utilization of technology enables business actors to monitor cash flow, plan inventory, and make real-time data-based decisions, thereby reducing operational risks that could lead to bankruptcy. Digitalization also expands market reach, improves efficiency, and strengthens competitive positioning (Nanda & Fitryani, 2023).

Business mentoring and digital incubation programs equip MSMEs with technical guidance, management consultation, digital training, and product innovation facilities. This approach provides practical experience and business networking opportunities that support collaboration, information exchange, and access to new market prospects. Implementation results indicate improved operational efficiency, expanded market access, and strengthened competitiveness, enabling

businesses to better withstand digital competition and reduce bankruptcy risks (Fuadi, Akhyadi, & Saripah, 2021).

Strengthening digital marketing helps MSMEs reach broader markets, enhance product visibility, and maximize sales performance. Training in social media utilization, e-commerce, and marketing analytics equips business actors with adaptive capabilities to respond to market demands. The integration of digitalization with business management and financial record-keeping improves operational efficiency, consumer loyalty, and business sustainability. Thus, Bank Sumut Berkah's CSR plays a strategic role in building a resilient, innovative, and competitive business ecosystem in the digital era of Medan City

4. Concolusion

The implementation of the corporate social responsibility (CSR) program carried out by Bank Sumut plays a strategic role in strengthening the resilience of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Medan through an approach based on economic empowerment, digitalization, and sustainable mentoring. Through financial management training, digital literacy development, online marketing programs, business assistance, and business incubation, entrepreneurs are equipped with the capacity to manage risks, improve operational efficiency, expand market reach, and enhance competitiveness. The program, however, faces several challenges, including low digital literacy, weak financial management, limited access to information, and insufficient continuous mentoring, all of which may restrict its overall effectiveness. Nevertheless, the integration of the program with local government policies particularly through incentives and the synergy platform "Medan Berkah" has contributed to the creation of an adaptive and sustainable business ecosystem. As a result, corporate social responsibility is not merely social or philanthropic in nature, but also functions as a preventive instrument in safeguarding the sustainability and resilience of MSMEs in the digital era

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