

APPENDIX GA36d

LEVEL 7 ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATION



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Research Report as homework for the class:

Quantitative Research Methods

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Title of the underlying research project:

A quantitative Analysis regarding the impact of perceived Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on the consumers' purchase decision

Introduction

Background to the research:

Since the beginning of the 20th century Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has developed into a key matter for strategic considerations of a company. As a result, a significant number of academic research has been conducted from the 1950 onwards until today. Carroll 1999 provides a comprehensive summary of this research for the second half of the last century. The evolving role of corporations and their management has transformed significantly since the early 1950s, when it held limited relevance. It has become a central focus in recent years. This shift has been influenced by both internal and external factors. Internally, companies have reassessed their responsibilities, placing greater emphasis on their societal and environmental impact. Externally, heightened political regulations and stricter government oversight have further driven this change, reinforcing the need to align with broader expectations of the society. While the overall importance of CSR on a company standing within the society and its success from an economical perspective regarding profitability and costs has extensively researched over the decades, the perspective on the consumer itself had not been as prominent as a research question. My research will complement on the consumer perspective on CSR and their purchase decision. Therefore, I will leverage certain concepts and an enhanced questionnaire from Bianchi et al. 2019. His work is measuring the “impact of perceived CSR on corporate reputation and purchase intention” (Bianchi et al. 2019, p. 206).

Research goals and objectives:

The aim of my research is to demonstrate that there is a significant correlation between the perceived CSR customers have of the company and their purchase decisions. The objectives are:

- **To assess consumer awareness of CSR initiatives**
This objective aims to evaluate how familiar consumers are with CSR activities undertaken by companies. It explores whether CSR efforts are effectively communicated and recognized by the target market.
- **To evaluate how CSR initiatives influence brand loyalty and consumer trust.** This objective aims to investigate whether CSR contributes to stronger brand loyalty and greater trust in a brand, ultimately affecting long-term purchase behavior.
- **To identify the relationship between CSR practices and consumer purchase decisions**

The goal here is to investigate the extent to which CSR initiatives influence consumer behavior

This leads to the following detailed research questions:

- Are consumers more likely to purchase products from companies that engage in CSR activities?
- What is the level of consumer awareness regarding CSR initiatives of companies?
- How does consumer awareness of CSR practices affect their purchasing decisions?
- Which dimensions of CSR (environmental, social, ethical) most strongly influence consumer purchase decisions?
- How does a company's CSR performance influence consumer trust and brand loyalty?

Contributions

The research will contribute to the existing literature by working out the specific relationship between CSR and purchase decision, with the aim to show:

○ **Increased Consumer Awareness of CSR:**

The research is likely to show that a significant portion of consumers are aware of CSR activities, particularly among well-established brands that actively communicate their CSR efforts. Awareness may vary across different demographic groups, with younger consumers or those with higher education levels potentially showing higher CSR awareness.

○ **Positive Impact of CSR on Consumer Purchase Decisions:**

It is expected that CSR practices will positively influence purchase decisions for many consumers. Consumers are likely to favor enterprises which engage in socially and environmentally responsible activities, particularly when these align with their personal values.

Literature Review

The literatures available are often focused on specific areas such as cities, countries and/or sectors, which enable the researchers to obtain a significant number of questionnaires for their quantitative surveys but limits the possibility to generalise the results. Therefore, it is important to put the different studies for each area and sector in an overall context to understand the development and coverage of the available literature.

For example, He and Li (2011) investigates the impact of CSR and service quality (SQ) on service brand performance, particularly customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. They explore how brand identification mediates this relationship and whether SQ strengthens CSR's impact on brand identification. A survey was conducted with 268 mobile telecom customers in Taiwan. Key variables are CSR, SQ, brand identification, customer satisfaction, and brand loyalty. The findings support the hypotheses, showing both direct and indirect positive effects of CSR and SQ on satisfaction and loyalty, with brand identification acting as a mediator. SQ strengthens CSR's influence on brand identification but not on customer satisfaction, which is primarily driven by SQ. Results indicate that brand identification is a crucial link in how CSR and SQ enhance service brand performance. While SQ boosts CSR's influence on brand identification, satisfaction remains more directly tied to SQ itself. He (2011) advances the field by integrating CSR, SQ, and brand identification into a model for understanding brand performance, validating brand identification as a mediator, and providing new evidence of the combined impact of CSR and SQ. The research provides actionable insights for service companies on strategically leveraging CSR and SQ to improve brand identification, customer satisfaction, and loyalty. However, as indicated, the study is limited to a single country and industry. Another study covering Taiwan is Hsu (2012). It examines CSR initiatives and their impact on corporate reputation and brand equity within Taiwan's life insurance sector. They explore the impact of CSR as a form of advertising, differentiating between the Informative Advertising Effect (direct influence) on corporate reputation and brand equity and Persuasive Advertising Effect (indirect influence) on these factors through customer satisfaction. Structural equation modelling was employed to evaluate the relationships among CSR, customer satisfaction, corporate reputation, and brand equity. These findings indicate CSR can serve as a strategic tool for enhancing reputation and brand equity, with distinct advertising effects: a direct impact on reputation, and both direct and indirect effects on brand equity via customer satisfaction. This research uniquely clarifies CSR's informative and persuasive advertising roles, expanding understanding of CSR's effects on key organizational metrics.

Furthermore, Fu et al. (2014) explores the connection between CSR and employee behaviour in China's hotel industry. It examines how CSR affects employees' organizational identification (OI), organizational commitment (OC), and organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB). The research aims to understand the mechanisms linking CSR to OCB, proposing that OI and OC mediate this relationship. A survey of 450 employees from mid-range and upscale hotels in China was conducted, using validated scales to measure CSR across four dimensions (economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic). Structural equation modelling was used to analyse the data. The results supported the proposed model, confirming that CSR positively impacts OI and OC. OI also influences OC, and OC partially mediates the CSR-OCB relationship, while OI partially mediates the CSR-OC connection. The findings suggest that CSR strengthens employees' identification with and emotional attachment to their organization, which encourages them to engage in extra-role behaviours. Hotels that engage in CSR activities across various dimensions can enhance employees' organizational identity and commitment. Although this study is not focusing on the purchase decision, it provides to obtain a better general understanding of the impact CSR can have on companies.

Rivera (2016) presents a theoretical framework for smart tourism. The model serves as a useful tool for designing strategies for smart and sustainable tourism development. However, the research is limited to literature analysis, and future studies could empirically validate the model through case studies or further explore additional influencing factors. They explore how CSR influences consumer satisfaction using two approaches. The first examines the impact of specific CSR initiatives on satisfaction, while the second investigates both the direct and indirect effects of CSR on satisfaction, with brand attitude used as a mediator. The research objectives include identifying which CSR initiatives mostly affect customer satisfaction and understanding the direct and indirect influence of CSR on satisfaction through brand attitude. The first study analysed data from 65 U.S. companies, matching CSR initiatives with customer satisfaction data from the American Customer Satisfaction Index. The second study surveyed 351 Spanish consumers to test the proposed model. Results showed that employee training and environmental CSR initiatives positively influenced customer satisfaction, while CSR-related corporate communication had a negative impact. The second study confirmed both a direct positive effect of CSR on satisfaction and an indirect effect through improved brand attitude. The findings indicate that CSR shapes brand perception, which enhances satisfaction. The research adds to the field by highlighting how different CSR activities affect satisfaction and by uncovering the dual pathways, direct and indirect, through which CSR impacts consumer attitudes and satisfaction.

Moreover, Bianchi et al. (2019) investigates how consumers' perceptions of a company's CSR activities affect their purchase intentions and the company's reputation. The study explores the roles of brand image, satisfaction (both cognitive and emotional), and brand loyalty in this relationship. The main goal is to assess the short-term impact of perceived CSR on purchase intention and its long-term impact on corporate reputation, while also considering the mediating roles of brand image, satisfaction, and loyalty. A quantitative study was conducted with 429 consumers in an Argentinian city. They validated the measurement model using confirmatory factor analysis and tested the hypotheses using structural equation modelling. The findings revealed that most direct and indirect relationships in the model were significant. The study's model helps explain how CSR perceptions influence both purchase intentions and corporate reputation. The findings suggest that cognitive perceptions of CSR enhance satisfaction through brand image, which incorporates both rational and emotional factors. By addressing various relationships that have often been studied separately, this research provides a more holistic understanding of how CSR perceptions impact consumer behaviour and reputation.

In the same year, Chang and Yeh (2017) investigates the CSR impact on customer loyalty in the intercity bus service sector, exploring how CSR interacts with quality of service, brand image, and client satisfaction to influence loyalty. The study introduces a new model to examine the links between CSR and customer loyalty, focusing on the mediating roles of corporate image and customer satisfaction. It tests nine hypotheses to validate the proposed relationships. A survey was conducted with 349 passengers from a major intercity bus company in Taiwan. Structural equation modelling was used to analyse the collected data. CSR indirectly influences client satisfaction and loyalty through brand image as mediators. Similarly, service quality impacts clients' loyalty, mediated by client satisfaction. The main finding highlights corporate image as a crucial mediator in strengthening the effect of CSR on customer loyalty. The study recommends that bus companies enhance their corporate image through CSR initiatives to foster greater customer loyalty, and that improving service quality and satisfaction further supports this goal. The study makes a theoretical and empirical contribution by emphasizing the mediating role of brand image in the CSR and client loyalty link within the intercity bus sector. It offers practical advice for companies to develop CSR strategies to build customer loyalty. The findings offer valuable insights for intercity bus companies on using CSR to improve brand image and client satisfaction, leading to stronger client loyalty, particularly in a competitive market.

Ramesh et al. (2019) complements on that by investigates how CSR activities influence consumers' purchase intentions, focusing on whether the effect is direct or mediated by brand

image, brand attitude, and perceived quality. However, the data used from Indian consumers of Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) products showed that CSR does not directly impact purchase intention but positively affects brand image, attitude, and perceived quality, which then act as mediating factors. The findings highlight the importance of effectively communicating CSR activities to consumers, as they may unconsciously form positive attitudes.

Similarly, Rivera (2018) explores how CSR affects consumer brand loyalty. It proposes a model that examines the role of brand awareness, brand attitude, and customer satisfaction as mediators in the CSR-loyalty relationship. The study aims to: 1) assess how CSR, brand awareness, brand attitude, and customer satisfaction impact different aspects of brand loyalty, and 2) develop a model explaining how these factors mediate consumer loyalty. An online survey was conducted with 351 Spanish sportswear consumers. Again, structural equation modelling was applied to test the proposed theoretical framework. The results indicate that CSR positively affects brand loyalty both directly and indirectly by improving brand awareness and customer satisfaction. However, brand attitude did not significantly contribute to the impact of CSR on loyalty. Two potential reasons for the weak role of brand attitude are offered: 1) consumers may view CSR as a standard corporate duty rather than an outstanding effort, and 2) negative perceptions of a company's responsibility could reduce its influence on brand attitude. The study enriches the literature by adopting a multidimensional view of brand loyalty and analysing how various factors mediate the link between CSR and loyalty. It highlights how CSR influences loyalty through direct and indirect channels, providing guidance for marketing strategies that align CSR with customer focus.

Another interesting perspective had been added by Won-Moo (2018), who investigates how customers' perceptions of CSR influence their customer citizenship behaviour (CCB) through the mediating roles of customer-company identification and affective commitment. The research, based on data from 615 banking customers in South Korea, confirmed that CSR perceptions positively affect CCB. Both customer-company identification and affective commitment acted as mediators, and they also sequentially mediated this relationship. The findings suggest that CSR initiatives strengthen customer relationships and encourage beneficial behaviours through increased identification and emotional commitment. The study highlights potential biases due to self-reported data.

Then, the mediating role of perceptions of a company's CSR activities has been further analysed by Castro-Gonzalez 2019. Their research aims to investigate how admiration mediates the relationship between CSR perception and consumer advocacy and examine how consumer

integrity moderates the connection between CSR perception and admiration. The tested hypotheses are that CSR positively affects consumer admiration, admiration enhances advocacy behaviours, admiration mediates the CSR-advocacy link, and integrity moderates CSR's influence on admiration, with stronger effects for consumers with higher integrity. A sample of 252 adult consumers in Spain, who were customers of a food company, was surveyed through interviews. The findings confirmed that CSR increases consumer admiration, admiration enhances advocacy behaviours, admiration mediates the CSR-advocacy relationship, and consumer integrity moderates the CSR-admiration link, with stronger effects for individuals with high integrity. These results indicate that consumers who perceive CSR positively develop admiration toward the company, which drives advocacy behaviours such as positive word-of-mouth. This reveals an emotional mechanism behind CSR's influence on consumer behaviour, with individuals who have higher integrity reacting more strongly to CSR in terms of admiration. The study highlights the role of emotions, particularly admiration, in the connection between CSR and consumer behaviour. It also uncovers the significance of moral characteristics like integrity, which have been underexplored in this area. The research provides valuable insights into the psychological processes linking CSR and consumer behaviour, showing that CSR can generate positive emotions and actions, particularly among consumers with strong moral virtues.

In addition, Al-Ghamdi and Badawi (2019) suggest that banks can increase customer satisfaction and loyalty by adopting CSR initiatives, making it a powerful marketing strategy. The study contributes to the field by being one of the first to explore CSR's effects in the Saudi banking sector, offering valuable insights for both academics and practitioners. The research fills a gap in literature by exploring this relationship in a Middle Eastern, developing country context.

And Lin and Chung (2019) investigate how different types of CSR activities; related to food, environment, employment, and community; impact brand equity in the restaurant sector. It also explores how brand characteristics, such as size, segment, and identity, influence the CSR-brand equity relationship. The study's goals are to analyse CSR's effects on brand equity and to determine how this relationship is shaped by brand size, segment, and identity, with several hypotheses developed to test these connections. Using a survey with hypothetical CSR scenarios, respondents were randomly assigned to scenarios involving various CSR types or a control scenario. The survey measured brand equity through perceived quality, brand awareness, brand image, and brand loyalty, while assessing brand size, segment, and identity. Findings show that CSR activities positively impact brand equity, but the effect varies by CSR

type and brand attributes. Community-focused CSR had the greatest impact on brand image, while food-related CSR most strongly boosted brand loyalty. The brand's size, segment, and identity also modified CSR's impact on brand equity. The study reveals that CSR impacts different aspects of brand equity, emphasizing the role of brand attributes in shaping these effects. For example, large restaurants gained more in brand image through food- and community-related CSR, while limited-service restaurants benefited in brand image and loyalty from food-related CSR. By distinguishing CSR types and brand attributes, this study offers a nuanced perspective on the CSR-brand equity relationship, emphasizing the need to consider industry-specific CSR practices and brand characteristics in such evaluations. The findings provide valuable guidance for restaurant managers to strategically allocate CSR resources based on brand characteristics, helping to build brand equity and competitive advantage through targeted CSR efforts.

Aramburu and Pescador (2019) investigates how CSR influences customer loyalty in banking, examining if CR plays a mediating role and whether bank type affects this mediation. Through a survey of 572 Basque Country bank customers, the research confirmed that CSR is positively linked to customer loyalty, with CR serving as a partial mediator. The type of bank did not significantly alter this mediation effect, implying similar customer responses to CSR efforts across bank types. This work contributes by modelling CSR as a multi-dimensional construct and by exploring CR's mediating impact in CSR-loyalty dynamics, which addresses a research gap.

Çakir (2020) research examines how CSR impacts consumer identification with a company, brand prestige, and purchase intention, focusing on the Nivea brand within the personal care sector. The study aims to understand how CSR image influences brand prestige, consumer-company identification, and purchase intent. Additionally, it investigates how brand prestige affects consumer identification with the company and purchase intent, and how consumer-company identification influences purchase intent. Data was collected through an online survey of 270 consumers, utilizing validated scales to measure CSR image, consumer-company identification, brand prestige, and purchase intent. The scales demonstrated high reliability. Findings indicate that CSR image positively influences both brand prestige and consumer-company identification. Brand prestige also strengthens consumer identification, while consumer-company identification increases purchase intent. Additionally, consumer-company identification mediates the link between CSR image and purchase intent. The results suggest that a positive CSR image enhances consumer identification with the brand, which, in turn,

encourages purchase intent. However, CSR image alone did not directly impact purchase intent, potentially due to ineffective CSR communication to consumers.

Furthermore, Wong (2021) investigates the factors influencing consumer purchase intentions in Hong Kong's retail industry. It focuses on five key variables: value-driven CSR motives and perceived CSR as independent variables, purchase intentions as the dependent variable, and corporate reputation and consumer trust as both independent and dependent variables. Using a quantitative approach, data was collected through online questionnaires distributed via social media, with 249 valid responses analysed using partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). The findings show that five of the six hypotheses were supported. Specifically, perceived CSR, corporate reputation, and consumer trust all have positive relationships with purchase intention. Perceived CSR is also positively linked to corporate reputation, which, in turn, positively impacts consumer trust. However, the hypothesis connecting value-driven motives with purchase intention was not supported. The research offers a useful theoretical framework for future CSR studies and suggests that retail managers in Hong Kong should focus on promoting CSR initiatives that align with their products or services to benefit the overall retail industry.

Similarly, Badawi (2022) explores the impact of perceived CSR on corporate reputation, organizational commitment, and purchase intention, but only focused on the Indonesian cement industry. The research aims to understand how CSR affects both internal factors, such as employee commitment, and external factors like customer behaviour and company reputation. Five hypotheses were tested, examining whether CSR positively influences corporate reputation, organizational commitment, and purchase intention, as well as whether corporate reputation and organizational commitment drive purchase intention. The study used a quantitative approach, gathering data from 310 employees through questionnaires and analysing the results using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with SmartPLS. The findings confirmed all hypotheses, showing that perceived CSR significantly improves corporate reputation, organizational commitment, and purchase intention. Additionally, both corporate reputation and organizational commitment positively affect purchase intention. The results suggest that companies in the cement industry should prioritize CSR efforts to enhance reputation, increase employee commitment, and encourage higher customer purchase intentions.

Raza et al. (2023) explores marketing strategies aimed at Generation Z (born 1995-2009) in Pakistan's emerging market. It examines how social media cognitive engagement, social media

influencers, perceived CSR, and user-generated content impact this generation's purchase intentions. The study also assesses the moderating effect of hedonic brand image.

The main goal is to understand how the four factors, social media engagement, influencers, perceived CSR, and user-generated content, affect Generation Z's purchase intention, along with the moderating role of brand image in these relationships.

Data was gathered from an online survey of university students in Karachi, Pakistan, representing Generation Z. The researchers employed factor analysis, structural equation modelling, and other statistical methods to analyse the data and test hypotheses. The findings reveal that social media cognitive engagement and perceived CSR positively influence Generation Z's purchase intention, while social media influencers and user-generated content do not show significant impact. Hedonic brand image significantly moderates the effects of social media engagement and CSR on purchase intention. The results indicate that Generation Z in Pakistan is highly responsive to social media and CSR in brand interactions. Marketers should emphasize these factors to engage this demographic effectively. The lack of influence from influencers and user-generated content may reflect Pakistan's unique cultural and economic context. Raza et al. (2022) sheds light on Generation Z's consumer behaviour in Pakistan, offering a detailed model for understanding key drivers of purchase intention in an emerging market, which can inform targeted marketing strategies. The findings enrich current insights into Generation Z marketing, particularly in developing countries. The study's use of advanced data analysis enhances the reliability of its results.

Most recently, Zhang et al. (2023) examines CSR's influence on corporate reputation, purchase intent, and willingness to pay a premium in Pakistan. Using legitimacy theory, the study finds that CSR's economic, social, and environmental dimensions positively affect corporate reputation, both cognitively and emotionally. Emotional reputation increases willingness to pay a premium, while cognitive reputation primarily boosts purchase intent. Despite a positive response to CSR, Pakistani consumers are price-sensitive and not inclined to pay extra solely due to CSR efforts. This research emphasizes the impact of CSR on corporate reputation and consumer behaviour in Pakistan, particularly within the marketing sector.

All the studies show similar limitations. Either the narrow scope of the survey, e.g. only in one city, region or country or the focus on a specific brand, company or industry that limits the generalizability of the results. In addition, often non-random sampling approaches are used, which weaken the generalizability further. Future studies could broaden their scope to include other industries and regions, examine different groups or sectors, or use larger samples to enhance generalizability.

Methodology

My research will follow a quantitative approach as well. I have developed a questionnaire based on the concept developed by Bianchi et al. 2019 and customized it to the needs of my specific research project, which are limited due to the concept and timeframe of the project. The goals have been:

- To construct a questionnaire with at least 20 questions based on the groundwork done by Bianchi et al. 2019.
- To at least collect 30 responses as part of a Convenience Sampling approach in my personal network.
- To analyse the responses to determine the impact of CSR on the consumer purchase decision.
- To investigate the correlation between CSR and consumer purchase decision using a T-Test and, if possible, with the data points, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis as done by Bianchi et al. 2019.

I have adapted the questionnaire from Bianchi et al. 2019 and used the following four categories of questions for my work:

- Perceived CSR profile of the brand/company
- Brand image
- Customer Loyalty
- Purchase intention/decision

This provided me with a questionnaire of 22 statements, which the participants had to rate on a Likert scale from 1 (completely disagree) to 7 (completely agree), please refer to questionnaire by Bianchi et al. 2019 p. 212, the alphabetic referencing has been adapted to this project:

“Perceived CSR:

- A: The brand/company treats employees very well.
- B: The brand/company is socially responsible.
- C: The brand/company helps civil society organizations in the community.
- D: The brand/company is committed to ecological issues.
- E: The brand/company returns some of what it has received to society.
- F: The brand/company acts thinking about society.
- G: The brand/company integrates philanthropic contributions in their business activities.
- H: The brand/company behaves honestly with their customers.
- I: The brand/company respect the legal regulations.

Brand image:

- J: The brand/company has a strong personality.
- K: The brand/company has powerful image.

- L: The brand/company is very good.
- M: The brand/company is a very nice brand/company.
- N: The brand/company is a very attractive brand/company.
- O The brand/company is a hugely sympathetic brand/company.

Customer Loyalty:

- P: I say positive things about the brand/company to other people.
- Q: I recommend this brand/company to other people.
- R: I encourage friends and relatives to buy that brand/company.
- S: I consider that brand/company my first choice.

Purchase intension:

- T: I will purchase brand/company the next time I need a product.
- U: It is very likely that I will buy from that brand/company.
- V: Definitely, I will buy some product from that brand/company.”

Expert Review:

This initial questionnaire has been given for validity review to five experts. Three out of these experts have been fellow DBA students at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) who have an excellent understanding of the quantitative research process and the specific requirements for this research report. Further, two external experts have been consulted to obtain a broader view on the research approach. One expert has a PhD in Business Administration, was a Strategy Consultant at McKinsey & Company and is now Managing Director for an e-commerce company. His PhD thesis included an extensive research project regarding entrepreneurship with a mixed method approach. The other expert has a PhD in Chemical Pathology and works for a big pharma company. Her research included complex statistical analysis. The experts provided the overall feedback:

- Add a free text field for the participant to state the brand/company which he or she is considering for the completing the questionnaire.
- To request the participant to focus on a past purchase over a certain threshold and not only on a theoretical purchase they could do.
- Add a control question, if "the person would buy the product again" to avoid that the questions regarding the purchase intension are exclusively focused on the future.

Based on that feedback, I have further extended the questionnaire by two more questions:

- Kindly document the product you have selected for your own reference. (Not included in the statistics).
- W: I will buy from the same brand/company again.

Distribution:

The questionnaire has been drafted in Word document and afterwards been created in Google forms as a survey. Then, the survey has been distributed electronically through a network sampling approach to people within my network.

The following hypotheses are tested:

- **Null Hypothesis (H_0):**

CSR activities do not significantly impact consumer purchase decisions.

This suggests that there is no relationship between a company's CSR efforts and whether consumers are influenced in their purchasing decisions.

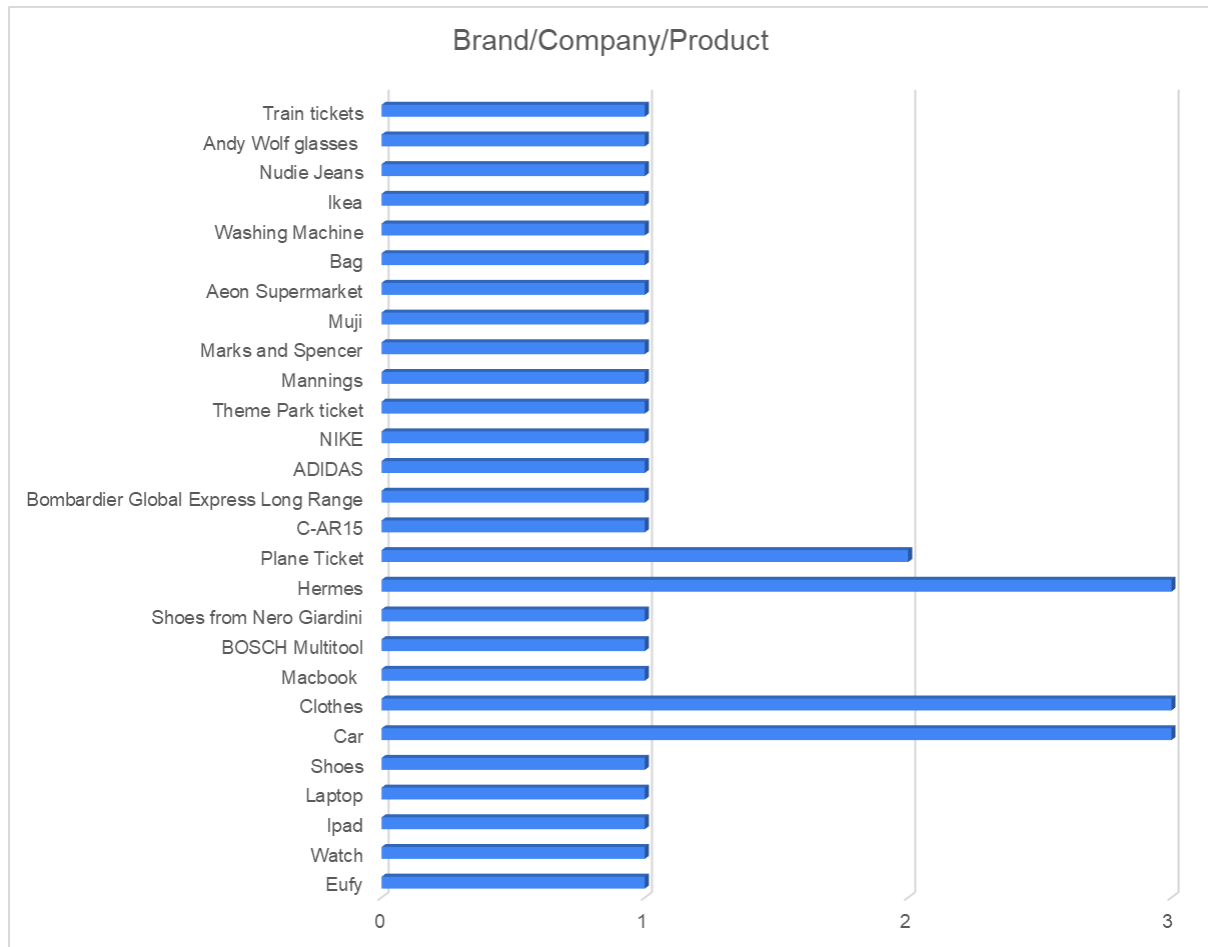
- **Alternative Hypothesis (H_1):**

CSR activities have a significant positive impact on consumer purchase decisions.

This hypothesis suggests that companies engaging in CSR initiatives are more likely to influence consumers' purchase decisions, as consumers tend to prefer socially responsible brands.

Results

All participants in this study were at least 18 or older. Through network sampling I was able to receive back 35 completed questionnaires. The participants in the survey were either located in Hong Kong, in Germany or Switzerland. One questionnaire had to be removed because it was only partially completed and would have caused an outlier. Therefore, 34 questionnaires have been quantitatively analysed. The group of products chosen was relatively diverse: The participants were asked to focus their responses on the brand/company from which they made the last purchase above 100 US Dollar. Please refer to the table on the next page.



To guarantee anonymity in completing the study, age and gender of the participants has not been recorded because of the network sampling approach and the small sample size. The focus was the perceived CSR of the company and the purchase intention. Please refer to the alphabetic labelling in the previous section to map the question with the related letter in the alphabet. The survey contains a series of statements related to these areas, and the participants have been asked to indicate their level of agreement with each statement using a scale from 1 to 7, where “1 = Completely Disagree and 7 = Completely Agree” (Bianchi et al. 2019 p.211).

Descriptives

[illegible]

Further, inferential statistics have been used to test hypotheses and to demonstrate the reliability of the instrument.

Principal Component Analysis

Component Loadings			
	Component		Uniqueness
	1	2	
A	0.514		0.650
B		0.828	0.285
C		0.832	0.307
D		0.845	0.285
E		0.927	0.138
F		0.936	0.122
G		0.769	0.402
H		0.564	0.614
I	0.409	0.508	0.575
J	0.540		0.706
K	0.653		0.536
L	0.771		0.354
M	0.768		0.376
N	0.764		0.411
O	0.561		0.622
P	0.521	0.434	0.540
Q	0.750		0.357
R	0.676	0.458	0.333
S	0.723		0.477
T	0.800		0.358
U	0.766		0.402
V	0.632		0.601
W	0.705		0.501

Note. 'varimax' rotation was used

Following the Principal Component Analysis, it became evident that adopting a similar approach to the one used in Bianchi et al. 2019's study was necessary to achieve the required insights from the questionnaires. Consequently, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis was conducted as the next step.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Factor Loadings

Factor	Indicator	Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Interval		Z	p
				Lower	Upper		
Perceived CSR	A	0.253	0.158	-0.0561	0.563	1.60	0.109
	B	0.843	0.152	0.5450	1.142	5.54	< .001
	C	1.111	0.186	0.7478	1.475	5.99	< .001
	D	1.055	0.184	0.6946	1.416	5.74	< .001
	E	1.538	0.206	1.1333	1.942	7.45	< .001
	F	1.292	0.181	0.9378	1.646	7.15	< .001
	G	1.020	0.194	0.6389	1.401	5.25	< .001
	H	0.595	0.195	0.2125	0.977	3.05	0.002
	I	0.520	0.208	0.1119	0.928	2.50	0.013
Brand Image	J	0.412	0.159	0.0990	0.724	2.58	0.010
	K	0.484	0.160	0.1705	0.798	3.02	0.002
	L	0.901	0.116	0.6743	1.128	7.78	< .001
	M	0.896	0.119	0.6624	1.129	7.53	< .001
	N	0.836	0.143	0.5561	1.116	5.85	< .001
	O	0.980	0.199	0.5899	1.370	4.92	< .001
Customer Loyalty	P	0.652	0.155	0.3488	0.955	4.22	< .001
	Q	0.838	0.129	0.5853	1.090	6.51	< .001
	R	0.942	0.148	0.6518	1.232	6.36	< .001
	S	0.896	0.259	0.3875	1.404	3.45	< .001
Purchase Intention	T	1.139	0.179	0.7874	1.491	6.35	< .001
	U	0.818	0.135	0.5542	1.082	6.08	< .001
	V	0.778	0.149	0.4846	1.070	5.20	< .001
	W	0.919	0.151	0.6223	1.216	6.07	< .001

[4]

Factor Estimates

Factor Covariances

		Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Interval		Z	p
				Lower	Upper		
Perceived CSR	Perceived CSR	1.0000*					
	Brand image:	0.1793	0.173	-0.1591	0.518	1.038	0.299
	Customer Loyalty	0.3548	0.168	0.0264	0.683	2.118	0.034
	Purchase intension:	0.0349	0.184	-0.3265	0.396	0.189	0.850
Brand image:	Brand image:	1.0000*					
	Customer Loyalty	0.6917	0.103	0.4900	0.893	6.722	< .001
	Purchase intension:	0.4739	0.146	0.1885	0.759	3.254	0.001
Customer Loyalty	Customer Loyalty	1.0000*					
	Purchase intension:	0.6188	0.128	0.3678	0.870	4.832	< .001
Purchase intension:	Purchase intension:	1.0000*					

* fixed parameter

Model Fit

Test for Exact Fit

χ^2	df	p
487	224	< .001

Fit Measures

CFI	TLI	RMSEA	RMSEA 90% CI	
			Lower	Upper
0.660	0.616	0.186	0.163	0.208

Discussion – Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The first table provides the following insights for the four dimensions:

1. *Perceived CSR*

Indicators: A, B, C, D, E, F; G, H, I

Most indicators, such as D (1.055), E (1.538), F (1.292), and G (1.020), have strong loadings ($p < .001$), suggesting they are reliable measures of the Perceived CSR construct. However, indicator A has a lower factor loading (0.253) with a higher p-value ($p = 0.109$), meaning it is not statistically significant at conventional thresholds. This suggests it may not be a reliable indicator of the Perceived CSR construct. The confidence intervals for the significant indicators do not cross zero, reinforcing the robustness of these loadings.

2. *Brand Image*

Indicators: J, K, L, M, N, O.

Indicators L (0.901) and M (0.896) have the high factor loadings, suggesting they are the representative measures of brand image. Further, the low p-values (all < 0.001) across these indicators indicate high statistical significance. However, Indicators J (0.412) and K (0.484) only show moderate but significant loadings (p-values of 0.010 and 0.002, respectively), meaning they are relevant to the factor but not as strong as the other indicators. Nevertheless, all indicators are statistically significant, supporting that Brand Image is a well-defined construct in this model.

3. Customer Loyalty

Indicators: P, Q, R, S.

Indicators P through S all have high loadings (0.652 to 0.942) with p-values < 0.001 , indicating they are reliable and significant measures of Customer Loyalty. In addition, Z-values for all indicators are relatively high (e.g., Q at 6.51 and R 6.36), suggesting a strong association with the factor.

4. Purchase Intention

Indicators: T, U, V, W.

Indicator T has the highest factor loading (1.139), with a significant p-value (< 0.001), indicating a strong association with Purchase Intention. All indicators show statistically significant loadings, suggesting that each is a reliable measure of Purchase Intention.

Overall, the Confirmative Factor Analysis results indicate that most indicators are statistically significant and strongly associated with their respective factors. The key findings are that the constructs of Perceived CSR, Brand Image, Customer Loyalty, and Purchase Intention are supported by strong factor loadings, with significant indicators contributing meaningfully to each factor. However, indicator A, under Perceived CSR, may not be a reliable indicator due to its low loading and lack of statistical significance. For a more extensive study it might be required to revise or remove this indicator to improve the model fit.

Nevertheless, these results provide support for the model's hypothesized factor structure, with each factor demonstrating strong internal consistency and clear, statistically significant relationships with its indicators.

Discussion – Factor Estimates

The second table presents factor covariances between the dimensions (Perceived CSR, Brand Image, Customer Loyalty, and Purchase Intention). These covariances measure the extent to which pairs of factors are related to one another.

Perceived CSR and Brand Image:

The covariance estimate between Perceived CSR and Brand Image is 0.1793 with a p-value of 0.299, indicating that the relationship between these two factors is not statistically significant.

The confidence interval (-0.1591 to 0.518) includes zero, further reinforcing that there is no strong evidence of a relationship.

Perceived CSR and Customer Loyalty

The covariance between Perceived CSR and Customer Loyalty is 0.3548 , with a p-value of 0.034 . This result is statistically significant at the 0.05 level, suggesting a positive relationship. The confidence interval (0.0264 to 0.683) does not include zero, indicating that higher perceptions of CSR may be associated with greater Customer Loyalty.

Perceived CSR and Purchase Intention

The covariance estimate between Perceived CSR and Purchase Intention is very low (0.0349) with a p-value of 0.850 , suggesting no statistically significant relationship. The confidence interval (-0.3265 to 0.396) includes zero, so there is insufficient evidence to claim a relationship.

Brand Image and Customer Loyalty

The covariance between Brand Image and Customer Loyalty is 0.6917 , with a highly significant p-value (< 0.001). This positive and significant relationship (confidence interval: 0.4900 to 0.893) suggests that a strong Brand Image is associated with higher Customer Loyalty.

Brand Image and Purchase Intention:

The covariance between Brand Image and Purchase Intention is 0.4739 , also statistically significant ($p = 0.001$), indicating a positive association. The confidence interval (0.1885 to 0.759) confirms this relationship, suggesting that a better Brand Image is linked with higher Purchase Intention.

Customer Loyalty and Purchase Intention

The relationship between Customer Loyalty and Purchase Intention has an estimate of 0.6188 , which is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). The confidence interval (0.3678 to 0.870) does not include zero, supporting a meaningful positive association between these two factors. This suggests that higher Customer Loyalty may be associated with greater Purchase Intention.

Overall Relationships

There is a strong, statistically significant positive covariance between Brand Image and Customer Loyalty, as well as between Brand Image and Purchase Intention. Customer Loyalty and Purchase Intention also share a significant positive relationship. Perceived CSR is positively related to Customer Loyalty, though the relationship is weaker than other significant associations. However, Perceived CSR does not have a significant relationship with Brand Image or Purchase Intention, as indicated by the high p-values and confidence intervals that include zero.

Conclusions - Hypothesis Evaluation

Null Hypothesis (H₀): CSR activities do not significantly impact consumer purchase decisions.

Support for H₀: The data predominantly supports H₀, as there is no significant direct relationship between CSR activities and consumer purchase decisions.

In the first table of factor loadings for the Perceived CSR construct, the indicator Purchase Intention had a covariance estimate of 0.0349 with a p-value of 0.850, indicating no statistically significant relationship between perceived CSR and purchase intention. This result supports the null hypothesis, as it suggests that the perceived CSR activities do not significantly influence consumers' purchase decisions. The confidence interval for this relationship also includes zero (−0.3265 to 0.396), which further implies that there is insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis.

2. Alternative Hypothesis (H₁): CSR activities have a significant positive impact on consumer purchase decisions.

Weak Support for H₁: While there is some evidence that CSR influences customer loyalty, which could, in turn, affect purchase decisions, the direct relationship between perceived CSR and purchase intention is not statistically significant. This limits the support for H₁.

The results for the Perceived CSR factor suggest no significant impact on purchase intention, the relationship between Perceived CSR and Customer Loyalty is statistically significant ($p = 0.034$). This indicates that consumers who perceive a company as engaging in CSR activities are more likely to exhibit higher customer loyalty, which can influence their purchasing behaviour indirectly. However, the lack of a direct significant relationship between Perceived

CSR and Purchase Intention challenges the hypothesis. The connection is weak, as evidenced by the low covariance estimate and high p-value for Purchase Intention in relation to CSR.

Implications

Companies may need to consider that while CSR can enhance customer loyalty, merely engaging in CSR activities may not directly drive consumer purchase decisions. It suggests the importance of integrating CSR into broader marketing and brand strategies that highlight these efforts to cultivate consumer preferences effectively. Future studies could explore mediating variables or additional pathways through which CSR might impact purchase intention, such as brand image or other consumer perceptions, to better understand the dynamics at play. These results indicate that enhancing Brand Image may lead to increases in both Customer Loyalty and Purchase Intention. Additionally, Customer Loyalty appears to be directly related to Purchase Intention. However, Perceived CSR does not show a consistent influence on Purchase Intention, suggesting that perceptions of CSR might play a less central role in driving purchase behaviour within this sample.

Limitations

The main limitations of this study are the small sample size, and that the questionnaire has been developed by simplifying an existing questionnaire and not developing an own one for the specific purpose. Further, the research project had to be completed within 6 weeks, which is a restrictive timeframe for a quantitative project that includes the collection of questionnaires. It makes it difficult to collect more questionnaires than the 35 obtained. In addition, the age and gender of the participants have not been recorded due to the small sample size and intention to guarantee anonymity for the participants when completing the questionnaire.

The small sample size also causes limitations regarding the Confirmatory Factor Analysis. Usually, the sample size for this kind of analysis should at least consist of 200-300 participants. With only valid 34 participants, it is harder to detect the true relationships, because important factors might be missed. In general, the parameter estimates have the tendency to be more unreliable and cannot be easily generalized, if the sample size is small. In addition, a higher standard error can cause that the estimates are less precise. Moreover, the model fit might not

be correctly reflected, and therefore model quality might be overstated. The model may fit specific sample characteristics, but not the general patterns.

For my future research I will consider a longer timeframe, a more comprehensive questionnaire, a higher sample size to be able to use more complex statistical models in a more reliable manner. Further, I would like to enhance the international scope of my survey to obtain a better and more generalisable result.

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