Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and consumer purchase intention in the UK fashion industry

Thu Kywe Khant Soe
University of Bolton, UK

Palto Datta
Regent College London, UK

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Abstract

As consumers become more aware of their purchasing decisions' social and environmental impacts, fashion businesses in the UK increasingly turn to corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategies to gain a competitive advantage. However, there is a dearth of research on which CSR areas are most attractive to UK fashion customers and how these practices influence their buying decisions. This paper addresses this gap by examining the influence of CSR on consumer purchase intention in the UK fashion industry. Using a positivist lens, the study employs a quantitative method to investigate the leading CSR dimensions that affect purchase decisions and assess the strength of these effects. A deductive approach is used to test established hypotheses based on data collected from a sample of UK fashion consumers.

Corresponding author: Thu Kywe Khant Soe
Email addresses for the corresponding author: thu.he23806@student.rcl.ac.uk
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Introduction and background

The research aims to identify the key CSR dimensions for UK fashion consumers and measure how these practices influence their purchasing behaviour. The findings provide actionable recommendations for fashion businesses on effectively leveraging CSR to cultivate stronger customer relationships and boost sales. This study contributes to the marketing and fashion literature by offering valuable insights for companies seeking to refine their CSR strategies to attract environmentally and socially conscious customers. Future research should explore the factors that shape consumer perspectives and utilize a broader research approach to identify potential biases and other driving forces. By addressing this knowledge gap, the research can pave the way for a more sustainable and ethical future for the UK fashion industry.

Consumers are beginning to realise how their purchase decisions have social and environmental impacts. This change of consciousness has resulted in a demand for brands that promote social responsibility alongside profit. The UK fashion industry, which is one of the biggest and most difficult in-terms of world's industries is not different from this fact. To survive in this competitive market, fashion brands must find ways of establishing their uniqueness and maintain the trust of consumers. The goal can be achieved using Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as a strategic solution.

CSR is a complex concept that includes various practices such as ethical sourcing, sustainable production and consumption processes, fair labour standards delivered along the value chains involved in products or services development and performance of community engagement activities. Through the inclusion of these values into its core processes, fashion brands will be able to attract positive brand image and capture consumer's attention who value social responsibility. The positive effects created by CSR initiatives on brand perception, customer loyalty and sales have been substantiated multiple times (DaSilva et al, 2023).

While the effectiveness of CSR campaigns is not general, there can be certain activities found to work in a particular country. There are different consumer segments that have their own priorities which respond differently to CSR activities. Activities related to social and environmental aspects of the concept seem to outperform others in terms of influencing intentions or purchasing behaviour. For instance, people will be purchasing from brands focused on sustainability or with a social cause they relate to.

Although profitability is still an important issue for business, in the long term their sustainability depends on more than just profits. An implication for corporations is that they are required to be accountable not only toward its shareholders but also toward the society at large and nature. The implementation of ethical and sustainable mechanisms to all parts of the business statement, from material acquisition to waste management shows dedication towards social responsibilities by building credibility with conscious conscientious consumers who favour socially responsible environmentally friendly brands.

Literature review

The Origins and Evolution of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): Models and Concepts

Social responsibility of business begins with roots in old-fashioned philanthropy and concern about employees' wellbeing (Mızrak, 2024). Nevertheless, a coherent conceptualisation of corporate social responsibility (CSR) began to appear around the mid-twentieth century (García-Rivas et al., 2023). As social responsibilities are inherent in businesses, profit maximisation cannot be done at the expense of society by Howard Bowen (1953) in his article "Social Responsibilities of the Businessman." The first and foremost significant notion which was the foundation of the following research and discussion about the character of these duties was the implementation of the same (Boadi et al., 2018).

The development of CSR occurred by its transition from an unfair and slightly neglected field to an integrated part of business strategy. No longer an issue that lay in the marginal peripheries, CSR was rather being incorporated into the very fabric of business models (Siltaloppi, Rajala and Hietala, 2020). The CSV (Creating Shared Value) idea suggests that businesses can assist in solving social problems and overcome challenges while at the same time being financially successful. This strategy, originally proposed by Porter and Kramer in 2011, implies that social value creation can be part of businesses strategic integration. Effective social value creation comes as a twofold act of benefits – society and the business itself. While others viewed a trade-off between profits or social impact, CSV showed that businesses can come up with strategies which solve social problems and are also competitive. It was such a vision that viewed CSR as a potent force for and revenue generation in business (Royo-Vela and Lizama, 2022).

Theories of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Clear understanding of the theoretical bases under CSR provides both scholars and practitioners with a foundation to manoeuvre through this intricate arena. Four leading CRS theories are reviewed within this analysis to explore their nuances and areas of sustained significance.

Stakeholder Theory: A theory that is championed by Freeman (1984) puts corporations in the centre as organizations related to all kinds of stakeholders among them employees, customers, communities, and nature. Business success is achieved through balancing stakeholder interests. Its power is in reinforcing reciprocity and co-creation of values (Freeman, Dmytriyev and Phillips, 2021). However, difficulties become noted in selecting and assigning of priorities to stakeholders' interests especially when conflicts ensue (Amis et al., 2020).

Carroll's Pyramid (1991): Carroll developed this framework, which groups CSR into four concentric layers of economic responsibility, legal responsibilities moral or ethical responsiveness and philanthropic obligations. The centre strives to make profit, the outer layers require compliance with legislation, moral conduct, and voluntary contribution of society (Lu et al., 2020). Thus, the strength of a model lies in its simplicity and completeness allowing to draw CSR engagement roadmap (Silva Junior et al., 2023). Yet critics object that its pyramidal design favours economic interests and, therefore, puts social issues or those of the environment to one side (Junior et al., 2022).

Integrative CSR Theory: This theory is proposed by Elkington (2010), and it refers to the expansion of traditional financial accounting that includes social and environmental performance in addition to

economic indicators. This universal aspect encourages companies to incorporate sustainability components into core business strategies (Velte, 2021). However, the strength of triple bottom line is based on its emphasis on connectedness and sustainability over time (Khan, Ahmad and Majava., 2021). Nevertheless, the construction of reliable indices for social and environmental effects together with functional goals is complicated process (Shahzad et al., 2020).

Political CSR Theory: This theory was put forward by Scherer and Palazzo in 2007; they see corporations as global agents that should help solve worldwide challenges like climate change or human rights violations. This widens the application of CSR to go beyond local issues by impacting on political matters incorporated in global corporate governance (Rhodes and Fleming, 2020). The strength of the theory is in its ability to identify societal and political environment that shows where a corporation deals with (Borges and Ramalho, 2022). Nevertheless, it is controversial (Lu and Wang, 2021) to discuss the scale of corporate influence and global governance responsibility.

Review on Consumer Behaviour

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: This theory, which is a classic one, is a basis of developing a product-targeting model that is built on the principles of consumer's need hierarchy (Maslow, 2020).

Theory of Reasoned Action: Highlights the integration of thoughts and social atmosphere influences in forming the purchase desire. In such manner, marketers also meld the attitudes of consumers similarly to achieving the desired result (Wu and Yang, 2018).

Cognitive Dissonance Theory: The strategies can be developed that are centred on solving the problems associated with post-purchase uncertainties and conducting efforts to further emphasize the salient benefits of the product (Cerbaro, Pereira and Cruz, 2018). The theory states that consumers develop doubts because of the conflict between the beliefs they already have and the new ones they adopt.

Elaboration Likelihood Model: Recognize that consumers can think through cognition or emotion and adapt marketing messages in relation to that (high involvement markers are used in this case – they provide comprehensive information about the product, with the low involvement markers – they highlight peripheral information) (Pluta-Olearnik and Szulga, 2022).

Endowment Effect: Consumers are always going to assign more value to items of material goods compared to their sentimental value (Lubensky and Schmidbauer, 2020). Using a strategy of free trials, which draw potential consumers to establish ties, is another factor that makes these products sell quite well.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and its dimensions & consequences

CSR, when implemented well, yields enormous benefits to the community and respective businesses (Koi-Akrofi, 2023). CSR activities attract deposits and customers, ultimately bringing back profits and returns to businesses (Matare and Sreedhara., 2020). CSR is generally defined as the adoption of socially responsible and environmentally sound behaviour by enterprises towards its key interested parties (UNIDO, 2023). In UK's ethical clothing sector, brand image acts as a mediator between CSR and consumers' buying purpose, more influence being on the high social-conscious buyers compared to low social-conscious customers (Lee and Lee, 2018).

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a business model, that is based on the self-regulation of companies and considering their accountability to the stakeholders and the society in general (Silva and Coutinho, 2023). It includes multiple areas such as economic development, environmental protection, role of consumers, charity, and operation of the legal and ethical system (Sidhoum and Serra, 2018).

Economic duty which involves the provision of goods and services, legal duty exceeding statutory responsibilities, ethics duty that extends beyond legal responsibility and societal duty, among others which fulfil societal duties (Lee, Kim and Roh, 2019). Although making profits is a priority for companies and it helps in strengthening the economies of their communities, CSR influences a business to see to economic well-being of their communities (Rela et al., 2020). The source of creating employment, having fair salaries, and supporting local businesses is involved in this (Dyakiv, 2019). CSR involves the implementation of sustainable business practices such as green industrial technologies, waste management, and use of resources (Suganthi, 2019). In addition, it also incorporates the environment and conservation of natural resources in the decision-making processes (Kraus, Rehman and García, 2020).

Customers will be treated ethically, their rights will be respected, and they will be provided with good quality and safe products which are considered as the basic components of CSR (Luu, 2019). Fair trade practices, product standards for safety, and audit advertising show which a business is dedicated to consumers' interest (Zerbini, Vergura and Latusi, 2019). Such commitment to responsible consumer conduct is to be acknowledged as a mechanism of customer behaviour with most consumers most likely to choose socially responsible businesses (Dang, Nguyen and Pervan, 2020).

Today, many companies render corporate philanthropy in various ways, including but not limited to charitable donations and community project funding (Peterson, Landuyt & Pham, 2021). These initiatives are not only good for society but also contribute towards building company's reputation and brand image as well (Peterson, 2018). Businesses not only comply with laws and rules but are also obliged to carry out ethical and moral business activities (Brennan et al., 2021). It involves observing human rights, eliminating corruption, and maintaining decent workers' rights (Schrempf-Stirling, Buren & Wettstein, 2022).

In addition, corporate social responsibility goes beyond the economic core mission of a company that includes its social, environmental, and ethical impact. An efficient execution of social responsibility strategies may play a key role in long-term development of a company, produce a positive image and result in economic value for both business and society (Cook et al., 2019). Customer's perception of CSR depends on the customer's association with CSR and their assessment of business practices. The subjective perception of CSR is constructed by consumers based on available information and they can distinguish between a company's obligations towards economic, moral, charitable, and legal responsibilities (Yu,Wang and Xin., 2021).

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Brand Trust

The notion of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has gradually proven to be an integral part of modern business strategies. Companies conduct CSR for the various purposes present and recording their companies as one that is ethical, environment friendly and caring to members of the community. CSR endeavours can increase companies' reputation and form bonds between customers and brands that, in the long run, leads to an image of these companies as strategically important. Undeniably though, there is a need to apply a critical eye and understand the existing complex nature associated which brand trust is related to CSR. To gain trust, companies should show their real dedications to their missions by instilling consistent CSR in their value systems and operational works. General and symbolic CSR could hamper the process of building up the consumer confidence and further a brand's reputation instead of serving the purpose of strengthening it.

In addition, the exact nature of what CSR efforts aim at will of necessity influence its effect on brand trust to that extent. The studies say that CSR efforts with products, brands and their core values connected to each other are apparently more persuasive to people (Kim et al., 2020). The business world needs to choose appropriate social causes to show responsiveness, but at the same time, these should reinforce the brand promise and market a desired audience. Even the consumers scepticism level remains high, especially when we speak about ethical problems of such kind of industries. CSR of the company is like the long-term process in which it is to be demonstrated consistently through transparent communication and action to make trust finally. Further, the impact of CSR on brand trust is dependent rather than fixed, on culture and markets. Through globalisation of the market, the companies which maintain their presence internationally must be considered in local cultural nuances and adapt their CSR initiatives towards the consensus of values and expectations shared by the local or domestic audiences (Rodrigues and Kurnaz, 2023).

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Competitive Advantage

The significance of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the contemporary business perspectives is being frequently emphasised (Wołowiec, Marczuk and Wiśniewska, 2023). More and more research outputs point out to the fact that CSR can be used for purposes such as gaining a competitive advantage (Rodriguez-Gomez et al., 2020). Corresponding to the resource-based view (RBV), various mechanisms can be used by CSR for acquiring competitive advantage. It will be through reducing risks, increasing operational efficiency and reputation, the firm would get market competitive advantage (D'Oria et al.,

2021). Menghwar and Daood (2021) stress the fact that CSR must be aligned with the firm's strategy to create "shared value" that could result in the return for both society and the business organization.

On the other hand, making CSR a competitive advantage is not a simple thing, but chances are that CSR will become an important factor of competitive advantage. When CSR campaigns are not realigned or properly implemented, it is likely that the resources would be exhausted and may interfere with the competitiveness level (Sheikh, 2019). Therefore, organizational CSR that tightly focuses on the company's long-term business aims is a key to success. Lastly, CSR can create opportunities for competitive advantage, but this can only be tangible if the strategic alignment and execution is done appropriately. Going deeper in the understanding of the CSR mechanisms through which this competitive advantage occurs, specifically considering different industry sectors, may be one of the key factors explaining this complex relation.

Perceived Corporate Social Responsibility (PCSR) and Consumer Purchase Intention

Applying PCSR not only affects what a person purchases, but also what their opinion about a brand is. Favourable PCSR increases the brand attitude of consumers that makes it more possible for them to back the company. This bond is more significant among Generation Y. Young Millennial and Gen Z consumers, who are characterized by their individual social consciousness, may be more likely to promote brands whose CSR are in line with their values (Arachchi and Samarasinghe, 2023). Perhaps one of the most striking features of a business's social protection endeavours is their ability to go beyond cultural limits. When even ethnocentricity enters the picture (a bias to one's own culture), CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) can still make a positive impact on the brand. An ethical program and commitment of a company to a positive impact can lead to all over the world a connection with the consumers (Long et al., 2023). Despite the quality of the product and the design, the social responsibility is already an unavoidable factor in the marketplace. Customers want to connect with companies they trust (Parung, 2019) and CSR helps to create this feeling. With such behaviour business organizations, prove that they care for society and not merely for the profit.

In addition, morality is one of the basic supports of CSR which plays the main role in pushing consumers toward ethical purchase (Sharma et al., 2018). Consumers get attracted towards organisations they perceive to be ethical, just, and fair in their doing business. It therefore implies promoting a friendly environment for employees while being proactive in the environmental conservation and supporting social causes. Nowhere can you witness the significant effects of PCSR more clearly than in the mushrooming of green products. The preference influx for sustainability fashion is driven by compulsory social awareness and youth. Therefore, they purchase only those products from companies that employ environmentally friendly raw materials and minimize the carbon footprint (Abrar, Sibtain and Shabbir, 2021).

Conceptual Framework of literature review

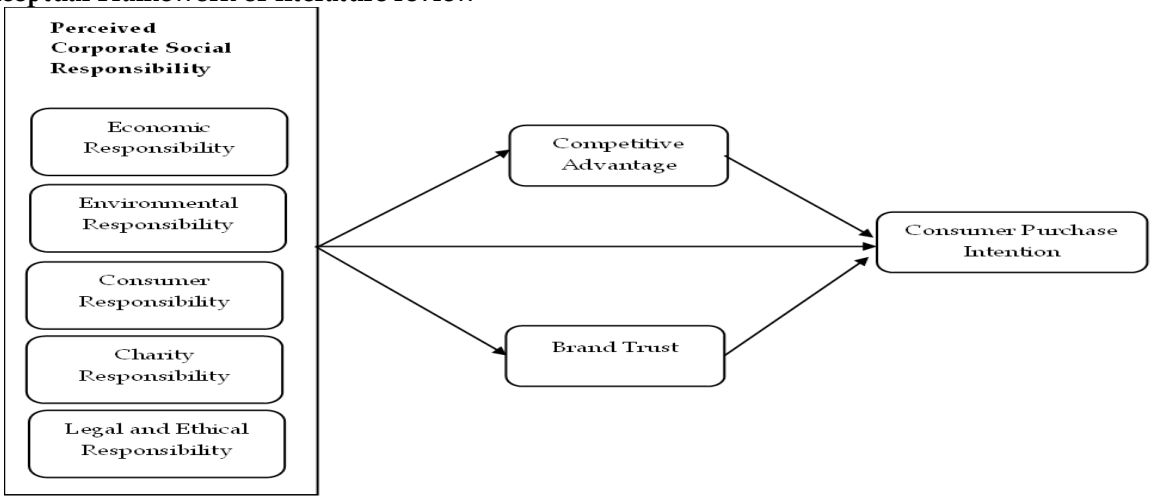


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework (adapted from Yu, Wang and Xin, 2021; Popa et al., 2022)

Starting with the proposed dimensions for CSRs such as economic responsibility, environmental responsibility, consumer responsibility, charity responsibility, and legal and ethical responsibility which are expected to impact on competitive advantage and brand trust, direct as well as indirectly. This study measures the impact of competitor's advantages as well as customer confidence towards the brands that they intend to acquire. Figure 1 shows a conceptual model of three hypothesis and how the variables are related to one another.

H1: Brand Trust mediates the relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility and Consumer Purchase Intention.

H2: Competitive Advantage mediates the relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility and Consumer Purchase Intention.

H3: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has a positive direct effect on Consumer Purchase Intention.

Research methodology

Using a positivist lens, the study employs a quantitative method to investigate the leading CSR dimensions that affect purchase decisions and assess the strength of these effects. A deductive approach is used to test established hypotheses based on data collected from a sample of UK fashion consumers. By using convenience random sampling method, 59 respondents are collected by using online Google forms to conduct survey and SPSS is applied for data analysis.

Results and findings

Profile of the Respondents

Table-1: Demographic Data of the Respondents

Sr. No	Item	Category	No. of Respondents	Percent
	Total		59	100.0
1	Gender	Male	28	47.5
		Female	31	52.5
2	Education	Undergraduate	5	8.5
		Graduate	16	27.1
		Master	37	62.7
		Doctorate	1	1.7
3	Occupation	Employed	31	52.5
		Self-employed	6	10.2
		Unemployed	2	3.4
		Student	20	33.9
4	Annual Income	Under £20,000	27	45.8
		£20,000 - £29,999	14	23.7
		£30,000 - £39,999	10	16.9
		£40,000 - £49,999	3	5.1
		£50,000 or more	5	8.5

Based on table-1 the sample comprises more of female respondents (52.5%) compared to male respondents (47.5%). Most of the respondents have a masters' degree (62.7%), and then followed by an undergraduate (27.1%). In terms of occupation, employed people are the largest group (52.5%) followed by students (33.9%). Most of respondents have an annual income of under £20,000 (45.8%) whereas second largest group earns between £20,000 – £29,999 (23.7%).

Analysis on Mediating Effect of Brand Trust on the Relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Consumer Purchase Intention

In this study, the variable (Brand Trust) has been considered as a mediator to the extent to which it carried the influence of independent variable (Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)) to dependent variable (Consumer Purchase Intention). Then, mediation analysis was performed to assess the mediating role of Brand Trust on the linkage between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Consumer Purchase Intention. Table-2 presents the regression analysis result.

Table-2: Mediating Effect of Brand Trust on the Relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Consumer Purchase Intention

Item	Direct Effect	Brand Trust	
		Indirect Effect	Total Effect
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	0.845	0.513	1.358

Table-2 shows the direct, indirect, and total effects of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Consumer Purchase Intention. In this Table, indirect effect through brand trust is calculated by multiplying contributing path coefficients. For example, the indirect effect of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Consumer Purchase Intention through Brand Trust (0.513) is obtained by multiplying the coefficient of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Brand Trust (0.708) with the coefficient of Brand Trust to Consumer Purchase Intention (0.724). The total effect (1.358) is the sum of the direct (0.845) and indirect effects (0.513). In Table (2), the total effect of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Consumer Purchase Intention through Brand Trust is greater than the direct effect of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Consumer Purchase Intention.

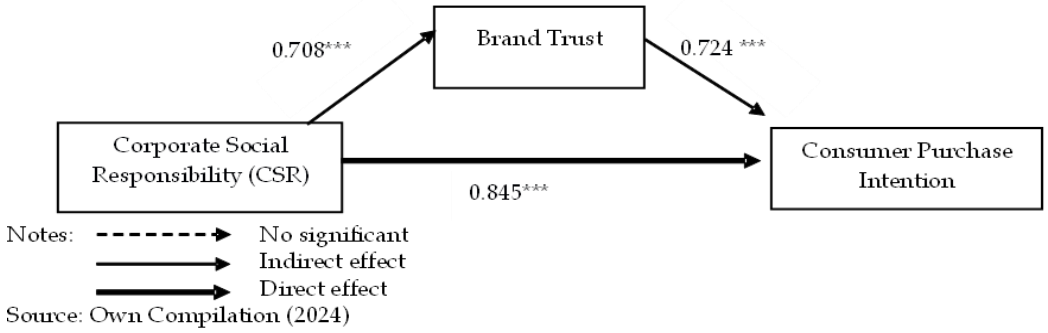


Figure 2: Mediating Effect of Brand Trust on the Relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Consumer Purchase Intention

According to the regression result as shown in Figure (2), there is a positive significant direct effect of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Consumer Purchase Intention. As indirect effect, there is a positive significant effect of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Brand Trust. In addition, there is a positive significant effect of Brand Trust on Consumer Purchase Intention. Thus, a partial mediation of Brand Trust is found on the relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Consumer Purchase Intention. According to the findings, if the firm can do more CSR practices, Consumer Purchase Intention will be improved. In addition, Consumer Purchase Intention can also be improved when Brand Trust is well practiced. However, businesses are required to achieve more CSR activities to achieve Brand Trust.

Analysis on Mediating Effect of Competitive Advantage on the Relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Consumer Purchase Intention

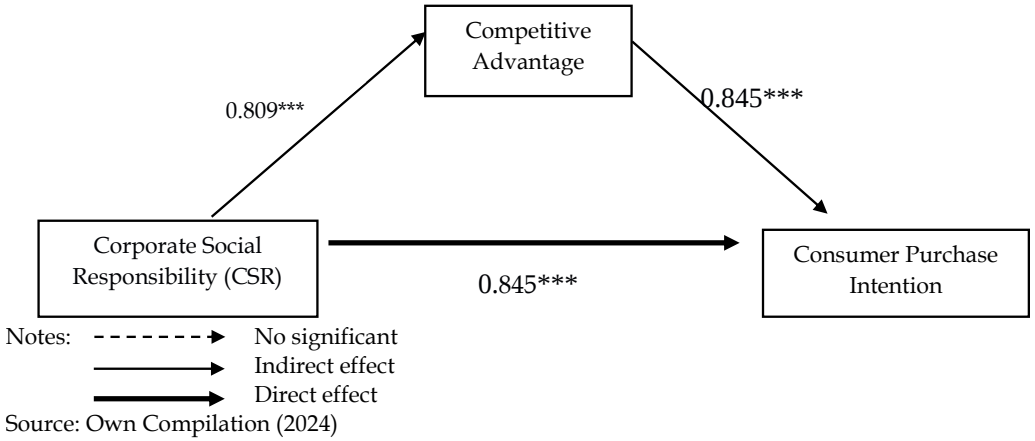
In this study, the variable (Competitive Advantage) has been considered as a mediator to the extent to which it carried the influence of independent variable (Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)) to dependent variable (Consumer Purchase Intention). Then, mediation analysis was performed to assess the mediating role of Competitive Advantage on the linkage between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Consumer Purchase Intention. Table (3) and Figure (3) presents the regression analysis result.

Table-3: Mediating Effect of Competitive Advantage on the Relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Consumer Purchase Intention

Item	Direct Effect	Competitive Advantage	
		Indirect Effect	Total Effect
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	0.845	0.684	1.529

Table (3) shows the direct, indirect, and total effects of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Consumer Purchase Intention. In this Table, indirect effect through Competitive Advantage is calculated by multiplying contributing path coefficients. For example, the indirect effect of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Consumer Purchase Intention through Competitive Advantage (0.684) is obtained by multiplying the coefficient of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Competitive Advantage (0.809) with the coefficient of Competitive Advantage to Consumer Purchase Intention (0.845). The total effect (1.529) is the sum of the direct (0.845) and indirect effects (0.684). In Table (3), the total effect of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Consumer Purchase Intention through Competitive Advantage is greater than the direct effect of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Consumer Purchase Intention.

Figure 3: Mediating Effect of Competitive Advantage on the Relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Consumer Purchase Intention



Source: Own Compilation (2024)

According to the regression result as shown in Figure (3), there is a positive significant direct effect of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Consumer Purchase Intention. As indirect effect, there is a positive significant effect of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Competitive Advantage. In addition, there is a positive significant effect of Competitive Advantage on Consumer Purchase Intention. Thus, a partial mediation of Competitive Advantage is found on the relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Consumer Purchase Intention. According to the findings, if the firm can do more CSR practices, Consumer Purchase Intention will be improved. In addition, Consumer Purchase Intention can also be improved when Competitive Advantage is gained. However, businesses are required to achieve more CSR activities to achieve Competitive Advantage as consumers are aware of Corporate Social Responsibility of firms.

Effect of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Consumer Purchase Intention

Table-4: Effect of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Consumer Purchase Intention

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig
	B	Std Error			
(Constant)	.871	.267		3.257	.002
Economic Responsibility	.022	.100	.028	.215	.831
Environmental Responsibility	.243**	.113	.305	2.157	.036
Consumer Responsibility	.199*	.107	.246	1.862	.068
Charity Responsibility	.130*	.077	.169	1.694	.096
Legal and Ethical Responsibility	.176	.114	.213	1.536	.130
R Square	.725				
Adjusted R Square	.699				
F Value	28.000***				

Source: Survey Data (2024)

*** Significant at 1% level, ** Significant at 5% level, * Significant at 10% level

According to Table (4), since the value of adjusted R square is 0.699, it can be concluded that this specified model can explain 69.9 % of variation of Consumer Purchase Intention which is predicted by Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). As overall significance of the model, F value is highly significant at 1 percent level, this model can be said valid.

Among five perceptions of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Environmental Responsibility, Consumer Responsibility and Charity Responsibility have positive significant effect on the Consumer Purchase Intention while Economic Responsibility and Legal and Ethical Responsibility do not have significant effect on Consumer Purchase Intention.

According to the standardized coefficient (Beta) score, Environmental Responsibility has the largest value among three significant explanatory variables. It means that Environmental Responsibility is the most effective factor for Consumer Purchase Intention. By means of introducing the Environmental Responsibility products before competitors, the firms can attract more consumer purchase intention.

Discussion

CSR and Purchase Intention

The findings of this study provide several insights into the role of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in influencing Consumer Purchase Intention. The model used in this study was able to explain 69.9% of the variation in Consumer Purchase Intention, which is a significant portion. This suggests that CSR is a major factor in shaping consumer behaviour.

The study found a positive direct effect of CSR on Consumer Purchase Intention. This implies that consumers are more likely to purchase from companies that engage in CSR practices. This finding aligns with previous research that have highlighted the growing importance of CSR in consumer decision-making processes. A sustainable approach to corporate social responsibility, coupled with effective communication by fashion companies, greatly influences consumers' demand for sustainable products, this trend is likely to continue post COVID-19 (Vătămănescu et al., 2021). CSR makes consumers keener to support this business strategy, get more involved, and then become more faithful to a brand (Deep, 2023).

The expanding body of research suggests a significant connection between a company's CSR initiatives and the purchasing decisions made by consumers. Studies have revealed that consumers are increasingly likely to support businesses that demonstrate a commitment to social and environmental causes (Buell and Kalkanci, 2019; Rodrigues and Borges, 2015). CSR acts as a differentiating factor, setting

socially responsible companies apart, and positively influencing brand perceptions. Moreover, CSR enhances a company's reputation, cultivates consumer trust, and aligns a brand with the values of its target audience (Kim, 2019).

Differentiated Impacts of CSR Dimensions on Consumer Purchase Intention

Among five perceptions, those of Environmental Responsibility, Consumer Responsibility, and Charity Responsibility were assessed that an increase in each of these factors was likely to significantly increase Consumer Purchase Intention. It confirms that those components of CSR which connect with them closely are highly appealing to consumers. In contrast, Economic and Legal and Ethical Responsibility just do not have any meaningful effects on Consumer Purchase Intention. This could be a research area where the reasons behind this influence of CSR are investigated.

It is very essential to realize that all the dimensions under CSR are not considered the same by all the customers. The fact that environmental consciousness, avoiding consumer harm, and charitable activities seem to impact customers' buying decisions more than other responsibilities (economic and legal/ethical) has been proven by research (Rodrigues and Borges, 2015; Kautish, Paul and Sharma, 2019). Consumers demand businesses that do not only say they care but also show their passion through their policies, customer treatment, and commitments to the society. The in-depth study of individual consumer preferences flanking on committal to CSR strategies is highly important for the companies as well.

Finally, the study revealed that Environmental Responsibility is the most powerful factor under the influence of Consumer Purchase Intention. This discloses how consumers attach one of the highest values for environment conservation that lead in having a greater possibility of green companies that have the environmentally friendly products to increase the consumers purchase intention.

Mediation Roles

The findings further suggested the presence of a positive significant effect of CSR on Brand Trust, and a positive significant effect of Brand Trust on Consumer Purchase Intention. This shows that the Brand Trust ends up partially acting as a moderator to the relationship between CSR and Consumer Buying Intention. This evidence indicates the necessity of consumer trust, which CSR might facilitate by building trust. CSR activities drive positive purchase intentions among customers through the enhancement of brand image and trust, as customer awareness acts as a moderator. The positive role of corporate social responsibility in influencing consumers' tendency to remain loyal and to keep buying green products is at stake, and this is attributed to trust that consumers have in products (Zhang et al., 2019) which could be the bridge between their intentions and actual purchases. The corporate social responsibility (CSR) perception has sales effect and corporate reputation with brand image, customer satisfaction and brand loyalty as a mediation role (Bianchi, Bruno and Sarabia-Sánchez, 2019).

Among the interesting findings of the study is that Consumer Purchase Intention partially responds to mediation effect of the CSR on Competitive Advantage. This implies that the activities of CSR through the avenue of directly engaging with consumers, they also indirectly benefit the organisation in the market when it locates at a competitive place. The fact that CSR has been proven to contribute to the success of a business in the current competitive landscape brings this to its strategic value. CSR is beneficial from the performance viewpoint for the companies because through this way they get increased reputation, competitive advantage and customer satisfaction in Iranian manufacturing and consumer product firms (Saeedi et al., 2015).

Conclusion

This research provides evidence on influence of CSR on Consumer Purchase Intention. A study shows that more and more consumers are becoming increasingly attracted to the brands of companies that have good ethical behaviour and social responsibilities. The three most powerful CSR dimensions that appeared are Environmental Responsibility, Consumer Responsibility, and Charity Responsibility which in turn have a positive effect on consumer sentiment. Though Brand Trust is narrowed down as an important mediator, the implication that a strong CSR could positively affect purchase decision through consumer trust and loyalty are sufficient to be addressed. Competitive advantage has also been proved to

be indirectly influenced by CSR activities; therefore, CSR activities are multidimensional resources for the businesses. Additionally, this strengthens the importance of organizations practicing responsible business practices.

Recommendations

The consideration of the findings of this research confirms that the corporate social responsibility (CSR) can significantly influence the attitudes of the consumers toward fashion and apparel items. More and more consumers start buying from companies who share the same values as them and they look out for the brand which advocates the environment, consumer protection and charities.

To achieve excellent CSR outcomes, a combine tight strategic picture that has the main sections stipulated should be a priority. These are the initiatives that not only make the company's good name, but it also provides the company a strong bond with the consumers that give sense of belonging and trust.

Putting value on transparency of giving discourse on CSR commitments and actions for public is a pivotal role. This would be most suitable through channels, such as the web, social media, and product packing, as it is a means communication. The adopted ethical practices by such companies ensure to get high level of consumer's trust and consequently people usually go for brands that has become trustworthy.

The study is conclusive when it says that the partial responsible of brand trust is as a mediator that driving the connection between CSR and consumer buying intention. Organizations should redirect much of their funding into programs that are centred at preserving the safety and health of consumers. This will evidently indicate that consumer purchasing decisions are indeed influenced positively by CSR and they have no doubt whether to buy into such brands in the future.

Further, CSR must be adopted and employed in a right way to differ from other competitions. To highlight responsible actions and sustainable global mining plan they stand ahead of others in terms of competitiveness. Ethicality plays a significant role in their image not only among the existing consumers but also the last reason why customers choose or not eco-friendly brands.

Through this analysis, the use of relevant data informs on what consumers choose and how CSR are considered in fashion industry purchases today. However, the finding must be context-dependent, and it is also subject to other limitations; therefore, further studies are needed to validate and extend these results. Sustainable-oriented practices could be integrated by intricate fashions with CSR activities and that can give a company an edge among competitors, develop consumers' trust and stimulate sustainability within the industry and in the wider society.

Limitations and Implications for future research

This research project reveals some important facts about CSR and its impact on consumer buying, particularly within the fashion industry. Nevertheless, there are certain limitations when even the results are explained. The number of respondents instigates the risk that the result sample could not be diversified enough to provide a complete spectrum of consumer views. Furthermore, there is the possibility that CSR reputation changes in time and thus an instantaneous survey could not be the final image of long-term trends. The findings of this study may be influenced by the setting they take place in, so the context must be observed in other settings too. As a result of that, pointed literature reviews will discover what part of the field is undone. Future research should focus on these limitations by considering utilization of bigger and more diverse samples, identifying through longitudinal studies, exploring different contexts and arrangements, and reading literature, which can be used for targeted literature reviews. This will consequently produce a more thorough and well-informed structure on the multi-layered relationship between CSR, consumer behaviour and rapidly changing fashion industry.

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