

## REVIEW ON CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ITS INFLUENCE ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Ass. Prof. Dr. Soth Vanthoch<sup>1</sup>, Pov Panuth<sup>2</sup>, Vann Sophealay<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor of the University of Management and Economics

<sup>2</sup>Dean of Faculty of Management and Tourism

<sup>3</sup>Faculty member at the University of Management and Economics

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### ABSTRACT

The following paper provides a brief review of the intervention of buyers' behavior through CSR taking into account the cultural economical and social factors influencing consumers. Therefore, the study proves that there are an influence of consumers' cultural attitude on CSR communication and society types affecting CSR with totalistic societies inclining more towards community influencing CSR and possessive societies towards environmental CSR. The levels of economic development themselves have also influenced what consumers expect in the ways of full CSR programs, while developed economies bear witness to growing concern for extended types of CSR, including those going beyond the immediate social impact, developing countries are satisfied with only social responsibilities of the firms. Also, an increase in consumer awareness and consumer education plays a crucial central role in the effectiveness of the CSR programs since the consumers are in a better position when they are knowledgeable about the CSR. Institutional trust and norms are also significant in determining the extent of consumers' reaction towards csr. At the same time, the paper describes how different forms of CSR actions, such as environmental management, charitable work, and responsible staff treatment, affect consumer behavior. Finally, this review highlights the need for firms to implement culture-sensitive and contextually appropriate CSR initiatives in order to build extended consumer relationships in markets globally.

**Keywords:** CSRs, Customer Behaviour, Cultural Anthropology/Valor, Economic Growth, Credibility, Customer Sensitisation, Charity, Environmental Conservation, Ethical Business Practice, Consumer Commitment.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

CSR has therefore cropped up as an important factor in the management of many organizations in the present day business society, as organizations wake from their slumber to realize that they have a definite corporate social responsibility to society and the environment. This move is no longer just as a result of regulation but due to the new market demands ahead of the regulating authorities. In today's environment consumers are becoming sensitive to the social and environment, issues and will buy goods and services from companies that are socially responsible. In this regard, this introduction discusses the interaction between CSR and consumer behaviors and the moderators as major themes with an emphasis on the implications for the current business entity desiring to elevate its market standing.

The current literature shows that CSR has positive impacts on consumers' behavioral intentions where the data shows a positive relationship between CSR initiatives and consumers' intentions to interact with brands [16]. For instance, a meta-analysis indicated that CSR drives consumer's behavioral intent astronomically, implied that organizations that invest in social responsible programs are likely to have better customer relations [16]. Moreover, different perception of a company's CSR activities can build the firm's credibility and trustworthiness which are indispensably important for forming consumer buying attitudes and intentions [3]. This goes to support the understanding and need to communicate CSR initiatives to the consumers, since consumer perception and knowledge of these CSR programs plays a major role in consumer behavior. Furthermore, consumers' perceived willingness to pay a premium for products linked to good CSR practices has been evidenced in different research. Consumers are now ready to give their money to those brands they can identify with, especially concerning ethical stands in today's world [40]. This trend is more evident where the junior consumer who seems more concerned with the aspect of CSR in products [43]. However, one has to make a clear understanding that CSR's positive impact on the consumer loyalty and purchase intentions are not the only determinants in consumers' decision making process, where price, product quality remains the most influential factors taking into account the research done by [18]. This fact points to the fact that while CSR can be a competitive advantage, it needs to be aligned with a larger value proposition consumers expect to see.

Hence, the effect of CSR on consumer behavior is actually conditioned by such factors as culture and individual ethical sensitivity [21]. For instance, they explained that if consumers from some particular areas are religious, then the CSR campaigns may impact them differently [5]. Further, the findings have shown that there could be a reason to explain why CSR could elicit consumer response effectively; with different CSR activities attracting different response levels among consumers; and with some types of CSR activities being more influential among consumers as compared to

others [31]. This paper affirms that due to this dynamics, there is a need to fully grasp the nature and significance of how different dimensions of CSR strategies can be adapted to reflect the heterogeneity of the consumers across the markets. In conclusion, the major evidence suggests that CSR and consumers behave in a mutually complex psychological social and contextual manner. Thus, when any business faces this reality, it should ensure that CSR is not simply an instrument for positively altering the organizational image but a solid factor that can help to attract customers' attention and generate their interest. More research can be conducted in the future depicting a sort of fluctuating relationship because there are constantly changing expectations of the consumer and the rising significance of ethical consumerism.

## 2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The primary aim of this systematic review is to investigate the influence of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on consumer behavior, focusing on the following specific objectives:

- To Examine the Relationship Between CSR and Consumer Purchase Intentions: This objective aims at understanding the effect of different CSR dimensions in consumers' buying behavior or their decision and inclination to do business with firms that are socially responsible. Understanding this relationship will give the knowledge on the impact CSR strategies have towards influencing the consumers [10],[25].
- To Identify Moderating Factors Affecting CSR's Influence on Consumer Behavior: This objective also seeks to understand external variables that interact with CSR which include ethical consumerism, cross cultural consumers and buyers' ethical disposition [21],[19].
- To Assess the Impact of CSR Communication on Consumer Perceptions and Brand Loyalty: This objective is centered on the impact of the communication of CSR initiative on consumers' perception of brands and consequent brand loyalty. It will examine the part played by transparency and genuineness in CSR communication [46],[38].
- To Analyze the Types of CSR Activities That Most Effectively Influence Consumer Behavior: This aim aims at differentiating between multiple CSR initiatives (Such as environment, communities, ethical job policies) and how the effects differ on consumer perceptions and behaviors [17],[13].
- To Explore Cross-National Differences in Consumer Responses to CSR: To achieve this objective the following research questions have been proposed: This objective seeks to establish the variation in consumers' responses to CSR activities cross culturally, and nationally and thus assess the global efficacy of CSR [47].

## 3. MODELING AND ANALYSIS

To systematically review the literature on CSR and its influence on consumer behavior, the following structured search strategy will be employed:

- Database Selection: To obtain most relevant literature, go to Google Scholar, JSTOR, Scopus, and Web of Science.
- Keyword Identification: Compile the list of words and phrases that will help to find the candidate. Keywords may include:

"Corporate social responsibility"

"Consumer Behavior"

"Purchase Intentions"

"Ethical Consumerism"

"CSR Communication"

"Brand Loyalty"

"Cross-National Comparison"

"CSR Activities"

- Boolean Operators: Employ use of Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT) so as to make specific searches. For example:

Searches: "Corporate Social Responsibility" AND "Consumer Behavior"

"CSR" AND "Purchase Intentions" AND "Ethical Consumerism"

Reading through the articles, the crucial topics were: CSR Activities & CSR Communication, Brand Loyalty.

- Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria: Formulate guidelines for identification of the studies:
  - Inclusion: Scientific journals and articles of empirical research, meta-analysis with focus on CSR and consumer behavior not earlier than 10 years.
  - Exclusion: All publications that are not journal articles or scientific papers, editorials, articles expressing the opinion of the author, articles which relate to consumer behaviour but are not primarily about it, or articles that are not from peer-reviewed academic journals.

- Data Extraction: When identifying the selected study, the following data must be firstly gathered:

Author Date

Stated and emerging goals and objectives of the study

Key findings and implications regarding cross sectional analysis between CSR and consumer behavior

- The influence of contextual factors and the moderating variables as determined

- Synthesis of Findings: Arrange the extracted data in themes to see patterns, research voids and can predetermine subjects for upcoming studies. This synthesis will help the author to present a systematic and elaborate review of the state of the art literature regarding the CSR impact on consumers' purchase behavior.

Thus, adhering to this approach of structured theme, the systematic review of the literature will present an evidence-based analysis of the CSR-Consumer Behaviour linkage that will be beneficial for theoretical principles and receptive for practical marketing and strategic corporate management applications.

## 4. FINDINGS

### 4.1 The link between CSR and Consumers' buying decisions

Many research bodies have explored the correlation between CSR and consumers' purchasing behavior which have yields essences findings as follows; These findings reveal the ways how CSR can improve consumer usage and customers loyalty, among the P&A Instant Foods'.

- a. Positive Correlation Between CSR and Purchase Intentions: According to Michaely & Womack, consumers product purchase intentions have been proven by many research studies to have a positive association with the amount of effort they put in studying a firm's CSR activities. For instance, the findings showed that consumers preferred to buy products from brands participating in CSR activities since these activities improve the brand image and consumer trust, [50],[28]. This is even more so when the type of products that they deal in are ones that involve ethical issues like the cosmetics and hospitality industries as pointed by [6],[27];
- b. Mediating Role of Brand Trust and Identification: Environmental effects on the purchase-intention relationship are frequently moderated by variables such as brand trust and identification with the brand. For instance, [27] established a realization that perceived CSR has a positive impact on customer loyalty regulated through trust and brand recognition in the hotel business [27]. In the same category, [9], was able to establish that CSR improves brand loyalty since the consumers identify with a certain brand and this influences their purchase behaviour [9];
- c. Consumer Expectations and Responsiveness: CSR initiatives are also worked on by consumers' expectation on how they should be done. The literature reviews suggest that consumers are more likely to reinvest back in those companies that are socially, ethically responsible and sensitive to social and environmental problems [6]. This expectation is more so because the young generation is more conscious about the type of product they wish to purchase from particular brands, especially products from brands that have adopted high ethical standards [50], [15];
- d. Impact of CSR Communication: It can also be said that sesame oil publicizing CSR activities crucial in managing perception and intention to purchase products. Research shows that consumers make their brand choices in preference to such brands that clearly relay information detailing their CSR activities, as this make them more loyal to the brands [8],[14]. For example, Du et al reveal how CSR communication enables the creation of perceived marketer Ideology that drives the stakeholder attitudes that in turn affect purchase behavior [8];
- e. Cultural and Contextual Influences: That is to say, the utilised CSR approaches significantly affect consumers' responses but not in the same measure across different cultures. [6] survey indicates that Chinese consumers bear high expectation for the CSR of cosmetics products; they are also receptive to practicing reciprocity towards good CSR behavior [6]. This has implications for suggesting that cultural factors are critical in defining how CSR programs are thought about and the influence that this has on purchase behavior;
- f. Long-term Loyalty and Behavioral Intentions: To this effect, the findings also found that engaging in CSR activities is a way of not only impacting people's purchase intentions in the short-run but also gaining reputation and hence consumer loyalty in the future. Consumers' perception of certain brands being socially responsible creates the goodwill that leads to repeat buying behaviour as well as recommendations for the brand by the consumers [1],[24]. Such long-term loyalty is especially important in the context of the increased competitive pressure, where CSR as the source of differentiation might ensure steadier consumers choice.

In conclusion, the critical findings concerning the association between the postulated factors and consumer liberty as measured and expressed in terms of purchase intentions speak volume of the usefulness of CSR as a strategic managerial tool. Through CSR, positive effects have been identified on consumers through changing their behaviours hence social

responsible initiatives works closely with consumers making them improve their companies standings and hence building long-term relationships.

#### 4.2 Thus here are factors that influence CSR impact to consumer behavior

CSR's impact on consumers is not direct; the impact is conditional; it depends on certain factors. Businesses that desire to use CSR to improve consumer buying intent, therefore need to have the understanding of these moderating variables. The following critical findings highlight these moderating factors:

- a. Cultural Background and Consumer Sensitivity: Studies show that cultural influence plays a major role in the consumer evaluation and the CSR communication process. For instance, [39] identified that CSR can affect the purchase intentions of consumers but on the basis of cultural difference in the customers in the cosmetics industry of Bahrain . This it implies that organisations should consider the culture of the market in order to have an effective CSR strategy;
- b. Consumer Identification with Brands: This study reveals that perceived brand identification is a significant moderator of the CSR–purchase intentions relationship. The authors Lee and Lee showed that while CSR communication has a beneficial impact on consumer attitudes and buying behaviour, these effects are moderated by self-congruity between the consumer and the brand [25]. Hence, this finding underlines the need to appropriately link CSR activities' messages to the relevant consumer set values and identity to the greatest effect;
- c. Trust as a Mediating Factor: In the current setting, perceived risk plays a moderating role and trust in a brand to a very large extent influences the extent to which CSR is likely to influence purchase intentions. According to [2]., it was revealed that omegathat organisations which undertake CSR activities can improve customer trust, which will, in turn, have a variable impact on customer intentions to purchase products or seek services [2]. This is why for companies to build trust among consumers not only should they participate in the CSR, but also they should show it;
- d. Consumer Values and Norms: It is obvious that personal and social values play an important role in the framework of consumer behavior. The findings of [7] proved that moral norms and subjective norms have influences on consumers' intention to visit brands involved in CSR [7]. Based on this result, organisations are advised to integrate the ethicality of consumers into CSR strategies in order to enhance the strategies' fit and the influence of CSR on purchase intention;
- e. Type of CSR Activities: CSR activities are also limited in the extent to which they can direct consumer behaviour by the specific nature of such activities. For example, [34]. established the regularity whereby philanthropic and legal CSR activities motivated the buying decisions of consumers in Ghana, while more emphasis was expected towards the economical and moral CSR activities [34]. This shows that businesses should focus on other aspects of CSR and ensure that they address that aspect which consumers are likely to identify with;
- f. Demographic Factors: Alam and Mostafa also embraced that age, and gender are also the factors regulating the association between CSR and consumer behavior. [15] conducted a study, which revealed that Millennial's consumer's decision making occurs with consideration to CSR in the fast-food sector, it can be therefore concluded that younger consumers are more receptive to CSR compared to the older generation consumers [15]. This has made it clear that marketers should classify the targeted consumers by demographic characteristics when developing CSR strategies;
- g. Consumer Awareness and Knowledge of CSR: H2 – The awareness level of consumers concerning CSR activities has a moderating effect on the purchase intention. According to [37]. consumers' awareness of a brand's CSR initiatives play a definitive role in its buying decision process, especially in the luxury segment [37]. This means that companies need to spend a significant effort in making consumers aware about the CSR activities being undertaken, so as to enhance on the efforts of trigger usage in visitors' purchase intentions.

Altogether the conclusions drawn from the identified critical studies regarding the factors that moderate the relationship between CSR and consumer behavior convey the message that the process is not as elementary as it may have been assumed. When these moderating variables are taken into consideration it helps to do more as regards implementing CSR policies in such a way that it would lead to increased consumers on the side of the company.

#### 4.3 This paper focuses on a study that looks at the effect that CSR communication has on consumer perception and brand loyalty.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) messages play an important role in creating a perception about a particular brand or identification with that brand. The following detailed findings highlight the significant impact of CSR communication on consumer attitudes and behaviors:



- a. Transparency and Authenticity in CSR Communication: Studies show that when stakeholders take every efforts to communicate their CSR strategies or programs effectively, consumer confidence will be improved. For instance, [8] identified that since consumers distinguish between corporate behaviours and their disclosures, enhanced CSR communication results in consumer trust benefiting brand identity and purchase intentions [8]. This work therefore brings out the fact that while organizations must endeavour to undertake CSR activities, they must also ensure that these activities are properly communicated to the consumers;
- b. Influence of CSR Messaging on Brand Image: Research has shown that the manner in which CSR initiatives are packaged and communicated to stakeholders bears a great deal on brand image. Martínez and Rodríguez conducted a study showing that pro-active CSR communications can help brand image and thus consumers' overall perception and loyalty [36]. This means that companies should carefully design and package CSR messages with a view of promoting a positive corporate image as seen by the consumers;
- c. Consumer Engagement through CSR Communication: CSR communication with the consumers can create common identity and values for both the consumers and the organization. According to Boulstridge and Carrigan's study, consumers' are willing to participate in the brand's CSR activities through participatory marketing or community support [48]. Not only does this type of engagement further strengthen consumer's commitment to a particular brand, but it can also motivate consumer to actively promote a brand within their social network;
- d. Impact of Social Media on CSR Communication: This paper aims to justify the proposition that the emergence of social media has changed the way that CSR programmes are advertised to consumers. Research has revealed that on one hand, SMMs offer a unique opportunity for brands to communicate their CSR communications and on the other, they offer a platform for real-time communication with the consumers. For instance, the study by Morsing and Schultz showed that brands focused on CSR communication using social media garner higher consumer touchpoints and customer loyalty than brands depending on other forms of media [44]. This study highlights the significance of the strategic planning and implementation of CSR communication through multimodal platforms including the social media;
- e. Differential Impact Based on Consumer Demographics: Literature review has revealed that the extents of CSR communication may differ depending on demographic dimensions such as age, gender and socio-economic status. A study undertaken by [15]. shows that young consumers and particularly millennials are more sensitive to CSR communication than elder generations [15]. This suggest that organisations should modify their CSR messages depending on their audience and their communication strategy should be compatible with the values of the receiving audience;
- f. Emotional Appeals in CSR Communication: It has been found that telling an appealing story and establishing an emotional link with the consumer can improve the results of CSR communication. Lichtenstein et al shown in a study that committed appeal of CSR is more effective for consumer attitude or behavior change appeals than routine reports [32]. Further, this discovery means that brands should include storytelling and emotions into CSR disclosure initiatives to help consumers develop stronger bonds with them;
- g. Long-term vs. Short-term CSR Communication Strategies: According to research, long-term CSR communication strategies of organizations are more effective in engaging the consumers' loyalty than the short-term communication strategies. In a study by Aguinis and Glavas, they suggest that CSR communication has a long lasting positive impact as consumers see the brand as committed to CSR practices hence consistent communication increases consumer loyalty [26]. This goes to show that CSR communication should not be approached as an independent sub-project, but rather as a part of a company's branding process.

In conclusion, the findings that regard the effect of CSR communication on consumers' attitudes and brand preferences indicate the importance of employees' work in improving the CSR programs' function. Hence, transparency, interactivity, and emotion will be centrally involved both as predictors and outcomes in that consumption is an ongoing process in which brands may affect consumer attitudes.

#### 4.4 Most Effective CSR Activities That Indicate Brand Management

This study has found that the influence of CSR on consumer decision making depends on the nature of CSR programs implemented. The following detailed findings highlight the specific types of CSR activities that have been shown to resonate with consumers and drive their purchasing decisions:

- a. Environmental Sustainability Initiatives: Another study also reveals that customer awareness about hostile environmental factors is enhancing, and that, therefore, CSR programs that are oriented to sustainability are more effective. According to a study made by [24], companies who adopt the environmental management leading to production of green commodities gain customers' actual purchase intentions by effectively producing low carbon commodities and products that encourage sustainable and green purchasing behaviors. Thus, the current research

indicates that firms that incorporate environmental sustainability in their CSR initiatives can approach environmentally conscious consumers;

- b. **Philanthropic Activities:** Programs encompassing philosophical corporate social responsibility, for example, corporate give and social involvement activities, have been seen to bring about a favorable social sentiment impact. In their study, [8] posit that consumers are willing to patronize brands that act in socially responsible ways this is because such actions create an gains in perceived social benefits for the brand from consumers. From this we deduce that firms can positively manipulate philanthropy to create a favourable perception and loyalty among customers;
- c. **Ethical Labor Practices:** Today consumers become sensitive to the labor practices of companies that they patronize their products. Becchetti et al study shows that customers are willing to purchase goods manufactured by firms that protect the rights of workers and treat them humanity. This paper therefore posits that transparency in labour practices is a key dimension of CSR that can impact consumers;
- d. **Community Development Programs:** Strategist, not tacticians: CSR initiatives which involve the sponsoring of jobs within the community, support for local supply chains, and so forth has been found to be favored by consumers. Consumers –regardless of their income level – are more likely to buy from companies that are committed to the welfare of their communities according to Bénabou and Tirole. This avers that organisational leadership should think about enhancing community focused CSR programmes in clamping consumer loyalty and engagement;
- e. **Health and Wellness Initiatives:** Due to the higher level of health conscious among the consumers, the CSR activities which are related to health and fitness have came up. Some researches found that firms that are involved in Corporate Social Responsibility concerning health including the promotion of healthy living or supporting the underprivileged in the health sector will have greatly improved brand image and purchase intent from consumers. This discovery just serves to confirm that CSR should be implemented in a way that would complement consumer health needs most;
- f. **Transparency and Reporting:** The way in which the CSR initiates and transmits its CSR activities determines its effectiveness long the consumer value chain. [8] focus on the idea stating that if organizations make their CSR reports easily comprehensible, consumers’ trust to specific products increases. This means that more importance should be placed on the communication strategies in order to enhance the Corporate Social Responsibility impact for consumers;
- g. **Crisis Response Initiatives:** Consumers change their perceptions depending on how businesses and organizations respond to issues like catastrophe and other calamities. According to Coombs, active CSR conduct before and during the crisis can improve brand image and consumer loyalty. Based on this finding, it is recommended that companies should be ready to undertake CSR initiatives on society issues because this may be key to modifying consumers’ behaviour in the course of key sensitive periods;
- h. **Social Media Engagement:** It is quite clear that social media plays a crucial role in communicating CSR. Research also shows that brands that engage social media to market their CSR initiatives can improve on customer interest and loyalty. For example, Morsing and Schultz observed that social networks may help brands insinuate information regarding their CSR activity and in the process gain consumer trust hence loyalty. This makes it clear that social media must be incorporated into the strategies that CSR communication undertakes.

To sum up, the conclusions made with regards to the types of CSR activities which contribute most to the given conclusions prove that CSR management should embrace multiple avenues. csr work together with the consumer understanding and create the improved market position and higher customer relationships.

#### **4.5. International variations have been reported on consumer response to CSR efforts.**

It has been identified that the aspect of CSR that dictates its impact on behavior of consumers is highly consistent on culture, economical and social dynamics. The following detailed findings highlight the cross-national differences in consumer responses to CSR initiatives, providing insights into how these variations can affect purchasing decisions:

- a. **Cultural Values and CSR Perception:** According to the literature, culture has a central influence in determining how consumers perceive CSR communications. For instance, Matten and Moon established that consumers with collectivistic culture, particularly the Asian consumers, consider the CSR programs, especially the ones in welfare of the community and the social order as very profitable as compared to the consumers from the individualistic cultures, such as those in the United States of America who consider the CSR programs that respect the environment as well as individual rights highly valuable. This imply that companies should fold CSR strategies to match culture of target markets so as to improve on the effectiveness;
- b. **Economic Development and CSR Expectations:** This research established that the level of economic development in a country determines the level of expectations consumers have towards firms’ CSR. It is this culture of higher consumption that elevates the expectations of the developed consumer in as much as the company’s CSR entails to

embrace fuller responsibilities such as environmentalism and fair treatment of workers. On the other hand in developing countries consumers may have lower western standards of basic social contributions to make such as employment opportunities and community welfare. For instance, a research done by Jamali & Mirshak to assess the level of corporate governance disclosure of the Lebanese firms indicated that the Lebanese consumers expect firms operating in the country to play a role in the development of the community; evidence that owes to the social – economic nature of the country. This, therefore, poses the question of how organisations can employ the strategy depending on the economic status of the countries in which the organisations operate;

- c. Consumer Awareness and Education: In terms of the awareness on the CSR activities, a small variation when observed between the countries. According to Pérez and del Bosque, consumers from more educated countries and those with better awareness of CSR, have a positive perception of CSR strategies. On the other hand, consumers in the regions with low awareness may not consider CSR while making their purchase decision, meaning that, the companies need to spend more money on awareness creation to make the CSR work;
- d. Trust in Institutions and CSR Effectiveness: Governmental and non-governmental institutions are a component of the demographic factors that shape consumer perception of CSR. Hsu et al also pointed out that when consumers in different countries have low trust in institutional information about the firms, they are less convinced by the CSR reports, and might have to rely on higher levels of evidence regarding a company's responsibility before they can shift their purchase behavior. This implies that communication strategies of CSR in those environments should emphasize on issues to do with trust such as accountability and transparency;
- e. Social Norms and Consumer Behavior: The perception on the part of the Organisation may also differ from what is expected in another country by virtue of culture. For example, Ailawadi et al have shown that, in certain cultures there is pressure on business firms to integrate CSR into their business strategies as it is seen as part of the corporate image, in other cultures CSR is seen as a peripheral afterthought. This is a very important cultural difference that can really affect consumers' loyalty and purchasing behaviour; that is why business need to take into account social environment;
- f. Impact of Globalization on CSR Perceptions: Globalization has increase consciousness of CSR issues, but the effect differs geographically. Rangan et al. retrieved their information and they stated that whilst consumers in developed countries are likely to support international CSR campaigns, consumers in emerging markets may be likely to support local CSR campaigns that will impact societies in their countries. Consequently, this means that companies need to incorporate both international and domestic CSR approaches in order to cater for different markets to consumers;
- g. Regional Variations in CSR Focus Areas: The fields of operation for implementing CSR activities can vary widely between regions. For instance, Morsing and Schultz conducted a study and was revealed that European consumers actually care much about environmental issues, on the other hand, the Middle East consumers are possibly more concern on social issues or improvement of the societies. This discovery is useful in emphasizing the value of a market study that determines important CSR factors as understood by the consumers in the respective markets.

Finally, the implications of the results concerning the cross-national variations in consumer responses to CSR emphasize the role of cultural, economic, and social factors in consumer behavior. These differences should be understood so that firms are able to implement better and attuned CSR communication strategies across the global market to appeal to consumers, thus improving the overall brand appeal and purchase intention among its consumers.

## 5. DISCUSSIONS

### 5.1. International Variation in consumption behavior regarding CSR

The study findings on cross-national differences and their implication on consumer response to CSR highlights the importance of businesses to develop culturally sensitive strategies appealing to different consumers. These findings are further discussed in this paper to highlight a need to shift focus to cultural, economic, and societal factors.

1. Cultural Values and CSR Perception: As highlighted by the above analysis, culture has a tremendously informative influence on the perceived CSR. Some studies has reflected that when customers come from collectivist culture which emphasized on the common interest of the society, the CSR activities related to social order and support from the society would be better accepted by them. For instance, Japanese and Chinese consumers assume that the brand they use should play a constructive role in society since these nations are commentary on peoples individualism as compared to the group welfare [4]. On the other hand, the consumer response in individualist culture like that of the United States of America is likely to be more positive when the firm's CSR communication focuses on environmental issues and Individuals' rights. Such divergence implies that firms have to undertake a proper analysis of culture to develop effective CSR plans. In integrating culture with CSR activities, companies are in a position to improve customer interaction and patronage;

2. **Economic Development and CSR Expectations:** Consumer expectations on CSR are highly dependent with the level of economic development. Consumers in developed nations therefore expect firm's to engage in optimum CSR where they consider issues such as conservation of the environment and appropriate treatment of workers. Studied within these areas, the investigation proves that consumers are more willing to purchase products with a higher price from socially responsible brands [4]. However, consumers in a developing nation may not be interested in a company's far-reaching CSR programs but want the company to directly help create employment for fellow citizens and support their local communities. This relationship shows that context stability increases relevance, relevance, and significance of CSR to meet the needs and expectations of consumers on the basis of the economic conditioning we have described. Hypothesis 3: There is a significant difference between the views regarding the CSR type preferred by companies working in emerging markets and the actual type of CSR initiatives implemented. Research question: Which of the CSR types is seen as preferred by the respondents, as well as by the companies operating in emerging markets?;
3. **Consumer Awareness and Education:** The study also indicates that consumer awareness of CSR activities depends on the country, thus affecting their CSR reporting and sensitivity. [12] were of the view that consumers in areas where there is increased education on CSR, will consider the aspect of CSR before deciding to purchase (with probability greater than 0.5) the products of the company in question. From this it is clear that consumer awareness should form part of a firm's CSR strategy as it would help in creating awareness of the program thus increasing its effect. With the help of proper presentation of the significance and advantages of CSR, companies can create greater levels of awareness about the consumers' relation to social responsibility while selecting products;
4. **Trust in Institutions and CSR Effectiveness:** Governments and non-governmental institutions form an important aspect of consumers' CSR perception since the aspect of trust. Lack of trust in formal organisations may mean that consumers in such countries do not fully believe in CSR reports and will only change their consumption patterns once they are convinced of the authenticity of a company's CSR disclosure (Starliper, 2023). As such, this research underscores the importance of trustful CSR communication by organisations. This is because commitment to CSR and also opening up dialogue with consumers will assist in making business more credible and therefore have the ability to affect consumers in the right manner;
5. **Social Norms and Consumer Behavior:** Importantly, the impact of social norms in relation to the given research was also revealed. Some cultures view CSR activities as an inherent responsibility of firms as part of organizational obligations, while others consider CSR (commitment) as extra-organizational [30]. This cultural difference can affect consumer loyalty and buying behavior in a very big way. The second importance is the concern for the social norms that companies have to operate within the context of their CSR policies and strategies to reflect the expectations. Organizations can learn about best practices from the locals; this will include learning about social factors that influence consumption on goods and services in those regions.
1. **Impact of Globalization on CSR Perceptions:** Besides, today's globalization helps in spreading the awareness of CSR issues in global communities but its effectiveness is not ubiquitous. Whereas consumers from developed nations are willing to support international CSR activities, consumers from emerging markets may incline more towards national CSR activities targeting their immediate community [23]. Based on this research, firms need to use a combination of global CSR framework and operating market specific approaches to reach out to consumers. Thus, proving an organizations concern towards global CSR as well as local CSR will increase the image of the business and in turn increase customer loyalty;
2. **Regional Variations in CSR Focus Areas:** It indicates that the areas that are covered under CSR activities may differ considerably between regions. For instance, European consumers are likely to give conservation of the natural environment a high priority than middle eastern consumers who are likely to give a high priority to social rights and betterment of the community [35]. This variation is indicative of the need to carry out a stakeholder analysis to determine the particular CSR causes that end consumers in the various markets are receptive to. This implies that each Business Development Programme should focus on regional priorities to improve relevance and CSR impact among organizations.

To sum it all, the appraisal of cross national differences in consumers' responses to CSR has indicated that it is high time business organizations employed culturally appropriate and contextually grounded CSR initiatives. By gulping down culture, economy, and society characteristics that affect consumption behavior, corporations should be in a position to launch more appropriate CSR strategies that consumers in various markets can identify and respond to positively. It not only helps to build the level of brand loyalty and purchase intention to the brand but also can help to support the over all CSR endeavor by promoting, supporting the social cause and the change.



## 6. CONCLUSION

An investigation of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and its implications on consumer buying behaviour indicates that consumer responses are influenced by cultural as well as economic forces that operate differently depending on the context. According to this systematic review, CSR activity needs to be adapted to the specific cultural expectations as regards consumers.

First, the findings reveal that cultural values achieve their influence on consumers' perceptions of CSR; thus, cultures have to be taken into consideration by businesses. Self-actualization in collectivistic cultures, such as in Asia, will find CSR activities that deliver value for the communities more appealing than those that give value to the environment common in individualistic cultures such as in America. This consideration of culture is imperative more so for the companies who wish to improve the customer touchpoints and hence loyalty via their CSR initiatives.

Second, the economic development level of any country directly influences the consumers' expectations on CSR. Customers from the developed countries would like to see extended CSR programs while consumers in the developing countries may prefer tangible social carries out. This brings a need for contextual CSR that refers to the idea whereby the companies provide solutions that are specific to the needs of consumers with regards to the economical situation of their country.

In addition, consumer involvement as well as consumer knowledge play a huge role in the assessment of CSR projects. This calls for organizations to invest in informing consumers about CSR activities so as to establish consumers with correct perception of the issue of CSR and its impact on their consumption patterns. Thus, consumer trust and loyalty strengthen the requirements for transparent and authentic CSR communication which would require the involvement of the companies in open discussion with their consumers.

The study also finds that social norms and institutional trust have a bearing to the response of consumers on CSR. Such regions may not believe in institutions hence the need to ensure that consumption of CSR is credible through practicing transparency. Further, the effect of perceived globalization on CSR indicates that while global CSR activities are desirable, localized CSR activities that have the potential to create value for the community can positively improve consumer loyalty.

Last of all, the comparison of various CSR activities demonstrates that environmental responsibility, philanthropy, labor and social relations, and community investment activity have a significant positive impact on the consumers. The companies that actively adopt CSR strategies with responses to regional concerns and consumer demand can increase relevance and effectiveness.

All in all, the observations derived from this review stress for the imperative of managing culturally appropriate and contextually applicable CSR measures for businesses. Previous research has shown that there are key drivers affecting consumers' decisions when interested in CSR activities and the more companies grasp these factors then implement corresponding CSR programs creating better consumer relationship; then firms is in a position to improve the connection with consumers across the global markets. Further studies should extend research on the active CSR concept and its application to the subject of consumer behavior as it relates to the ever-changing world issues and customer attitude.

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