



**UNVEILING THE IMPACT OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR)
ON COMPANY IMAGE: A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF
CSR STRATEGIES AND BRAND PERCEPTION**

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) shapes a company's image. It examines how CSR initiatives influence brand perception and analyzes CSR's impact on brand perception and stakeholder relationships. It highlights the strategic importance of CSR for long-term business success.

The study involves 30 respondents who bought products with CSR actions as of April 2024. Based on Pearson r correlation, the relationship of the corporate social responsibility and brand perception has a negative weak correlation hence, the hypothesis is accepted in which CSR activities and stakeholders' demography has no significant relationship. The CSR perception shows that customer preference is needed significantly, trustworthiness indicates being trustworthy is a virtue that a corporation should possess to gain customer patronage. The brand image also is significant in CSR perception since it has a highly important description in this study. Positive social impact increases focus on CSR by businesses can lead to positive social change. Companies that prioritize ethical labor practices, environmental sustainability, and community engagement can contribute to a better society, therefore, CSR can hold businesses accountable for their actions. The results of the study give future researchers hints

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to investigate companies with program of corporate social responsibility and advice to implement CSR since it has a side of good and real manifestation to company's images and should suggests to have programs of corporate social responsibility that link to every stakeholders as company's clientele.

Keywords: *Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Brand Image, Brand Equity, Consumer Satisfaction*

INTRODUCTION

The intricate relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives and company image is crucial for businesses seeking to enhance brand perception and reputation. Studies have shown a positive correlation between CSR activities and a company's image (Lombart, 2016). Consumers are increasingly drawn to brands that demonstrate social responsibility (Kim & Manoli, 2020). Despite the growing emphasis on CSR practices, a knowledge gap remains. We need a comprehensive analysis of how specific CSR strategies influence consumer perceptions, brand equity, and overall company image (Walls et al., 2012). This research would provide valuable insights for companies seeking to optimize their CSR efforts and maximize their impact on key stakeholders and provide valuable insight to businesses that want to make efficient use of CSR initiatives to improve brand image and reputation in the market. Thus, Corporate image plays a critical role in achieving trade gains (Papasavas & Karakatsanis, 2013). This elevates the importance of social accountability in building a positive image. Consumers are increasingly making purchasing decisions based on a company's social responsibility practices (Kim & Manoli, 2020). Therefore, a strong focus on social accountability can enhance a company's image, ultimately leading to increased trade gains.

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The current research aims to bridge a gap in knowledge by comprehensively analyzing the impact of specific CSR strategies on consumer perceptions, brand equity, and overall corporate image (Walls et al., 2012). This study focuses on CSR strategies and brand perception as the primary drivers, further examining how these factors influence consumer satisfaction and ultimately contribute to a positive image and brand equity (Kim & Manoli, 2020). By analyzing various CSR initiatives and their effect on brand perception, the research seeks to identify valuable insights for companies to build strong reputations and connect effectively with stakeholders (Lombart & Louis, 2014).

To this extent, the study aims to investigate the effect of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on brand image and brand equity, and how these factors impact consumer satisfaction and aims to answer the following research questions.

Research Questions:

1. What are the demographic profiles of the respondents?
2. What is the relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and brand perceptions?
3. How do CSR perceptions affect brand equity, trustworthiness, and customer purchasing decisions?
4. What are the brand perceptions in terms of brand image, CSR activities, and CSR efforts?
5. How do CSR initiatives influence company image, brand trust, and brand image, especially in times of crisis and how do CSR strategies enhance corporate credibility and trustworthiness?
6. How do CSR and philanthropic contributions impact a company's social and environmental practices, and how do they influence customer perception and loyalty?

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7. How do CSR initiatives and stakeholder demographics perceptions impact a company's reputation, image, and brand perception, and what role do corporate behavior, intentions, and social responsibilities play in these relationships?

HYPOTHESES:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between corporate social responsibility and brand perceptions.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between CSR activities and stakeholders' demography (Age)

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a major factor influencing a company's image, making it a powerful tool for reputation improvement. Similarly, a company's commitment to ethical conduct with its partners is crucial for building trust. Carroll's (1991) CSR model proposes integrating four key areas of accountability: Economic, Ethical, Legal, and Philanthropic. Carroll further emphasizes that the benefits a company reaps from CSR practices can positively impact its stakeholders as well.

B. Kim, Lee, & Kang (2018) hypothesized that corporate social responsibility performances have a significant impact on company reputation.

Lee, Kim, & Kang uncovered that CSR affects brand trust and brand image. Thus, it is evident from the empirical and theoretical perspective that if the CSR initiatives are perceived optimistically by the stakeholders, they might be more favorable in leading towards the corporate image.

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Lombart C., Louis D. (1984) states that CSR implementation can be achieved by the active simultaneous participation of external and internal stakeholders; hence it can enable a company to forecast and take benefit of rapidly changing social environments and beliefs. Service firms, like any other company, are required to be in harmony with sociocultural, socioeconomic, and environmental activities. Earlier studies confirm the relationships among corporate social responsibility and corporate image by verifying that a company's corporate social responsibility methods significantly impact the company's image, consumer attitudes and the company's According to Islam T., Islam R., Pitafi A.H., Xiaobei L., Rehmani M., Irfan M. (2021) a community's ethical view regarding the company is vital to construct a reliable connection, hence companies are more motivated to engage in socially responsible programs to express their dedication to the community to increase customer loyalty and at the same time enhance brand reputation and positive media coverage.

Paine (2000) asserts that devotion to moral norms offers the foundation for trust that improves to create reputations, and strengthens the supply of value services. Similarly, ethical conduct by the staff of a business has a significant influence on customer trust. The collaboration among employees and customers to produce an image must turn out to be an attractive study. According to a research finding, service companies like hotels were indicated as brands. Consequently, the values of a company are characterized by brands.

Triatmanto (2021) asserts that Corporate image is an element of the argument regarding brands. Based on this argument it can be underlined that whenever an employee presents a brand via collaborative initiatives with customers, the view regarding the company's image can be influenced. Service companies like hotels perform corporate image by agents of supervisors in conveying and delivering services to customers (Wallace, 2009).

Dominguez (2011) suggests that managers and employees of the company should deliver values to customers which in turn becomes optimistic impressions and beliefs. Since the corporate image is created by trustworthy initiatives of a company, hence, trust is deemed as a critical element in the success of a business (Park, 2011).

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Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can lead to a range of positive outcomes, both for society and the company itself. Among these are: Increased customer loyalty and brand preference; Enhanced brand reputation and positive media coverage; Attracting and retaining talent; and Improved customer trust and brand advocacy (Singh, 2019).

Khan, G. F., & Fatma, W. (2023) set out to look the positive link between CSR and brand image can be manifested by the growing recognition of the positive impact corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategies that can have on a company's brand image and expand more. Studies have shown a strong correlation between the two, with consumers increasingly basing their purchase decisions on a company's social and environmental efforts. The following are the strong connection between Corporate Social Responsibility and Brand Image:

Enhanced Brand Perception: Consumers are more likely to view companies engaged in responsible practices favorably. This positive perception can translate into a stronger brand image, associated with ethical values and a commitment to the greater good of the company.

Increased Customer Loyalty: CSR initiatives can foster emotional connections with consumers who identify with a brand's social responsibility efforts. This loyalty can lead to repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth marketing.

Improved Brand Differentiation: In a crowded marketplace, a well-defined CSR strategy can set a company apart from its competitors. Highlighting responsible practices can position the brand as a leader in sustainability or social consciousness.

Thus, by implementing thoughtful and well-communicated CSR strategies, companies can cultivate a positive brand image that resonates with today's socially conscious consumers.

However, brand perception is the overall impression customers have of a brand. It's not just about what the company says about itself, but rather the sum of all the experiences, associations, and beliefs that consumers hold about the brand. A strong brand perception can be a powerful advantage in the marketplace. It can lead to increased customer loyalty, higher

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sales, and a premium price point for products. It's crucial for any business to understand how they perceive your brand. Companies can build stronger relationships with their customers and be successful for a longer period of time through active management of brand perceptions. (Wallace,2009)

Keller, K. L. (1993) cited that in USA Brand image is a crucial concept in marketing, representing the overall perception of a brand in the minds of consumers. It's essentially the collection of associations people have with a brand, based on experiences, advertising, and cultural touchstones. Kevin Lane Keller discusses how a brand's image is a key component of consumer-based brand equity, impacting purchase decisions and brand loyalty. Remember, brand image is constantly evolving. Companies in the USA need to be strategic in managing their brand image through marketing campaigns, social media presence, and overall brand experience to stay competitive.

Since the 1980s, Japanese multinationals have gained their global presence, hence drawn much academic interest. The earlier studies on CSR in Japan appeared in this context. Like many other studies on Japanese management, they centrally questioned how and why Japanese companies are different from Western companies. Based on one of the earliest surveys on CSR issues, for example, Lewin et al. (1995) found that Japanese companies were highly aware of CSR, but tended to avoid formal administrative processes, which was preferred by Western companies. Instead, they observed that "Japanese firms predominantly use cultural mechanisms such as philosophy and guiding principles to address such issues. The planning and management of the most important issues is conducted through teams or committees, and little formal monitoring is conducted.

Bianchi, R., Bagnasco, A., & Borgo, S. (2019) cited that in UK market, consumers are increasingly conscious of a company's social responsibility efforts. This means that a strong CSR strategy can have a significant positive impact on a brand's image. Research shows a clear link between CSR and brand image. Consumers are more likely to choose brands that align with their values and actively participate in social good. Studies indicate that a positive

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perception of CSR initiatives can enhance a company's brand image and brand equity, ultimately leading to higher customer satisfaction. In a competitive market, CSR can be a powerful tool for differentiation. By focusing on environmental sustainability, ethical labor practices, or community engagement, a brand can stand out from its competitors and build a reputation for being responsible. It's important to note that simply engaging in CSR activities isn't enough. For CSR to truly benefit brand image, there needs to be transparent communication about these initiatives. Consumers are perceptive and can see through greenwashing. Open communication about a company's CSR efforts helps build trust and credibility with stakeholders.

Dominguez (2011) proposed that Corporate social responsibility (CSR) can have a significant positive impact on a company's image. He cited the following impacts: **Boosts Reputation;** Consumers are increasingly interested in supporting companies that align with their values. Strong CSR initiatives showcase a company's commitment to social good, environmental responsibility, and ethical practices, leading to a more trustworthy and positive reputation.

Attracts and retains talent; People want to work for companies they believe in. A strong CSR program can attract top talent who are looking for employers that share their values. Additionally, CSR initiatives can boost employee morale and loyalty; **Increases customer loyalty:** Customers are more likely to choose and remain loyal to brands with a positive social impact. CSR demonstrates that a company cares about more than just profit, fostering a stronger connection with customers. **Improves media coverage;** Companies with well-implemented CSR programs are more likely to receive positive media attention. This free publicity can further enhance a company's image. **Mitigates risk;** Strong CSR practices can help companies avoid negative press or boycotts associated with irresponsible business practices.

The review above highlights the overwhelmingly supports the notion that CSR initiatives positively impact a company's image. By engaging in responsible practices,

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companies can cultivate positive consumer attitudes, enhance brand loyalty, and ultimately strengthen their reputation in the marketplace. While the specific mechanisms and strength of this effect may vary depending on factors like industry and target audience, the overall trend is clear: CSR is a strategic tool companies can leverage to build a strong and positive public image.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can have a significant positive impact on how people perceive a brand. Today's consumers are increasingly concerned with a brand's social and environmental impact (Kuokkanen & Sun, 2020). Strong CSR initiatives that address these concerns can shape positive brand perceptions. Consumers may view the brand as more trustworthy, ethical, and aligned with their values, leading to a stronger emotional connection (He & Li, 2011).

Genuine and strategically implemented CSR efforts can enhance a company's reputation (Mazutis & Slawinski, 2015). By demonstrating responsibility towards employees, the community, and the environment, a company builds trust and credibility with stakeholders. This, in turn, fosters a more favorable brand reputation (Bianchi et al., 2019).

Positive CSR initiatives can strengthen brand equity by fostering customer loyalty and a willingness to pay a premium (Mohr et al., 2001). Consumers may be more likely to choose a brand perceived as socially responsible, even if it comes at a slightly higher price point. On the other hand, strong CSR profile contributes to a positive company image by demonstrating the company's commitment to social good alongside its commercial goals (Kim & Stepchenkova, 2020). This holistic approach fosters trust and respect for the brand as a responsible player within society. CSR is essential in determining a brand's identity and how consumers view it. Companies can develop a positive brand image, reputation, and equity by actively participating in social responsibility, which will ultimately lead to sustainable success.

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METHODOLOGY

This research employs a quantitative methodology, utilizing a questionnaire distributed to individuals who have purchased products associated with CSR initiatives. The study focuses on the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and its relationship with brand perception, specifically examining brand reputation and brand equity.

SCALING THE RESPONSES OF THE RESPONDENTS.

Interval of the Responses	Description
4.81 - 5.80	Highly Important
3.81 - 4.80	Important
2.81 - 3.80	Neutral
1.81 - 2.80	Less Important
1 - 1.80	Not Important

DATA GATHERING PROCEDURE

The study utilizes a random sampling procedure and a survey questionnaire to collect data and obtain information. Thirty (30) survey questionnaires were distributed to the research participants. The researcher administered and collected the questionnaires.

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DATA ANALYSIS

The data are analyzed using JAMovi2.3.28. to determine the relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility and the company’s image. The data analyzed would determine the general Mean responses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

FINDINGS

This section delves into the findings of the investigation. Following the research questions, the results are presented in clear and concise tables for easy reference.

Table 1. The Age of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	%
20-25	16	53
26-30	2	6.7
31-35	3	10
36-40	1	3
41-45	0	0
46-50	3	10
Over 50	5	16.7
Total	30	100

The age of the respondents is significantly shows that in the interval of 20-25 with the frequency of 16 which has a percentage of 53% informs that mostly of the businessmen are

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young and the interval of 41-45 with zero frequency tells that no businessmen in this survey is not included but it does not mean that no businessmen are in this age.

Table 2. The Sex of the Respondents

Sex	Frequency	%
Male	11	36.7
Female	19	63.3

Table 2 shows that females are dominant in this study, with a frequency of 19 (63.3%). In contrast, males are a minority, with a frequency of 11 (36.7%).

Table 3. Educational Level of the Respondents

Educational Level	Frequency	%
College Level	12	40
Bachelor's Degree	18	60

Table 3 focuses on the educational level of the respondents, specifically those with college diplomas or bachelor's degrees, as determined by the study criteria. Bachelor's degrees are the most prevalent educational level within this group.

Table 4. Occupation of the Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	%
Businessman	4	13.3

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Business Owner	1	3.3
Student	12	40
Employee	13	43.3

The table above shows that the respondents' occupations include businessman, business owner, student, and employee. Among these, employees are the most frequent, with a frequency of 13 (43.3% of the population). This suggests that some business owners may also be employed by other agencies.

Table 5. The Relationship of CSR and Brand Perception

Variables	CSR
Brand Perception	-0.327

The relationship between corporate social responsibility and brand perception has a weak negative correlation, with a Pearson r correlation coefficient of -0.327.

Table 6. CSR Perception

CSR Perception	Mean	Description
Customer Preferences	4.37	Highly Important
Trustworthiness	4.63	Highly Important

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Brand Image	4.37	Highly Important
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This table analyzes corporate social responsibility (CSR) perception and its impact on customer behavior. Customer preference, with a high mean of 4.37 (considered highly important), indicates its significant role. Similarly, trustworthiness, with a mean of 4.63 and a "highly important" description, underscores its importance for gaining customer loyalty (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). The study also finds that brand image is significant in CSR perception, as it is also described as "highly important" (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004).

Table 7. Brand Perception

Brand perception	Mean	Description
Brand Image	4.46	Highly Important
CSR Activities	4.37	Highly Important
CSR Effort	4.5	Highly Important

Table 7 shows a positive association between brand perception and CSR efforts. The high mean score of 4.5 for CSR activities, described as "highly important," reinforces their significance to a corporation's mission. This emphasizes the value of corporations actively engaging in social activities, as demonstrated by their positive impact (Porter & Kramer, 2006).

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Table 8. CSR Strategies

CSR Strategies	Mean	Description
1. CSR initiatives play a significant role in the company's image.	4.7	Highly Important
2. Companies should communicate the CSR efforts to the public.	4.73	Highly Important
3. CSR initiatives should contribute to a long-term sustainability and success of the company	4.83	Highly Important

Table 8 on CSR strategies highlights the importance of CSR initiatives for a company's long-term sustainability and success (WBCSD, 2014). This is reflected in the high mean scores: 4.83 (described as highly important) and 4.7 (also highly important). These scores indicate that CSR initiatives significantly impact both a company's success and its image (Cone, 2020).

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Table 9. CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AND LOYALTY

Customer Behavior & Loyalty	Mean	Description
Switching brand based on CSR practices.	4.70	Highly Important
Paying premium for products from the company with strong CSR commitment.	4.57	Highly Important
3. Recommend a brand that is actively involved in CSR activities.	4.63	Highly Important

Table 9 indicates that CSR is a major consideration for consumers when evaluating brands, with a mean score of 4.63 (described as highly important). This suggests that consumers view CSR as a significant factor influencing their purchasing decisions. Furthermore, the high mean score (4.6, also described as highly important) for switching brands based on CSR practices highlights consumers' willingness to switch to competitors with a stronger commitment to CSR (Cone, 2020).

Table 10. OVERALL PERCEPTION

Questions	Mean	Description
1. The importance of CSR in shaping a company's image and reputation	4.70	Highly Important
2. Companies should prioritize		

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CSR as part of their business strategy.	4.57	Highly Important
3. CSR significant role in building trust and loyalty with the customers.	4.63	Highly Important

Table 10 suggests that CSR is highly important, shaping a company's integrity and reputation. This highlights the need for corporations to actively participate in social activities, which can yield demonstrably beneficial results. Strong CSR initiatives are linked to positive outcomes, such as enhanced reputation, improved employee morale, and attracting top talent (Porter & Kramer, 2006). Additionally, CSR can help mitigate risks and promote sustainability (Epstein & Buchan, 2007).

Table 11. Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate Social Responsibility			
Variable	CSR	P-value	Hypothesis
Brand Perception	- 0.327	0.788	Accepted

The table suggests a weak negative correlation between brand perception and corporate social responsibility, indicating that they are not strongly related (Fontenot et al.,

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2018). Therefore, the hypothesis that they correlate is not supported. The p-value of 0.788 is also not significant, as it is greater than the commonly used threshold of 0.05.

Table 12. Ho2: There is no significant relationship between CSR activities and stakeholders' demography.

Corporate Social Responsibility				
Variable	CSR Activities	P-value	Hypothesis	Conclusion
Stakeholders' Demography (Age)	0.05	0.789	Accepted	Not Significant

Table 12 examines the second hypothesis, which proposes a relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and stakeholder demographics. The results show a weak correlation (Pearson $r = 0.05$) and a non-significant p-value (0.789), exceeding the commonly accepted alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted, suggesting no significant relationship between CSR activities and stakeholder demographics.

DISCUSSION

In Table 2, the data reveals a clear gender disparity in the study population. Females make up the majority, with a frequency of 19 (63.3%), while males are a minority at 11 (36.7%).

Table 3 shows the study criteria limited respondents' educational backgrounds to college diplomas and bachelor's degrees. Interestingly, bachelor's degrees emerged as the dominant educational level within this group.

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Table 4 reveals the distribution of respondents across various occupations, including business owners, businessmen, students, and employees. Notably, employees comprise the largest group, accounting for 13 respondents (43.3% of the total). This suggests the possibility that some business owners also hold additional jobs as employees within other organizations. Interestingly, the data shows only one businessman who is also a business owner.

Table 5 shows the Pearson r correlation coefficient of -0.327 indicates a weak negative relationship between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and brand perception.

In Table 6, the data Customer preferences, trustworthiness, and brand image all emerge as significant factors in corporate social responsibility (CSR) perception based on the high mean scores and "highly important" descriptions. This suggests that consumers value companies that prioritize customer needs, demonstrate trustworthiness, and cultivate a strong brand image.

Table 7 highlights a positive association between brand perception and CSR initiatives. The high mean score for CSR initiatives (4.5, described as "extremely important") suggests that consumers value a company's demonstrated commitment to social responsibility. This complements the finding in Table 6, where CSR itself was perceived as highly important.

In Table 8, the data emphasizes the importance of CSR initiatives for a company's long-term sustainability and success, as reflected in the high mean score (4.83) and "highly important" description. This reinforces the connection between CSR and positive corporate image, aligning with the findings from previous tables.

In Table 9, it shows the consumers consider CSR a major factor when evaluating brands (mean score of 4.63, described as "highly important"). This suggests that a company's involvement in CSR activities significantly influences consumer purchasing decisions. Furthermore, the high mean score (4.6, also described as "highly important") for switching brands based on CSR practices highlights consumers' willingness to reward companies that prioritize social responsibility.

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The findings of overall perception suggest a strong positive perception of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). For **Reputational Benefits:** Consumers value companies that prioritize CSR. High mean scores across all questions indicate that CSR can significantly improve brand image and reputation. For the **Strategic Advantage:** Integrating CSR into business strategy can be a competitive advantage. Companies that prioritize ethical and sustainable practices may attract more customers, investors, and talent. And for **Customer Loyalty:** CSR efforts can build trust and loyalty with customers. When a company demonstrates social and environmental responsibility, customers are more likely to feel good about supporting them.

Positive social impact increases focus on CSR by businesses can lead to positive social change. Companies that prioritize ethical labor practices, environmental sustainability, and community engagement can contribute to a better society. CSR can hold businesses accountable for their actions. When consumers expect companies to be socially responsible, it pushes businesses to operate ethically and minimize negative impacts. Lastly, CSR can encourage collaboration between businesses and social organizations. Businesses can partner with NGOs and community groups to address social and environmental challenges.

The overall positive perception of CSR highlighted by the tables is an encouraging sign. It suggests a growing alignment between corporate responsibility and consumer values. Companies are increasingly recognizing that ethical and sustainable practices are not just the right thing to do, but also contribute to their success. By implementing genuine CSR initiatives, businesses can create a positive impact on society while simultaneously strengthening their brand image, attracting talent, and achieving long-term financial goals

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CONCLUSION

The study presents seemingly contradictory findings regarding the relationship between CSR and brand perception. The Pearson r correlation coefficient suggests a weak negative correlation, which might initially imply that brand preference isn't directly influenced by a company's social responsibility efforts.

The study yielded interesting results regarding the relationship between CSR and brand perception. While the data suggests a weak negative correlation between the two, it's important to consider other findings. Specifically, high importance was placed on factors like customer preference, trustworthiness, and brand image, all of which are influenced by a company's CSR efforts. This suggests that even if a direct correlation between CSR and brand perception wasn't statistically significant, consumers still value companies that prioritize social responsibility. The study also found no significant relationship between CSR activities and stakeholder demographics. This could be an area for further research to explore potential nuances or investigate the role of specific demographics in future studies.

The findings highlight the complexity of the relationship between CSR and various corporate aspects. While a direct correlation between CSR and brand perception wasn't statistically significant in this study, other data points suggest that CSR holds value for consumers. Future research could delve deeper into specific CSR initiatives and their impact on brand perception among different stakeholder groups.

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