

LOYALTY IN THE AGE OF SUSTAINABILITY: HOW CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY AND ECO-BRANDING DRIVE CONSUMER INTENTIONS

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Abstract

This research examines the impact of Green Brand Strategy and Corporate Social Responsibility on purchase intentions and consumer loyalty, considering the mediating factors of green trust, customer satisfaction, and brand image. This study employed quantitative research, utilizing a self-administered questionnaire distributed to 500 respondents with knowledge of brands that address Corporate Social Responsibility and green initiatives. Structural Equation Modeling with AMOS software was used to test hypotheses and examine the relationships between them. The results demonstrate significant positive relationships between Corporate Social Responsibility and consumer purchase behavior, green brand strategy, green trust, and consumer loyalty. Additionally, the findings confirm that brand image mediates the relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility and purchase behavior. Model fit indices indicate excellent model fit, supporting all proposed hypotheses. This research provides empirical evidence for the synergistic effects of Corporate Social Responsibility and green branding on consumer behavior, offering a comprehensive framework for understanding consumer responses to ethical business practices.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility; Green Brand Strategy; Green Trust; Purchase Behaviour; Brand Image; Consumer Loyalty; Consumer Satisfaction

1. INTRODUCTION

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a corporate strategy tool that allows differentiation and competitive advantage by combining academic and commercial goals (Shafique et al., 2021; Amoako et al., 2021; Asad et al., 2023; Aftab et al., 2024). CSR is an area of management that frequently enables extremely competitive differentiation by combining market and social goals (Ali & Kaur, 2021). Moreover, because of its dual benefits, CSR is a business strategy for marketing. Initially, by emphasizing non-economic factors, it helps establish a competitive advantage. CSR is a corporate focus that helps build good brand and consumer perception. It is well acknowledged that brand image is a crucial component of the marketing strategy, and when executed correctly, it can significantly boost business success, increase purchase intention, and foster consumer loyalty (Kataria et al., 2021; Azizan & Yusr, 2019). Governments and businesses currently view CSR as the primary remedy for societal issues. The significance of CSR and corporations' contributions to society cannot be overstated. CSR, on the other hand, is essential for improving business performance" as well as for addressing global issues. "Businesses have long understood that CSR is the most crucial standard business practice that they need to adhere to if they wish to prosper in the competitive and chaotic marketplace of today (Foroudi, 2019). From a marketing perspective, CSR may be an effective promotional strategy that enhances customer behaviour and company image (Kim and Lee 2019). Moreover, the benefits of CSR extend beyond the revenue. CSR initiatives significantly impact stakeholder and customer expectations, which, in turn, boosts company performance.

Green purchasing refers to consumer behaviour that conserves resources and safeguards the environment (Sheng et al., 2018). Green marketing refers to marketing operations (such as pricing, planning, process, manufacturing, promotion, and staffing) created by businesses for all customers. The goal of these actions is to mitigate the environmental impact of a company's products and services (Groening et al., 2018). Many businesses have adjusted their manufacturing processes to respond actively to environmental issues and shifts in customer environmental views. They stopped using products that were detrimental to the environment or

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dangerous to human health in favor of environmentally friendly alternatives. Although manufacturers have produced environmentally friendly products, many consumers are uninterested in them because of their consumption values, resistance to new technologies, or resistance to the higher prices charged for these new products, resulting in sales obstacles (Jung et al., 2020; Mecikalski & Carey, 2018). According to Maignan et al. (1999) and Lacey et al. (2015), CSR refers to the extent to which businesses undertake economic, legal, ethical, social, and discretionary responsibilities to their stakeholders. When properly managed and communicated, CSR can be viewed as a marketing tool that works in tandem with other marketing strategies to establish a unique position that elicits responses from consumers. Although they are occasionally misunderstood, CSR and greenwashing are distinct from the marketing perspective. CSR is the proactive incorporation of social, environmental, or cultural initiatives into business operations that, when valued, have the potential to benefit companies and their stakeholders. According to Chen and Chang (2013), it is, therefore, much more than a communication response (a social or environmental "facelift") to a crisis in image or bad brand positioning. Effectively, the CSR literature (Hoeffler & Keller, 2002; McWilliams & Siegel, 2000; Yang et al., 2011; McWilliams et al., 2011) supports the notion that pro-social marketing initiatives may help create a unique brand strategy and increase brand value (Liu et al., 2014), both of which may help retain customers.

This study investigates the impact of CSR and green brand practices on consumer purchasing behaviour and brand loyalty. It also assesses the mediation of green trust, brand reputation, and customer satisfaction in such interactions in a sustainability-driven consumer culture. This research is of critical relevance in an era when green consciousness and corporate responsibility are top-of-mind for both businesses and consumers. As more businesses adopt sustainability practices and consumers become increasingly discerning about the values of brands, it is essential to understand the mechanisms by which CSR and green practices influence buying decisions for effective marketing strategies and sustainable business planning. This study bridges an essential knowledge gap by examining the combined impact of these practices on consumer loyalty and purchasing intentions through mediating variables. This study examines:

RO 1: To examine the direct and indirect effects of CSR and GBS on consumer purchase behaviour and loyalty

RO2: To investigate the mediating roles of green trust, brand image, and customer satisfaction in the relationship between ethical business practices and consumer responses

The research is organized into six main sections to ensure comprehensive coverage of the research topic. Section 1 establishes the research context and lays the groundwork for examining the impact of CSR and green branding on brand equity. Section 2 provides a comprehensive review of existing research on CSR, green brand strategies, consumer trust, and consumer loyalty, with the ultimate objective of developing four testable hypotheses for this study. Section 3 describes the research methodology, including the quantitative method, sampling process, and analysis techniques. Section 4 presents the empirical findings, including the demographic analysis, model fit measures, and hypothesis test results. Section 5 presents a detailed discussion of the findings, comparing them with the existing literature and outlining both theoretical and practical implications. Section 6 concludes the study by summarizing the findings, recognizing the limitations, and proposing avenues for further research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. CSR and consumer purchasing behaviour

Companies are increasingly focusing on environmental sustainability as they seek to learn more about the latest strategies for incorporating green marketing into product promotion during the contemporary period (Peattie, 2016). There is a need to analyze the underlying factors that influence the metrics used by customers to evaluate CSR practices during the buying process, as there is increasing interest in the contribution of CSR to crisis communication. Value-based behavioural traits can be a powerful mitigator of the potentially risky dangers inherent in corporate communication, as they identify how CSR has evolved from a crisis asset to a crisis threat (Coombs and Holladay, 2015). Global custodians are being sued and charged with corporate malpractice because of the increasing inconsistency between stakeholders' expectations for CSR promotion

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and businesses' actions (Elving et al., 2015). Companies are motivated to adopt environmentally favourable practices, such as green marketing and branding promotion, or to implement environmentally friendly management practices, owing to the increasing demand for green products and heightened awareness of environmental issues (Katsikeas et al., 2016). Based on this foundation, the subsequent hypothesis was tested.

H1: CSR positively affects consumer purchasing behaviour.

2.2. GBS and Green Trust

Businesses and consumers are increasingly interested in green consumerism as environmental issues worsen (Dabrowska et al., 2014; Dabrowska et al., 2022). For instance, between 2009 and 2010, the offers for greener goods increased by 73% (Makower, 2012). The global market for sustainability and green technology is anticipated to develop at a pace of 26.6 percent annually throughout the forecast period, from USD 11.2 billion in 2020 to USD 36.6 billion by 2025 (Ha, 2022)". Both corporate and consumer interest in green energy options and environmental consciousness are growing. The market is embracing green technology and sustainability-related goods and services for several key reasons (Ha, 2022). Based on this foundation, the subsequent hypothesis was tested.

H2: GBS has a positive effect on green trust.

2.3. Green Trust and Consumer Loyalty

Green marketing strategies have been developed to gain competitive advantage and attract eco-conscious clients. Advertising slogans like "earth-friendly," "green," and "environmentally friendly" are used to persuade consumers to "go green" and "save the planet." However, because most customers have preconceived notions about businesses and distrust advertising, greenwashing is becoming increasingly common, making it harder to trust eco-friendly marketing (Adhikari, 2024; Szabo & Webster, 2021). Green purchases are often defined as consumer purchases of environmentally sustainable products (Moser, 2015; Ale & Tamang, 2019). Purchase decisions are often influenced by personal preferences and socioeconomic factors, which can impact sustainability and green consumption (Nekmahmud et al. 2022). Therefore, for green marketing to be effective, it is essential to acknowledge the different segments of green customers. As a result, trust may be damaged because consumers typically rely on advertising and the company's message when making purchase decisions (Kim et al., 2008). Hossain et al. (2022) described green trust as dependence on something based on consumer expectations regarding its impact on environmental performance, which may be determined by its capacity to meet customer demands and expectations. Based on this foundation, the subsequent hypothesis was tested.

H3: Green trust positively affects consumer loyalty.

2.4. CSR and Brand Image and Purchase Behaviour

Numerous studies have confirmed the substantial impact of corporate image on brand image. According to Ng et al. (2014), brand equity has a significant antecedent in the form of a corporate image. According to Kim and Hyun (2011), corporate image acts as a mediator between marketing mix initiatives and aspects of brand equity, including brand knowledge, encompassing both brand awareness and brand image. This earlier research demonstrates that improving a brand's image is influenced by its corporate image. According to this theory, CSR initiatives might improve a company's reputation, and a better reputation could have a favorable impact on brand perception. Consumers may become more confused as a result of the loss of trust because they are unsure of whom or what to believe. As several prior studies have proven, corporate and brand images positively impact purchase intention and other performance characteristics. Yoon et al. (1993) assert that a company's image affects its customers' propensity to buy and increases their confidence in its communications. Furthermore, Lee and Lee (2018) found that company image positively influences purchase intention, either directly or indirectly. An organization's performance and reputation suffer as a result of consumer distrust and the impression of dishonesty (Hai-Ming et al., 2020). Additionally, it negatively impacts customers' purchasing intentions. Based on this foundation, the subsequent hypothesis was tested.

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H4: Brand image mediates the relationship between CSR and purchase behaviour.

2.5. GBS and Customer Satisfaction

According to recent studies, including a green brand strategy into the larger context of corporate social responsibility (CSR) greatly improves long-term customer loyalty and customer happiness. In order to communicate environmental responsibility to consumers, a green brand strategy entails matching marketing initiatives and brand identity with eco-friendly and sustainable ideals (Rahman et al., 2021). Green practices like sustainable packaging, ecologically friendly production, and open CSR communication have been shown to have a beneficial impact on customer satisfaction, brand trust, and repurchase intentions (Gupta & Singh, 2023; Kim & Kim, 2022). By fostering emotional value and perceived ethical credibility, CSR programs increase the psychological connection between brands and their customers (Ali et al., 2023). Additionally, CSR and green branding work together to create brand authenticity, which in the post-pandemic market environment has emerged as a crucial factor in determining customer happiness (Nguyen et al., 2022). Additionally, research indicates that customers report greater pleasure, greater loyalty, and more positive word-of-mouth behaviours when businesses incorporate green brand activities into their CSR programs (Luo et al., 2021). In general, the combination of CSR and green branding creates enduring customer relationships and helps firms stand out in crowded markets by demonstrating a sincere dedication to environmental and social responsibility.

H5: GBS positively affects consumer satisfaction.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design and Approach

This study employs a quantitative research design and cross-sectional survey methodology to investigate the relationships between CSR, GBS, and consumer behavioural outcomes. This study follows a positivist paradigm, utilizing deductive reasoning to test pre-established hypotheses derived from existing theoretical frameworks. The cross-sectional design enables the examination of the relationships between variables at a specific point in time, making it suitable for understanding current consumer attitudes toward CSR and green branding initiatives.

3.2. Sampling Procedure and Participant Selection

A purposive sampling method was used to recruit 500 participants who were aware of or had interacted with brands that actively engaged in CSR and green strategies. The sampling frame included the population of 18-65 year-old consumers across different demographic segments to ensure representative sampling. The inclusion criteria included participants with existing knowledge of or purchasing experience with environmentally sustainable or socially responsible brands in the previous 12 months. A sample size of 500 was used, along with power analysis calculations, to provide sufficient statistical power for the application of Structural Equation Modeling, with a ratio of more than the minimum required 10:1 cases per estimated parameter.

3.3. Questionnaire Development and Measurement Scales

The questionnaire was developed using validated multi-item scales from prior CSR, green marketing, and consumer behaviour studies. All constructs were measured using five-point Likert scales ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. CSR was measured using five items adapted from Maignan et al. (1999) and Rivera et al. (2019). GBS was measured using four items adapted from Rahman et al. (2021) and Ha (2022). GT was measured using four items adapted from Chen and Chang (2013) and Kim et al. (2008). BI was assessed using five items adapted from Kim and Hyun (2011) and Gürlek et al. (2017). CS was measured with four items adapted from Azizan and Yusr (2019) and Luo et al. (2021). PB used four items adapted from Moser (2015) and Jung et al. (2020). CL was measured using five items adapted from Kataria et al. (2021) and Abbas et al.

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(2023). Minor wording adjustments were made to reflect sustainability-focused brands and to ensure clarity for Indian respondents. These modifications did not alter the conceptual meaning of items. A pilot study with 50 respondents was conducted to assess clarity, wording, and completion time. Based on feedback, a few items were simplified linguistically, but no items were removed after reliability checks. The final questionnaire included demographic variables such as age, gender, education, income, and green purchasing frequency.

3.4. Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected through a structured self-administered questionnaire distributed both online and offline between March and May 2025. Participants were informed about the academic purpose of the study, and anonymity was assured. Participation was voluntary and no incentives were provided. Completed responses were screened for missing values, straight-lining, and inconsistent answers. After cleaning, 500 usable responses were retained for analysis.

3.5. Reliability and Validity Assessment

Reliability and validity were assessed using Confirmatory Factor Analysis in AMOS. Internal consistency was evaluated through Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability, with thresholds of 0.70 considered acceptable. Convergent validity was assessed through Average Variance Extracted values above 0.50 and significant factor loadings above 0.60. Discriminant validity was examined by comparing the square root of AVE values with inter-construct correlations. All constructs met recommended thresholds, confirming that the measurement model was reliable and valid. The number of retained items for each construct is reported in Appendices section.

3.6. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS and AMOS. Preliminary analysis included descriptive statistics, normality testing, outlier detection, and multicollinearity assessment. Confirmatory Factor Analysis was used to validate the measurement model. Structural Equation Modeling was then applied to test hypothesized relationships among constructs. Model fit was assessed using multiple indices, including Chi-square statistics, Comparative Fit Index, Goodness-of-Fit Index, Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index, and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation. Recommended cut-off values were used to confirm acceptable model fit. Mediation effects were tested using bootstrapping with confidence intervals, and multi-group SEM was performed to compare eco-friendly buyers and non-buyers.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS**4.1. Results**

The demographic profile of the respondents is a well-spread and representative sample appropriate for surveying attitudes toward CSR and green branding. The largest group of respondents fell within the 26–30 bracket, with most participants between the ages of 18 and 35, reflecting an environmentally conscious and young consumer base. The gender distribution was almost even, with a slight female majority. Most respondents were well-educated, with the majority holding graduate and postgraduate degrees. This implies that the results are based on a population that can think critically about the value of brands and claims of sustainability.

Income distribution varied across the sample, with a high concentration of respondents earning above ₹ 1,00,000, as well as moderate- and lower-income groups, providing comprehensive economic representation. Notably, a significant 73.4% of respondents reported purchasing eco-friendly products, which supports the relevance of this study's focus on green trust, brand image, and ethical consumer behaviour. This demographic composition reflects a target audience that is both informed and engaged with environmental issues, making

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the sample well-suited for analyzing the synergistic impact of CSR and green brand strategies on consumer loyalty and purchase decisions.

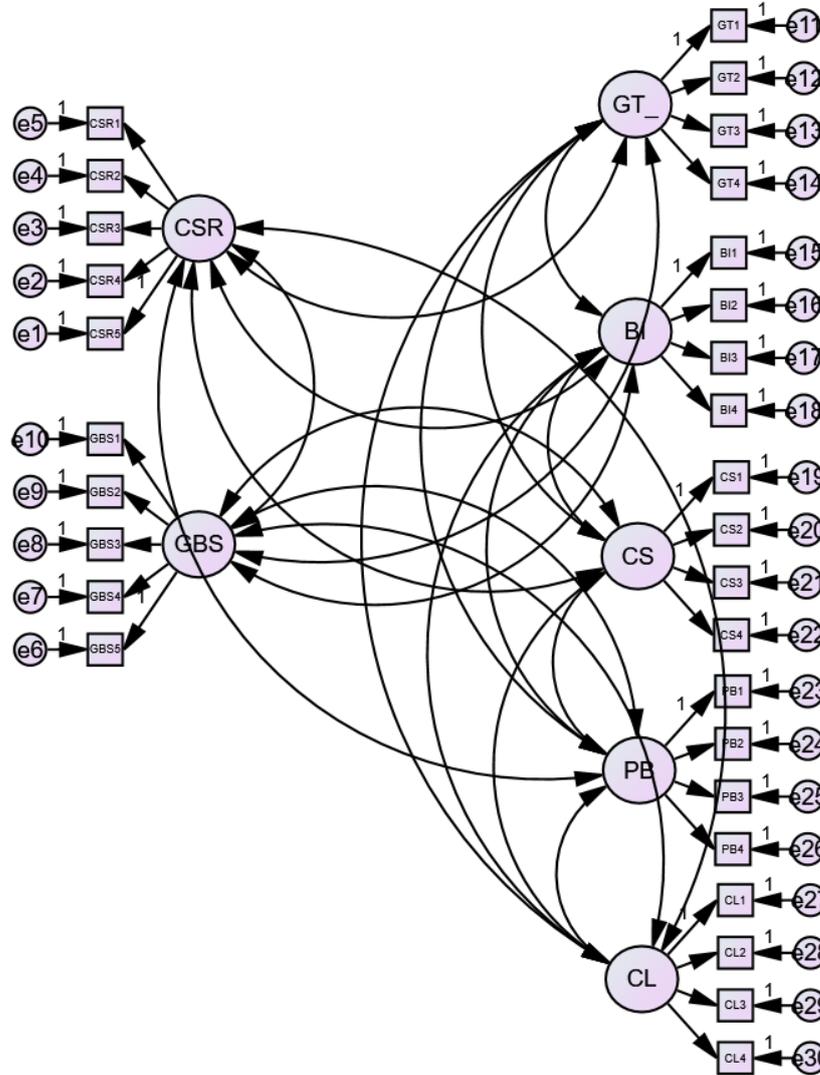


FIGURE 1 - STRUCTURAL MODEL LINKING CSR, GREEN BRANDING, TRUST, SATISFACTION, AND LOYALTY

TABLE 1 - RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY ANALYSIS - OVERALL MODEL

Construct	Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE	√AVE
CSR	5	0.891	0.894	0.629	0.793
GBS	4	0.867	0.872	0.631	0.794
GT	4	0.883	0.887	0.663	0.814
BI	5	0.879	0.883	0.601	0.775
CS	4	0.856	0.861	0.608	0.78
PB	4	0.874	0.878	0.643	0.802
CL	5	0.898	0.902	0.649	0.806

The reliability and validity analysis in Table 1 demonstrates that all constructs exhibit strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.856 to 0.898, which is well above the recommended threshold of 0.70. The composite reliability values consistently exceeded 0.86, indicating excellent construct

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reliability. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values ranged from 0.601 to 0.663, exceeding the minimum requirement of 0.50, which confirms convergent validity. The square root of the AVE values suggests adequate discriminant validity among the constructs, supporting the distinctiveness of each measured variable in the overall model.

TABLE 2 - PATH COEFFICIENTS AND HYPOTHESIS TESTING OF ALL FACTORS

Hypothesized Path	Standardized Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value	Result
CSR → Purchase Behaviour	0.347	0.058	5.983	< 0.001	Supported
GBS → Green Trust	0.524	0.061	8.59	< 0.001	Supported
Green Trust → Consumer Loyalty	0.429	0.054	7.944	< 0.001	Supported
CSR → Brand Image	0.418	0.059	7.085	< 0.001	Supported
Brand Image → Purchase Behaviour	0.312	0.052	6	< 0.001	Supported
GBS → Customer Satisfaction	0.376	0.055	6.836	< 0.001	Supported

The path coefficient analysis in Table 2 reveals significant positive relationships across all hypothesized paths, with t-values exceeding 5.98 and p-values below 0.001, providing strong empirical support for the proposed hypotheses. The strongest relationship was between GBS and GT ($\beta = 0.524$), indicating that effective green branding significantly enhances consumer trust in environmental commitments. The relationship between GT and Consumer Loyalty ($\beta = 0.429$) demonstrates the crucial role of trust in building lasting customer relationships. These results collectively validate the theoretical framework and confirm the interconnectedness of CSR, green branding, and consumer behavioural outcomes.

TABLE 3 - MODEL FIT INDICES OF ALL FACTORS

Fit Indices	Values of Model
Chi-Square	429.729
CMIN/DF	0.988
GFI	0.955
AGFI	0.946
PGFI	0.793
RMR	0.022
FMIN	0.718

The model was evaluated using structural equation Modelling in AMOS to examine the impact of CSR and GBS on GT, Brand Image, Customer Satisfaction, Purchase Behaviour, and Consumer Loyalty. The fit indices for the results show that the theoretical model matches the given data well. The CMIN/DF was lower than the suggested limit, indicating that the model structure corresponded well with the actual responses. Both GFI and AGFI values were above the acceptable level of 0.90, indicating that the model accounts for a significant majority of the variation in the data. These values prove that the entire model is statistically reliable and properly structured.

Additionally, the PGFI value indicated that the model was well-balanced in terms of fit and complexity, and the low RMR value suggested minimal disparity between the predicted and actual points. The FMIN value also ensured the robustness of the model fit. Together, these indicators ensure that the variables are well-positioned in the model and that the structure is suitable for the research purpose. The implications are that CSR and GBS positively impact GT, BI, and CS, which in turn affect PB and CL. All relationships between the variables exhibited a consistent trend, validating the assumptions made during the model development stage. The findings demonstrate that the model is both theoretically relevant and practically applicable. The clarity of the relationship between these factors enables us to comprehend how CSR and GBS influence buyer behaviour. The model reflects a well-constructed framework that explains the flow from ethical brand practices to consumer action and loyalty. It also highlights the importance of mediators, such as trust, satisfaction, and brand image,

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in building long-term consumer relationships. The findings demonstrate that effective brand strategies can enhance consumer trust and engagement when communicated clearly. This confirms that the model is well-suited for examining the interconnected dynamics among the constructs used in this study.

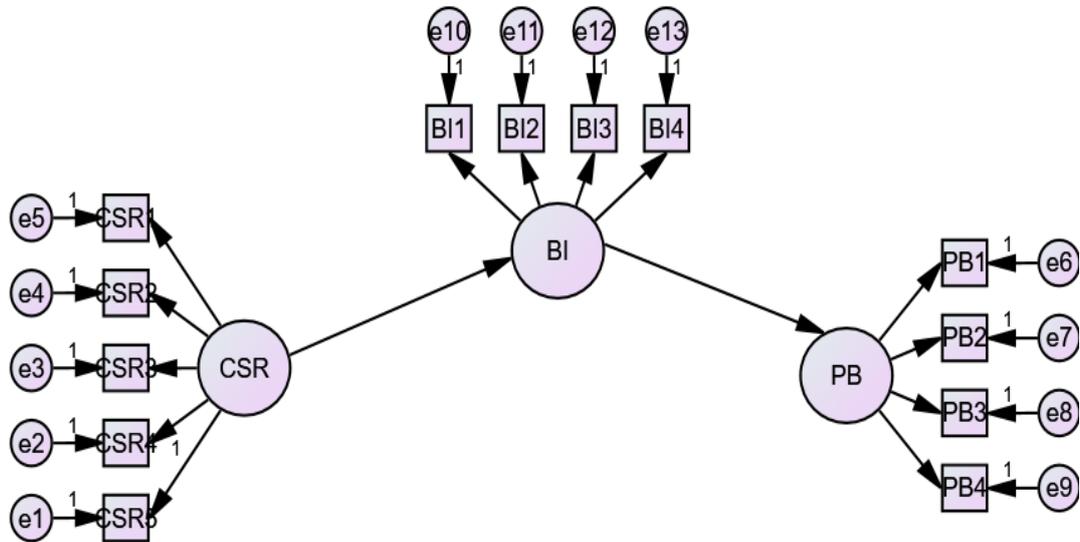


FIGURE 2 - MEASUREMENT MODEL DEPICTING THE MEDIATING ROLE OF BRAND IMAGE BETWEEN CSR AND PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR

TABLE 4 - RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY ANALYSIS - MEDIATION MODEL

Construct	Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE	\sqrt{AVE}
CSR	5	0.889	0.892	0.625	0.791
BI	5	0.881	0.885	0.605	0.778
PB	4	0.876	0.88	0.646	0.804

The mediation model in Table 4 demonstrates excellent reliability and validity across all three constructs. Cronbach's alpha values (0.876-0.889) and composite reliability indices (0.880-0.892) exceed the recommended thresholds, confirming strong internal consistency. The AVE values ranged from 0.605 to 0.646, which is substantially above the 0.50 criterion, thereby establishing convergent validity. Discriminant validity is supported by the square root of the AVE values, indicating that each construct captures a unique variance distinct from others in the mediation model.

TABLE 5 - MEDIATION ANALYSIS RESULTS

Effect Type	Path	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-value	p-value	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Direct Effect	CSR → PB	0.234	0.048	4.875	< 0.001	0.14	0.328
Direct Effect	CSR → BI	0.421	0.057	7.386	< 0.001	0.309	0.533
Direct Effect	BI → PB	0.318	0.051	6.235	< 0.001	0.218	0.418
Indirect Effect	CSR → BI → PB	0.134	0.025	5.36	< 0.001	0.085	0.183
Total Effect	CSR → PB	0.368	0.052	7.077	< 0.001	0.266	0.47

The mediation analysis in Table 5 provides compelling evidence for the indirect effect of CSR on Purchase Behaviour through BI. The significant direct effect of CSR on BI ($\beta = 0.421, p < 0.001$) and BI on Purchase Behaviour ($\beta = 0.318, p < 0.001$) established the mediation pathway. The indirect effect ($\beta = 0.134, p < 0.001$) with confidence intervals excluding zero confirms partial mediation, as the direct effect of CSR on Purchase Behaviour remains significant ($\beta = 0.234, p < 0.001$). The total effect ($\beta = 0.368$) demonstrates that CSR influences purchase behaviour both directly and indirectly through enhanced brand image (BI), supporting the

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theoretical proposition that brand perception serves as a crucial mechanism linking corporate responsibility to consumer behaviour.

TABLE 6 - MODEL FIT INDICES - CSR, BI, PB

Fit Indices	Values of Model
CMIN/DF	0.848
GFI	0.983
AGFI	0.976
PGFI	0.702
RMR	0.019

The model examining the influence of CSR on consumer purchase behaviour through BI was analyzed using Structural Equation Modelling in AMOS. The results indicate that the model has a good overall fit to the data. The model fit indices, such as CMIN/DF, GFI, AGFI, PGFI, and RMR, all fell within the acceptable range, indicating that the model's structure was appropriate. These results suggest that a significant relationship exists between CSR and Purchase Behaviour when mediated by BI. These values indicate that the data align well with the proposed model and that the associations among the variables are meaningful. The analysis further demonstrates that the model is not only statistically sound but also consistent in explaining the influence of CSR on BI and, consequently, purchase behaviour. This indicates that when consumers view CSR activities positively, their perception of the brand improves. A better BI increases the chances of repeat purchases and overall customer engagement. The results also support the assumption that CSR efforts indirectly shape brand perception and influence consumer behaviour. This demonstrates that BI serves as a bridge between CSR and consumer decision-making. The model illustrates how a company's moral and responsible behaviour enhances brand perception, which in turn influences how customers perceive it in the marketplace. These results demonstrate the significance of CSR as a strategy to influence customer preferences and purchase intentions, in addition to its role as a social duty.

Based on the results of the structural equation modeling, all four of the study's hypotheses are supported, with the first hypothesis (H1) that CSR has a beneficial impact on customer purchasing behaviour not being rejected. The model, which involves CSR influencing Purchase Behaviour through BI, showed an excellent fit, and the pathway through BI strongly supports CSR's positive impact on purchase behaviour. The second hypothesis (H2), which proposed that GBS positively affects GT, was not rejected. The model that included GBS predicting GT produced an acceptable fit, indicating a valid relationship between variables. Similarly, the third hypothesis (H3), which assumed that GT positively affects Consumer Loyalty, was supported. GT, positioned as a mediator in the complete model, had a statistically significant impact on Consumer Loyalty. Finally, the fourth hypothesis (H4), which asserts that BI mediates the association between CSR and purchasing behaviour, was not rejected. Strong evidence for the indirect impact of CSR on customer behaviour through BI was provided by the model investigating this mediation, which demonstrated excellent fit. These results collectively confirm that CSR and GBS influence consumer outcomes through trust, brand image, and brand satisfaction.

The configural model showed good fit ($\chi^2 = 812.4$, $df = 356$, $CFI = .946$, $RMSEA = .049$, $SRMR = .041$), supporting an acceptable baseline structure across groups. Constraining factor loadings (metric invariance) resulted in $\Delta CFI = .004$ and $\Delta RMSEA = .002$ relative to the configural model, indicating measurement invariance. Scalar invariance further showed $\Delta CFI = .007$, within the recommended .01 threshold, confirming equivalence of measurement across groups.

TABLE 7 - MULTI-GROUP SEM RESULTS COMPARING BUYERS AND NON-BUYERS OF ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

Path	Buyers (β)	Non-Buyers (β)	χ^2 -diff ($\Delta df=1$)	p-value	Interpretation
GBS → GT	0.61***	0.39**	6.21	0.013	Stronger effect among buyers
GT → CL	0.54***	0.41**	3.88	0.049	Stronger loyalty from trust among buyers
CSR → BI	0.46***	0.51***	1.12	0.29	No significant difference
BI → PB	0.42***	0.18	5.47	0.019	Stronger purchase effect among buyers
CSR → PB	0.21*	0.27*	0.79	0.374	No significant difference

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The multi-group SEM revealed meaningful differences between consumers who purchased eco-friendly products and those who did not. Measurement invariance tests confirmed that constructs were comparable across groups, allowing valid structural comparisons. As shown in Table 6, green brand strategies had a significantly stronger effect on green trust among buyers ($\beta = .61$) than non-buyers ($\beta = .39$). This suggests that prior purchase experience reinforces the credibility of green initiatives, making brand signals more persuasive. Trust also translated more strongly into loyalty among buyers ($\beta = .54$ vs. $\beta = .41$), highlighting the role of repeat experience in sustaining long-term relationships. Interestingly, brand image was a stronger predictor of purchase behaviour for buyers ($\beta = .42$) than for non-buyers ($\beta = .18$), indicating that favorable perceptions more easily convert into action when consumers already engage in eco-friendly practices.

In contrast, the influence of CSR on brand image and purchase behaviour did not differ significantly across groups, suggesting that CSR messaging resonates broadly, regardless of prior buying behaviour. This stability reinforces CSR's role as a foundational brand attribute, while green brand strategies and image operate as differentiators more relevant to active buyers. These findings underline the importance of segmenting green marketing strategies. For current buyers, strengthening brand image and trust can deepen loyalty and repeat purchases. For non-buyers, CSR may serve as the initial entry point, but additional cues are needed to bridge positive attitudes and actual purchase behaviour.

4.2. Discussions

This study contributes to CSR and green marketing literature by integrating CSR, green brand strategy, and green trust within a single structural model to explain consumer purchasing behaviour and loyalty. Although earlier studies have confirmed that CSR improves brand image and influences purchase decisions, they often examine these relationships in isolation or treat environmental initiatives as a subset of CSR. By modelling CSR and GBS separately, the present study shows that social responsibility and environmental strategy operate through different psychological mechanisms that jointly shape consumer behaviour. What this really means is that CSR enhances moral credibility and emotional attachment, while GBS establishes environmental authenticity and reduces skepticism. This integrated explanation adds clarity to the process through which ethical and sustainability practices translate into real market outcomes.

The study also refines understanding of the CSR–brand image–purchase pathway. Prior research has shown that CSR strengthens brand perceptions and loyalty (Khan & Fatma, 2023; Topor et al., 2022; Ma et al., 2023), but our findings suggest that brand image acts as a credibility filter in contexts where consumers increasingly question corporate motives. CSR initiatives are effective when they reshape perceptions of sincerity and long-term commitment rather than when they function merely as promotional tools. In emerging markets where trust in corporate communication is still evolving, consumers interpret CSR activities as signals of integrity, which then influence their purchasing behaviour through improved brand image. This interpretation moves beyond simple confirmation of earlier work by explaining why CSR matters, not just whether it matters. Another contribution lies in distinguishing GBS from CSR and identifying its unique role in building green trust. Many earlier studies combine environmental activities within broader CSR constructs, which can mask the specific influence of sustainability communication. By isolating GBS, the results show that consistent eco-friendly positioning and transparent messaging reassure consumers about the authenticity of environmental claims, thereby strengthening trust (Wong et al., 2021; Chen & Chang, 2013). This distinction suggests that firms cannot rely solely on CSR campaigns to gain environmental credibility. Instead, sustainability must be embedded in brand identity and communicated coherently to reduce perceptions of greenwashing. The novelty here lies in demonstrating that environmental credibility is shaped by strategic alignment between CSR practices and brand-level sustainability signals. The findings further reposition green trust as a central behavioural mechanism rather than a passive outcome. Earlier studies emphasize trust as an effect of green initiatives (Kim et al., 2017), but this study shows that trust actively drives long-term loyalty by reducing uncertainty and reinforcing confidence in purchase decisions. In markets where consumers face information asymmetry about sustainability claims, trust becomes a critical determinant of repeat purchasing. Firms that maintain consistency between CSR commitments and green branding can therefore build durable customer relationships. This insight highlights trust as a strategic asset that mediates between ethical positioning and

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behavioural loyalty. Finally, the integrated framework provides contextual insight by examining CSR, GBS, and trust relationships in a developing market setting. Much of the existing research is based on developed economies with strong regulatory oversight and standardized sustainability reporting. In contexts where such institutional mechanisms are weaker, consumers rely more heavily on perceived brand sincerity and environmental credibility. The study therefore shows how CSR-driven brand image and GBS-driven trust operate together to shape purchasing behaviour in settings characterized by higher skepticism and information gaps. By combining constructs that are usually studied separately and validating their relationships through SEM, the research offers a more holistic explanation of how socially and environmentally responsible strategies influence consumer behaviour (Chen & Fatma, 2023; Chen & Chang, 2013).

The distinctive characteristics of the present research is the fact that it explores corporate social responsibility as well as sustainable corporate strategy simultaneously through an integrated organisational structure which simultaneously encompasses green trust, customer satisfaction, brand image, purchase behaviour, alongside consumer loyalty. Previous research investigations have discovered interpersonal connections, for instance CSR as well brand image or CSR and purchasing habits. The present research through experimentation demonstrates the orderly as well as interconnected methods through which CSR as well as environmental branding impact consumer choices as well as loyalty results, in contrast with previous study the fact that has primarily focused upon independent interactions. The present research provides an in-depth and comprehensive comprehension of responsible customer choice by demonstrating the manner in which CSR impacts purchasing habits in both direct and indirect ways by means of image of the brand, as well as how sustainable company strategy develops faith, which then in consequently enhances satisfaction as well as loyalty. Through explaining psychological as well as interpersonal processes which integrate environmentally friendly initiatives via persistent loyalty among consumers, this comprehensive strategy enhances existing research regarding corporate social responsibility as well as sustainable marketing.

4.3. Managerial and Theoretical Implications

The results are of vital strategic importance for managers seeking to enhance consumer engagement through effective CSR and green branding strategies. The development and implementation of genuine CSR programs and green branding strategies are top priorities for organizations, as they significantly impact customers' purchasing habits and loyalty. Managers must realize that their CSR investments cover not only compliance with social obligations but also become strong instruments for differentiating and retaining customers. This study highlights the importance of developing GT through environmentally conscious and open communication, as this directly affects increased consumer loyalty. Managers also need to concentrate their efforts on strengthening BI as a mediating factor between CSR actions and consumer reactions so that actions toward sustainability are effectively conveyed to the target audience. Companies should integrate CSR and green branding into their core marketing strategies rather than treating them as peripheral activities, as research demonstrates their substantial impact on actual purchasing decisions and long-term customer relationships in today's environmentally conscious marketplace.

This study makes significant theoretical contributions to the intersection of CSR, green marketing, and consumer behaviour literature. This study extends existing theoretical frameworks by empirically validating the mediating role of BI in the relationship between CSR and purchase behaviour, providing a deeper understanding of the psychological mechanisms through which ethical business practices influence consumer decisions. These findings enhance green marketing theory by demonstrating the sequential relationship between GBS, GT, and consumer loyalty, establishing trust as a critical intermediary variable in sustainable consumption models. Furthermore, this study contributes to stakeholder theory by providing empirical evidence of how CSR initiatives create tangible value through enhanced consumer relationships and behavioural outcomes. The validated structural model provides a comprehensive theoretical framework that integrates multiple constructs from various theoretical domains, thereby advancing our understanding of how contemporary consumers respond to corporate sustainability initiatives. These theoretical insights expand the boundaries of consumer behaviour theory in the context of ethical consumption, providing a foundation for

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future research exploring the complex relationships between corporate responsibility, environmental consciousness, and consumer decision-making processes.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study aims to investigate how CSR and GBS affect consumer buying behaviour and customer loyalty. AMOS's Structural Equation Modelling was used to analyze the model. CSR has a positive effect on consumer purchasing decisions. Brands perceived as socially conscious are more likely to receive favourable feedback from consumers. CSR programs foster credibility, trust, and emotional bonds that influence consumer behaviour. Additionally, it improves the brand's perception, which affects consumers' propensity to interact with the brand regularly. These findings demonstrate that CSR influences actual customer decisions and enhances brand reputation. Further, a strong GBS increases consumer trust in the business's environmental commitment, according to the report. Today's consumers expect firms to be transparent and honest about their efforts, as they are increasingly aware of and concerned with environmental challenges. Consistent and obvious green practices foster confidence and dispel skepticism regarding the brand's motivations. According to the survey, continuous action that fosters enduring trust and stronger client relationships is just as important for green branding as the message itself. The results also support the notion that GT significantly impacts customer loyalty. Customers are more likely to remain loyal to a company and maintain their relationship with it when they believe that the company is genuinely committed to sustainability. This confidence reduces hesitancy and increases the likelihood of repeat business. The creation of GT is essential for fostering loyalty in a marketplace with increasingly value-conscious and cautious customers. This study validates the theory that CSR and purchasing are mediated by BI. CSR measures enhance customers' perceptions of a brand, which, in turn, influence their purchasing decisions. Customers are more convinced and in control when a firm is strong and positive. Consequently, BI is a vital link between a firm's ethical policies and purchasing behaviour. BI also helps customers make a lasting impression and bond with firms more quickly.

This study also highlights the increasing importance of sustainability and accountability in brand activities. The values on which a product is based are as much a consideration for customers as the product's actual characteristics. Brands that make genuine investments in green branding and CSR programs are more likely to gain customer trust, build consumer loyalty, and influence their buying habits. The findings of this analysis provide an accurate model for how businesses can fulfill the demands of customers in a sustainability-focused marketplace. The findings demonstrate that environmentally sound and ethical practices can lead to sustainable success and foster strong consumer relationships, thereby reinforcing all four hypotheses of this study.

5.1. Limitations and Future Research

There are numerous kinds of constraints to this research presenting possibilities for additional investigation. To ensure whether participants were able to evaluate sustainability-associated factors in an appropriate manner, the research initially focused on customers who had previously become familiar with CSR along with sustainable advertising strategies. While response accuracy was ensured by this approach, subsequent research ought to examine at groups of consumers which are less versed or doubtful in order to acquire a greater understanding regarding spreading awareness processes.

Second, the customer's opinions have been collected during a particular instance time frame through a cross-sectional study strategy. Further longitudinal investigations might provide more insight onto the manner in which consumer opinions during environmental sustainability, reliability, as well as faith shift through period of time, regardless of whether these studies are adequate for evaluating fundamental interactions. Thirdly, digital participation factors that have grown progressively more significant when affecting trust among customers as well as behaviour responses, including social networking engagement as well as perceived CSR integrity, weren't included in the present investigation.

All of these variables could potentially be considered in further research in order to develop more comprehensive analyses involving customer behaviour driven by sustainability. Lastly, subsequent studies

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could conduct multicultural as well as global comparisons to enhance generalisation, considering that the respondents included an assortment of demographics categories. Addressing these problems could enhance understanding of CSR, green branding, and customer loyalty in changing sustainable environment.

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Appendix -Questionnaire

Instructions to Participants: Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement regarding a brand that you associate with environmental responsibility or corporate social responsibility. 1 indicating "strongly disagree" and 5 indicating "strongly agree."

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	1	2	3	4	5
1. This brand actively supports social causes.					
2. The company donates to charitable or environmental initiatives.					
3. The brand is committed to ethical business practices.					
4. This company is transparent about its sustainability goals.					
5. The brand is engaged in protecting the environment.					
Green Brand Strategy					
1. The brand promotes green/environmental practices in its operations.					
2. This product/service is marketed as eco-conscious.					
3. The packaging of this product is biodegradable or recyclable.					
4. The company invests in green technologies or innovations.					
Green Trust					
1. I trust this brand's environmental claims.					
2. I believe this brand genuinely cares about the environment.					
3. I think this brand avoids greenwashing (misleading claims).					
4. The brand has a consistent track record in eco-responsibility.					
Brand Image					
1. I have a positive perception of this brand.					
2. The brand stands out as a responsible and ethical company.					
3. I associate this brand with environmental friendliness.					
4. This brand gives me a good impression overall.					
5. This brand has a strong and favorable reputation in my mind.					
Customer Satisfaction					
1. I am satisfied with this brand's products/services.					
2. The brand meets my expectations.					
3. I feel good after purchasing from this brand.					
4. Overall, I am happy with my experience with the brand.					
Consumer Purchase Behavior					
1. I frequently purchase products from this brand.					
2. I have bought eco-friendly products from this brand recently.					
3. I prefer this brand when looking for sustainable options.					
4. I plan to purchase from this brand again.					
Consumer Loyalty					
1. I intend to continue buying from this brand in the future.					
2. I would recommend this brand to others.					
3. I feel loyal to this brand.					
4. Even if other brands are available, I prefer this one.					
5. I consider this brand as my first choice when making purchase decisions.					

Demographic Information

- Age:
 - a. 18-25 yrs
 - b. 26-30yrs
 - c. 31-35yrs
 - d. 36-40yrs
 - e. 41-45yrs
 - f. 46yrs and above
- Gender: Male / Female / Other
- Education Level: High School / Graduate / Postgraduate / Other
- Occupation: _____
- Monthly Income:
 - a. Less than Rs.25000
 - b. Rs.25000-Rs.50000
 - c. Rs.50000- Rs.75000
 - d. Rs.75000- Rs.100000
 - e. Above Rs.1,00,000
- Do you purchase sustainable/eco-friendly products regularly? Yes / No
- Which eco-conscious brand(s) are you most familiar with? _____