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AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF CONSUMER PERSPECTIVE ON CSR

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ABSTRACT

The Companies (Amendment) Act, 2019 came into effect on July 31, 2019 and with certain changes were introduced in the Act. CSR is now mandatory and the amount which remains unspent is transferred to PM's Funds. The Act makes it compulsory for companies having a profit of greater than 5 Crore, turnover of 100 Crore, and net worth of more than 500 Crore to spend at least two percent of their three years' annual average net profit towards CSR activities. In today's times people are becoming more and more conscious of their environment, and as a result the employees of an organisation or the customers place a lot of significance on the activities the businesses are conducting to make sure that these activities are in no way harming their environment. More so people want to be associated with brands and companies who are willing to contribute something towards the betterment of the society. CSR is an evolving business practice that incorporates sustainable development into a company's business model. It has a positive impact on social, economic and environmental factors. The aim of this study therefore is in the context of the consumer and how the CSR policies of a company affects its consumer's perspective for that brand and to find out if CSR activities affect the purchasing decisions of the customers. Through this research, it will be studied that how aware the customers are regarding the CSR initiatives of companies and how they view these CSR initiatives. Whether CSR activities have a positive impact on the image of a brand or not will be evaluated by the end of this study.

KEYWORDS

CSR, consumer, consumer perspective, brand.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Indian corporate world in April 2014 woke up to a new reality spending time money and efforts for the betterment of the society was made compulsory for some companies in the form of CSR i.e. corporate social responsibility. In the same companies were asked to share the burden of social development. Corporate social responsibility relates to the responsibility of the corporates or business houses specially bigger ones to engage part of their wealth in philanthropy or charitable activities on the line of giving back to the society, and conducting responsible businesses. Which is very noble concept considering the impact of business on environment and displacement of people but India seems to be the only country to make it mandatory.

In today's times people are becoming more and more conscious of their environment, and as a result the employees of an organisation or the customers place a lot of significance on the activities the businesses are conducting to make sure that these activities are in no way harming their environment. More so people want to be associated with brands and companies who are willing to contribute something towards the betterment of the society. CSR is an evolving business practice that incorporates sustainable development into a company's business model. It has a positive impact on social, economic and environmental factors.

Prominent researchers working in the field of marketing have proved that CSR plays a very important role in improving the image of the organisation. It helps people to believe that the organisation is conscious of its activities and therefore find it easier to trust and believe that these organisations are ethical. What the people think about a business and what are their larger view of the organisation will determine the future of that company. By investing time effort and money into areas which the company believes in, the company can improve its brand image."

1.1 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR): MEANING

Corporate social responsibility is a method of making companies socially accountable as a result the employees and outside stakeholders know that the business is indeed following a self-regulating business. With the help of corporate social responsibility companies can have control over the impact it has on its overall environment. Companies can be mindful of the kind of impression they are having on all facets of society, including economic, social, and environmental.

To contribute to CSR funds means that a company is working in harmony with the environment and erasing any negative effect it might have had on the environment. This helps the business to stay in the game for a longer period of time because businesses are only a part of the society and they use the resources of the society so if the society will do well so will these businesses

Corporate social responsibility is no single dimension concept in fact it has many dimensions. Corporate social responsibility can be performed through various means like philanthropy, volunteering, guiding, charity etc. while taking up all these initiatives the business is not only helping itself grow by building a positive brand image, it is also enhancing its immediate environment. Another very important concept of CSR is that it helps the companies to build a bond with its outside world and not just stay limited to its internal environment. It helps the companies to better understand the environment the exist it which will only help them to identify opportunities better and will lead a better engagement with the end consumers.

1.2 MAIN ASPECTS OF CSR

- Corporate social responsibility is not only beneficial to customers but also to the businesses running these CSR projects.
- Corporate responsibility programs are a great way to build a rapport with the outside world.

CSR is primarily beneficial for larger companies because these companies only are capable of arranging the kind of funds that a CSR project will require. This is only fair, because it is believed that larger companies have even bigger responsibility to give back to the society and set a standard which can followed suit Small and medium sized business also like to indulge in CSR initiatives although they may not be able to do it at that scale and level as big corporates and that is also the reason why their CSR activities never really end up getting the kind of recognition that the CSR activities of these big corporates get.

Starbucks is one extremely popular example of a good CSR strategy that came to a successful conclusion. Starbucks has always been known for its ethical practices which produce not only great quality products but also do not have any negative effects on the environment. They keep the interests of all parties that are included in the process of manufacturing of coffee into consideration including the farmers and that too without compromising on the sustainability aspect of the manufacturing process. Starbucks has also launched many ground-breaking projects which aim to sensitise students about how to naturally source the raw materials. Starbucks has always achieved all the milestones that they have set for themselves.

1.3 CSR PERSPECTIVE IN INDIA

India became the very first country which made CSR compulsory and this was done through an amendment in the Companies Act, 2013 in April 2014. Businesses can make contributions via their CSR projects in fields like education, poverty, women empowerment, child care, road safety, cleanliness etc. according to the new amendment such contributions have become necessary for companies and organisations operating on a large scale that is making more than specified amount of profit every year.

The amendment informed in *the Companies Act, 2013* necessitates companies with a net worth of INR 500 Crore or additional, or an yearly revenue of INR 1000 Crore or additional, or net profit of INR 5 Crore or more, to invest 2 percent of their average net profits of three years on CSR. Before the amendment CSR was not

compulsory that is the companies could voluntarily invest how much ever amount they liked into these CSR activities whereas now it has become necessary for the above specified companies to invest a certain portion into the CSR activities.

CSR includes but is not limited to the following:

- Ventures connected to activities specified in the Companies Act; or
- Ventures connected to activities taken by the company board as indorsed by the CSR Committee, on condition that those activities cover objects itemized in the Companies Act.

Organizations will note that the CSR expenditures are not eligible for deduction in the taxable income assessment. Nonetheless, the Government is considering a re-evaluation of this provision as well as other recently introduced CSR regulations under the Companies (Amendment) Act, 2019 ("the Act").

1.4 CSR AMENDMENTS UNDER THE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) ACT, 2019

Till now what had been happening is that the companies had the option to carry forward any amount that was not fully utilised for the CSR fund for that year, to use in the next year along with the amount allotted for that year.

The new CSR amendment now states that the unspent amount will not be carried forward but will now be deposited into a separate fund prescribed under schedule 6 of the companies Act by the end of the fiscal year. The amount in this fund should be utilised within the next three years, and if that does not happen it is again to be transferred into a separate fund. The CSR amendments introduced under the Act now require companies to deposit the same. If the companies will not comply with the new amendments, there is a monetary penalty and as well as imprisonment for such defaulters from now on. The defaulters have to pay a penalty ranging from INR 50,000 (US \$700) to INR 25 lakh (US \$35,000) whereas the defaulting officer of the company may be liable to imprisonment for up to three years, or a fine up to INR 5 lakh (US \$7,023), or both.

But these new amendments have received a lot of backlash from the industry because of the very strict punishments mentioned in the act, Imprisonment for example for not complying with the CSR guidelines. As a result the government is now considering reviewing the guidelines and is yet to fully operationalise them. CSR is a method of controlling and analysing the impact businesses have on the society at large. It makes these organisations responsible for the environment surrounding them and put them in a position of responsibility. A business has many aspects, some of them being:

- Customers;
- Suppliers;
- Environment;
- Community
- Employees.

The CSR plans ensures that the organisation should abide by the legislature and follow diligently all the legal requirements that are to be fulfilled on the part of the business, but not only that. These organisations should also make sure that through their CSR projects they are giving the marginalised communities equal chance of a better life and minimising any harmful impact on the environment surrounding them.

CSR activities should be able to reap benefits for the society for a long period of time. These projects should be sustainable and reliable, because only then will they be able to help the community for a longer period of time. CSR plans should therefore be culminated keeping in mind the long terms goals that the organisation wants to achieve from these projects. The growth of CSR and their success in India have been pretty impressive.

Companies have now started coming up with separate departments and teams which carefully look into the CSR plans of the company. They carefully study the fund requirements of a project and try to align it with what the organisation wants to achieve with respect to these CSR activities. Organisations are also taking up CSR projects considering their business domain. This helps them to align their business goals with these CSR goals.

1.5 CSR DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

After the applicability of the new CSR provisions which makes CSR spending compulsory, CSR spending by the Indian Corporate houses have increased manifolds. Companies have spent almost 47% more as compared to the amount in 2014-2015, making a contribution of INR 7,536 crores (US \$1 billion) to CSR initiatives, according to a survey.

Listed organisations in India have spent INR 10,000 crore (US\$1.4 billion) in various programs. These programs range from educational programs, women empowerment programs, programs for eradicating poverty, environment conservation. Also the Prime Minister Narendra Modi Fund for Relief saw an increase of 139 percent in the CSR contributions from previous year.

It has been seen that the duration sector receives the maximum CSR contribution followed by other sectors like healthcare, environment sustainability etc. but there are also many sectors who have continuously been neglected when it comes to CSR contributions. Programs such as technology incubators, sports, armed forces, reducing inequalities saw negligible spends. Taking into account the recent amendments to CSR provisions, industry research estimates CSR compliance to improve and range between 97 to 98 percent by FY 2019-20.

1.6 EXAMPLES TO UNDERSTAND CSR IN INDIA

1.6.1 TATA GROUP

The Tata Group conglomerate undertakes various projects and are one of the biggest spenders on CSR. Most of their programs focus on the eradication of poverty and the overall development of community. They have invested a lot of their money into many self-help groups. These self-help groups help in the skill development and overall improvement of the financial sustainability of women in rural areas. When it comes to their contribution in the education sector, they have introduced many schemes of scholarships for meritorious students who come from humble background and cannot afford a quality education on their own.

Another key area of their focus is sensitizing the population about AIDS. Tata group organises workshops in these areas to inform the people about this disease and how they can reach for help. They have also done plenty of work on improving the financial health of farmers, by allocating their funds for researches in the field of agriculture to provide the farmers scientific ways to maximise their crops with minimum amount of investment.

1.6.2 ULTRATECH CEMENT

Ultratech Cement basically have kept their focus on rural areas as they have targeted as much as 407 villages as part of their CSR projects. Their main aim is to make the population belonging to these areas self-reliant. They have introduced many workshops in these areas which educate them on wide variety of topics and these workshops are also gaining a lot of popularity among the crowd with people enrolling in thousands for these workshops.

They run a wide variety of programs in these areas ranging from conservation of water to childcare. They give special assistance new and to be mothers throughout their pregnancy and post pregnancy period to bring down infant mortality rate in these areas. They ensure that the mothers are getting enough nutrients and all the health needs of the child are also being taken care of. With these initiative they have made many people self-reliant including many women. The company has organized medical camps, immunization programs, sanitization programs, school enrolment, plantation drives, water conservation programs, industrial training, and organic farming programs.

1.6.3 MAHINDRA & MAHINDRA

Indian automobile manufacturer Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) established the K. C. Mahindra Education Trust in 1954. This trust focuses on providing a quality education for the underprivileged kids who do not come from economically weak backgrounds. These students are meritorious but cannot afford a good quality education and hence Mahindra helps them get sound education so that they do not have to work in menial jobs and can successfully sustain themselves.

Moreover, they specially focus on the education of girls and making them skilled so they do not have to rely on others in order to provide for themselves. They also focus on healthcare focusing on the health of and hygiene of girls during menstrual cycles. Apart from this they also focus on conservation of the environment and practice environment friendly and sustainable business activities.

1.6.4 ITC GROUP

ITC Group is a conglomerate with its reach in many business areas like hospitality, FMCG and agriculture, IT, packaging sector etc. the main focus of area of their CSR Project Wise to not compromise on their quality of services and products which are sustainably sourced and do not bear any negative impacts on the natural resources as well as the community. Through their CSR activities they have been able to provide 6 million people with livelihood.

Their e- Choupal program, which aims to connect rural farmers through the internet for procuring agriculture products, covers 40,000 villages and over four million farmers.

1.7 TREND OF EXPENDITURE ON CSR BY INDIAN COMPANIES

Spending on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), or welfare schemes like health and education, by India’s largest firms stood at Rs7,536.30 crore (around \$1 billion) in the financial year that ended in March 2019, according to a survey by KPMG India. The survey analysed the CSR spending of India’s top 100 listed companies.

The CSR spending by top Indian companies in 2019 was 47% higher than what it was back in 2014 when India first made it mandatory for large private and public sector firms to spend at least 2% of their net profits on special development projects. The mandatory funding applies to companies with a turnover of Rs. 1,000 Crore or those reporting a profit of over Rs. 5 crore in a year.

CSR in India is becoming mainstream day by and it is no longer seen as a compulsory mandate. The boardroom members are taking up serious discussions about CSR. As a result of this integration India has seen major contributions towards CSR. Also the number of companies contributing 2% of their wealth have increased, the amount of money going unspent on CSR is also decreasing every year, all indicative of the fact that CSR is mainstream phenomena for the businesses now and not just a legally binding mandate of the government

1.7.1 TOP SPENDERS AND GAINERS

Companies who work in the energy and power sector emerged as the greatest spenders in CSR and second to them was the banking sector and financial services industry in India. Media and entertainment firms were the ones far behind. These industries invested heavily in the education sector and the education sector emerged as the most sought after CSR domain. Second to the education sector was the health care sector.

But also these numbers that show us that corporates spend heavily on education are also reflective of the fact that these spending are not very strategic and innovative. This might be an indication of the fact that companies view CSR as a charitable activity. Because it is mandatory clause to spend on welfare of society, there is also fear among many researchers that money is merely being spent but any tangible, visible benefit is not being received from these half-hearted CSR initiatives.

But even though there many limitations to the CSR structure and policy implementation in India, the Government still see a lot of potential in the power of the corporates to make an impact on the society. One step that the government should undertake in order to make CSR more effective is to limit the preference of the corporates to spend their funds and prescribe priority sectors to the corporates so that the sectors which are in actual need for funds are given importance.

Key trends seen in CSR recently:

- **Average expenditure:** the average amount that is being spent on these CSR activities has increased manifolds over the years. The average amount that is being spent on CSR is increasing at the rate of 9%. So with the government making compulsory for the large scale companies to spend a certain amount of their profits on CSR. One can conclude that it has given a kick start again to the CSR projects and companies are also increasingly showing more and more interest on these projects.
- **More participants:** before the mandatory clause the number of companies spending less than 2 % was very high and even after the new amendments there were certain companies which were getting by even though they were spending way less than 2% of their average profits of three years. But this scenario has changed and the number of companies spending less than 2% has decreased significantly showing that the government has taken effective steps in order to ensure a successful implementation of the amendments introduced in the Companies Act.
- **Innovative ideas:** there are various ways in which the companies can take up CSR activities. They can do so by directly employing their resources, or by taking up CSR activities via their already existing foundations and many more ways.
- **Increased compliance:** as mentioned before that there was a time when companies could just get by without complying with the regulations regarding CSR because the policies and the rules were not very strict. But now the transparency has increased and there is uniformity in the implementation of CSR across all the companies and it has resulted in greater compliance by the companies.

1.8 DETAIL OF CSR EXPENDITURE ON VARIOUS SECTORS BY INDIAN COMPANIES – 2018 & 2019

TABLE 1: DETAIL OF CSR EXPENDITURE ON VARIOUS SECTORS BY INDIAN COMPANIES – 2018 & 2019 (Amount in INR)

EDUCATION	2018: Rs. 2404 crore 2019: Rs 2202 crore
HEALTH	2018: Rs 1641 crore 2019: Rs 1691 crore
RURAL AREAS	2018: Rs 889 crore 2019: Rs 1029 crore
MULTIPLE AREAS	2018: Rs 826 crore 2019: Rs 505 crore
ENVIRONMENT	2018: Rs 797 crore 2019: Rs 483 crore
OTHER AREAS	2018: Rs 187 crore 2019: Rs 625 crore
ARTS AND CULTURE	2018: Rs 168 crore 2019: Rs 279 crore
REDUCING INEQUALITY	2018: Rs 136 crore 2019: Rs 525 crore
WAR VETERANS	2018: Rs 31 crore 2019: Rs 7 crore
WELFARE FUNDS	2018: Rs 2 crore 2019: Rs 71 crore
TECHNOLOGY INCUBATORS	2018: Rs 2 crore 2019: Rs 0 crore

CSR Expenditure on various sectors by Indian companies in the year 2018 and 2019

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Ki-Hoon lee, Dongyoung Shin, 2016: in their research paper “Consumers’ responses to CSR activities; The linkage between increased awareness and purchase intention” showed the positive effects of Corporate Social Responsibility on the behaviour of a consumer. Although previous researches have failed to show that CSR activities affect the purchasing decisions of a customer but this study has found a significant positive relation between the two. This study employed a questionnaire survey on the Korean customers. This study also concluded that corporate environmental protection and contribution have absolutely no effects on the purchase decision of a customer.

Chun Keung Hoi, Qiang Wu, Hao Zhang, 2015 in their research paper “ Is corporate social responsibility associated with tax avoidance? Evidence from irresponsible CSR activities” tried to examine the empirical relationship between corporate social responsibility and tax avoidance. Firms who undertake excessive irresponsible CSR activities are in this study seen to be having a very high chance of engaging themselves in tax avoidance activities.

Shelly Wigley, 2012: in her research paper "Gauging consumer's responses to CSR activities: does increased awareness make cents?" analysed the impact of the understanding of an organisations' corporate social responsibility on the attitude of the customer and the purchase intent of the consumer. In this study it is shown that by educating and making customers aware about the CSR initiatives of a company the organisations can not only spread awareness about their projects but also somewhat be able to convince the customer into believing that it is more responsible therefore positively impacting the purchase decision of the customer.

Yeosun Yoon, 2011: in the research paper the impact of a brand's CSR initiatives on its image was studied. In the paper it was concluded that the CSR activities of a brand severely affect its image in the mind of the customers and they tend to change the way they look at the brand based on their idea of the company's CSR policies. All CSR activities do not positively impact the image of the brand, that is to say that only when consumers are convinced that the brand is sincerely taking up these initiatives that they tend to form a positive image about the brand.

Eun Mi Lee, 2009: There have been many studies which have been performed on the consumer's perspective of CSR but very few studies focus on the employee perspective. In this study it is found out that CSR has an impact on influencing the employees of that organisation also. When employees see that the company they work in is doing its bit to help the society, they tend to psychologically grow more attached to the company and tend to get loyal to the company.

Trja Ketola, Anna Blomback, Caroline Wigren, 2009: The study was conducted to mark the difference between the CSR practices of very large scale firms and medium scale firms. They should how implementation of CSR varies from large scale firms to small scale firms. It was observed that large scale firms invest in special departments of CSR whereas medium scale firms prefer to integrate the CSR functions with other functions of the organisation.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To check the dependence of consumer's purchasing decision on CSR.
2. To check the dependency of consumer's perspective of CSR on their gender.
3. To check the dependency of consumer's perspective of CSR on their trust for a brand.
4. To check the dependency of the consumer's gender on their ability to trust a brand based on CSR.

4. HYPOTHESIS TESTING

HYPOTHESIS 1

H₀: The variables "CSR impacts purchasing decision" and "CSR positively impacts society" are independent.

H₁: The variables "CSR impacts purchasing decision" and "CSR positively impacts society" are not independent.

HYPOTHESIS 2

H₀: The purchasing decision of consumers based on CSR and their Gender are independent of each other.

H₁: The purchasing decision of consumers based on CSR and their Gender are not independent of each other.

HYPOTHESIS 3

H₀: the purchasing decision based on CSR and the trust for a brand based on CSR are independent.

H₁: the purchasing decision based on CSR and the trust for a brand based on CSR are not independent.

HYPOTHESIS 4

H₀: the trust on a brand based on CSR and the gender of the consumers are independent.

H₁: the trust on a brand based on CSR and the gender of the consumers are not independent.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The data used for the present study is primary in nature. In order to collect primary data, self-administered questionnaire was used.

The questionnaire was administered to about 100 people. The respondents included 48 males, 52 females. The survey was carried out on the people mostly in the age group of less than 25 in the city of Delhi and Uttar Pradesh during the months of January, February 2020. Convenience sampling approach was adopted in order to collect the primary data however questionnaire was administered diligently to avoid biased errors.

Research Design: The study conducted is an exploratory as well as descriptive study. The study explores the phenomena and describes the problem.

Sampling Unit: For this study, people residing mainly in Delhi and Noida were selected.

Sample Size: There are 100 respondents taken for this course of study who formed the sample size. 48 were Males and 52 were Females.

Sampling Technique: The technique through which the sample size is collected is of utter importance. For this study, convenient sampling technique was used.

Sampling Design: Questionnaire was prepared and circulated among people in order to gain the information regarding their CSR perspective.

Data collection source: The data was collected through primary mode and secondary mode. The primary data was collected through the assistance of the respondents. Questionnaire was constructed in order to gain information from the respondents. Following that the secondary data were collected with the help of books, journals and through websites. Analysis of this study was undertaken with the help of survey that was undertaken and conducted in December 2019 to March 2020.

Analysis of Data: There are various statistical tools that were used in order to analyse the data. The tools essentially helped in the understanding and achievement of the objectives of the study.

The research tools used for the study are:

- The data were represented through graphs, tables and charts.
- Excel (Chi Squared Test of Independence).

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 INFERENCE ANALYSIS

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

HYPOTHESIS 1

H₀: The variables " CSR impacts purchasing decision" and "CSR positively impacts society" are independent.

H₁: The variables " CSR impacts purchasing decision" and "CSR positively impacts society" are not independent.

FIGURE 6.a

	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
2													
3													
4						Do you believe CSR has a positive impact on society							
5					Does CSR affect your purchasing decision	YES	NO	TOTAL					
6					YES	25	7	32					
7					NO	57	11	68					
8					TOTAL	82	18	100					
9													
10													
11													
12						YES	NO						
13					YES(EXPECTED)	26.24	5.76						
14					(O-E) ² /E	0.0586	0.26694	0.32554					
15													

FIGURE 6.b

	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q
17													
18													
19													
20					YES	NO							
21					NO(EXPECTED)	55.76	12.24						
22					(O-E) ² /E	0.02758	0.12562	0.1532					
23													
24					Chi Stat	0.47874							
25					df	1							
26					Critical Value	3.841							
27													

INFERENCES

The Chi Statistic came out to be **0.478738**. The Degree of Freedom is **1**.

At 1 Degree of Freedom the **Critical Value** is **3.841**.

Chi statistic < Critical Value therefore hypothesis is accepted. It indicates that the consumer's purchasing decision is not affected by their perspective of the positive impact of CSR on the society.

HYPOTHESIS 2

H₀: The purchasing decision of consumers based on CSR and their Gender are independent of each other.

H₁: The purchasing decision of consumers based on CSR and their Gender are not independent of each other.

FIGURE 6.c

	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q
33															
34															
35					Gender of the particip.	Does CSR affect purchasing decision									
36						YES	NO	Total							
37					Female	10	42	52							
38					Male	22	26	48							
39					Total	32	68	100							
40															
41															
42															
43															
44															
45															
46						YES	NO								
47					Female(expected)	16.64	35.36								
48					(O-E) ² /E	2.649615	1.246878	3.896493							
49															

FIGURE 6.d

	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
49												
50												
51					YES	NO						
52			Male(expected)		15.36	32.64						
53			(O-E) ² /E		2.870417	1.350784	4.221201					
54												
55												
56					Chi Stat	8.117694						
57					df	1						
58					Crit Value	3.841						
59												
60												Chi Stat> Crit Value, Hypothesis Rejected
61												

INFERENCES

Chi statistic is **8.117694**. Degree of Freedom is **1**.

Critical Value is **3.841**.

Chi statistic > Critical Value, therefore hypothesis is rejected.

Which means that the consumers purchasing decision based on CSR is indeed affected by their gender.

HYPOTHESIS 3

H₀: the purchasing decision based on CSR and the trust for a brand based on CSR are independent.

H₁: the purchasing decision based on CSR and the trust for a brand based on CSR are not independent.

FIGURE 6.e

	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
62												
63												
64			CSR affects		Brand Practicing CSR is easier to trust							
65			purchasing decision	yes	no	total						
66			yes	27	5	32						
67			no	56	12	68						
68			total	83	17	100						
69												
70												
71					yes	no						
72			yes(expected)		26.56	5.44						
73			(O-E) ² /E		0.007289	0.035588	0.042877					
74												
75												

FIGURE 6.f

	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
75												
76												
77												
78					yes	no						
79			no(expected)		56.44	11.56						
80			(O-E) ² /E		0.00343	0.016747	0.020178					
81												
82												
83					Chi Stat	0.063055						
84					df	1						
85					Crit Value	3.841						
86												Chi Stat< Crit Value, Hypothesis Accepted
87												
88												

The Chi Statistic is **0.063055**. degree of freedom is **1**.

Critical value is **3.841**.

Chi statistic < Critical value, therefore hypothesis is accepted.

Which means that the consumers purchasing decision is not affected by their trust in the brand due to CSR.

HYPOTHESIS 4

H₀: the trust on a brand based on CSR and the gender of the consumers are independent.

H₁: the trust on a brand based on CSR and the gender of the consumers are not independent.

FIGURE 6.g

	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
90												
91		Gender		A brand practicing CSR is easier to trust			Total					
92				Yes	No							
93		Female		48	4		52					
94		Male		35	13		48					
95		Total		83	17		100					
96												
97												
98												
99												
100				Yes	No							
101		Female(Expected)		43.16	8.84							
102		(O-E) ² /E		0.54276	2.649954751		3.19272					
103												

FIGURE 6.h

	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
99											
100				Yes	No						
101		Female(Expected)		43.16	8.84						
102		(O-E) ² /E		0.54276	2.649954751		3.19272				
103											
104											
105				Yes	No						
106		Male(expected)		39.84	8.16						
107		(O-E) ² /E		0.58799	2.870784314		3.45878				
108											
109						Chi Value	6.65149				
110						df	1				
111						Crit Value	3.841			Chi Value>Crit Value,	
112											

The chi statistic is **6.651493**. the degree of freedom is **1**.

The critical value is **3.841**.

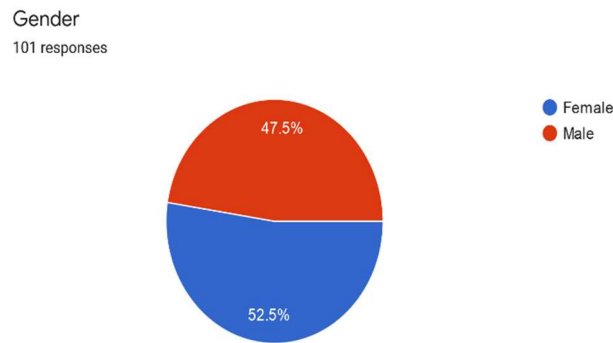
Chi statistic > critical value, therefore hypothesis is rejected.

Which means that the amount of trust in a brand based on CSR is affected by the gender of the consumer.

6.2 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

The respondents were approached to collect information using Survey methodology making use of questionnaire as a tool. The discussions and summaries of the findings are given in distribution tables of frequency, percentages and figures. The basic traits of the sample participants regarding age, gender, education, occupation, income and marital status of the sample respondents were analysed and the results are presented below.

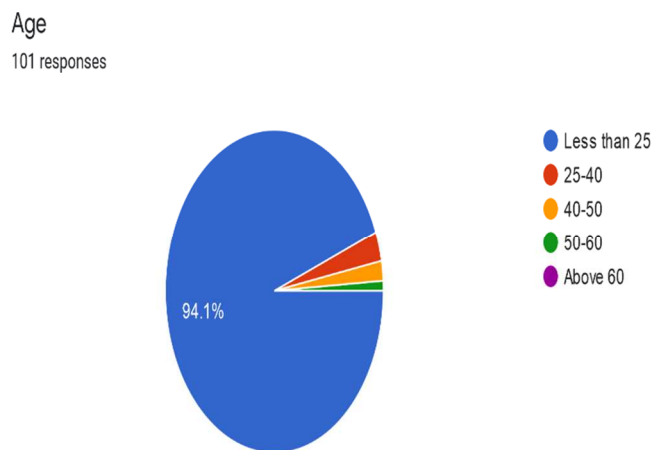
FIGURE 6.i



INFERENCE

Gender plays an important role in any type of research depicting different pattern and lifestyle. They are different in terms of eating and spending habits. It could be observed from the figure 6.i that male gender accounted for 47.5% and the remaining 52.5% were belonged to female gender. The female and male respondents are in equal proportion which means that this study from any biases based on Gender and is not skewed in favour of one gender only.

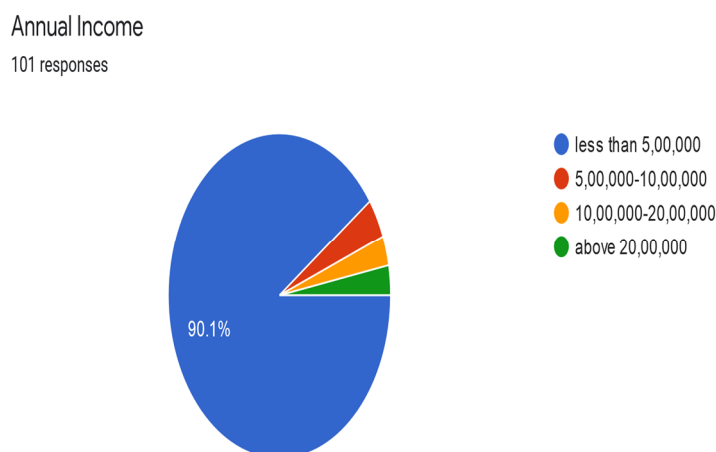
FIGURE 6.j



INFERENCE

Age is an important demographic factor which determines individual person’s lifestyle attitudes like thinking, decision making, risk bearing, etc. It could be inferred from the figure that 94.1% per cent of the sample respondents were belonged to the age group of less than 25 years which suggests that this study is being conducted on the younger generation who are well educated about the CSR concept of business. They keep themselves up to date with the new developments taking place around them and are very fast to respond to these changes. They also do not have much income at their disposal.

FIGURE 6.k



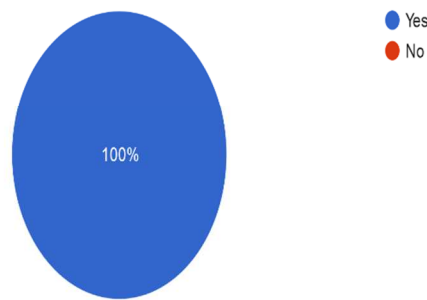
INFERENCE

As it has already been discussed that the majority of respondents belong to the young generation and therefore they do not have much income. Around 90.1 % of the respondents are earning less than 500000 per annum.

FIGURE 6.I

Are you aware about CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) concept of business?

101 responses



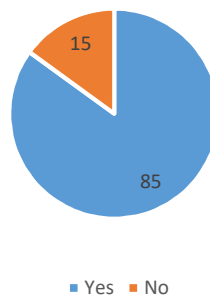
INFERENCE

As it was earlier stated that the youth takes keen interest in the developments of the market around them they keep themselves up to date with the changes taking place in the business scenario. Therefore 100% of the respondents were aware about what the CSR concept of business is. This is very helpful because it would have been difficult to make inferences about the findings if the population had not been aware of the CSR concept of business. But since each and every respondent was aware about CSR activities and what they do, it can be stated that the research shows a true and fair picture of their perception of CSR.

Also another fact to note here is that CSR activities have gained a lot of popularity and people are becoming aware about what actions the companies are taking as part of their CSR initiatives. That is the Government and the companies have been successful in making the population aware about the CSR activities which also means that the consumers are now in a better position to scrutinise the CSR policies of the company and the companies should formulate their CSR activities with care because with increased awareness, there is a chance that any decision regarding CSR will affect the way the consumer thinks about the brand.

FIGURE 6.m

Is It Important for a Company To Contribute to the Welfare of Society



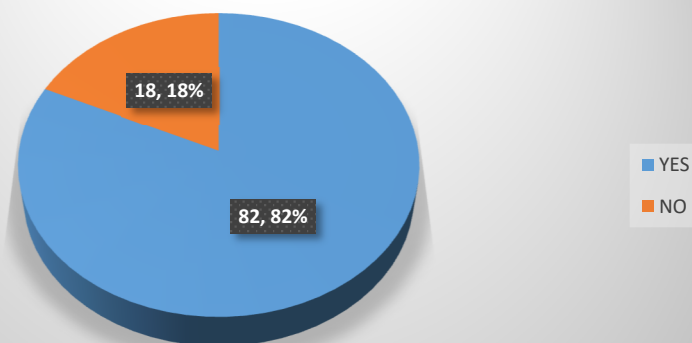
INFERENCE

These findings are very interesting because one might assume that that the people aren't aware about CSR activities, but these results show that people are not only aware but also believe that CSR initiatives are actually successful in making a positive impact on the welfare of the society. Thus the research shows that the consumers believe that it is right to implement CSR activities because they do have a positive impact on the society. As you can see in figure a 85% of the respondents said yes to other question that do they believe that companies should contribute to the welfare of the society.

This shows that there is increased awareness among the people and they do hold the corporates responsible for having an impact on the society. They consider corporates as part of the society and because they operate as a member of the society and have resources and technology at their disposal, they should take steps to benefit the society and the weaker aspects of the society.

FIGURE 6.n

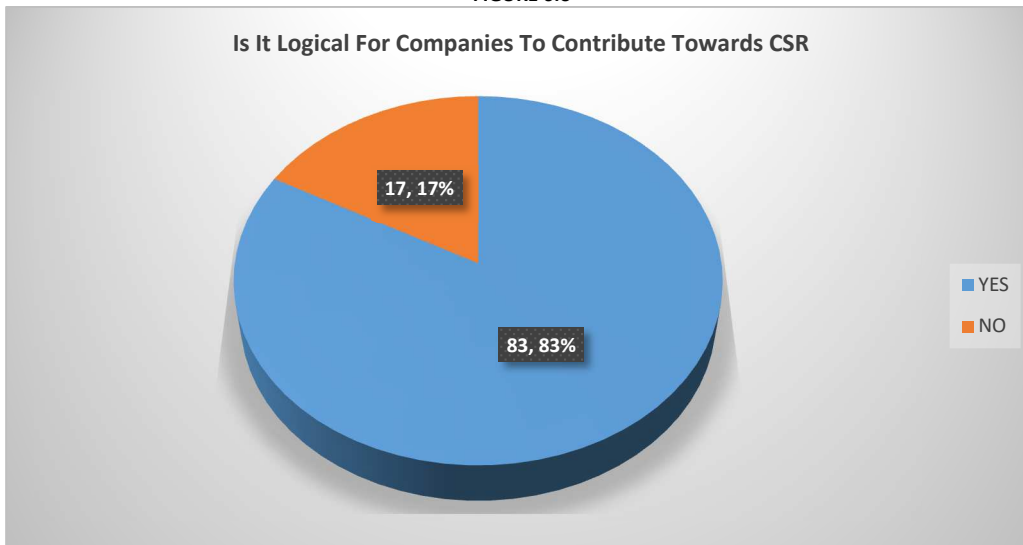
Do You Believe CSR has Positive Impact on the Society



INFERENCES

AN 82% of the respondents believe that CSR activities are actually helpful in making a positive impact on the society. Therefore they view CSR activities in a positive light and believe they are actually making tangible changes in the society.

FIGURE 6.o



INFERENCES

This question was introduced in the questions because some people are also of the opinion that companies should not participate in the social welfare activities and their main purpose is to earn profit and not do charity. As a result it is believed that even though they will spend money on these activities, it will never be whole hearted effort.

But the findings show otherwise with 83% of the population believing that it is indeed logical for the companies to contribute to the welfare of the society and they should integrate their profit making goal with the goal of welfare of the society.

FIGURE 6.p



INFERENCES

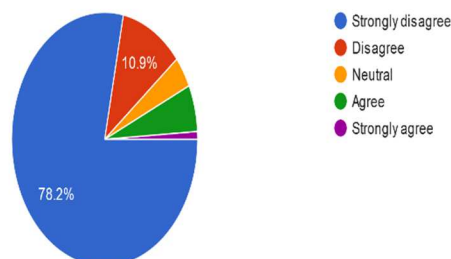
Very important and interesting observation is made here. Almost all the respondents viewed CSR as important and positively impacting the society, but even though they believe CSR is important they do not consider it as a factor while making a purchasing decision. As you can see from the figure 68% of the population said that they do not think that the CSR initiatives of a brand will affect their purchasing decision

This means that the people make purchasing decisions independent of the companies' CSR projects. Although CSR is believed to be important it will not have an impact in the purchasing decision making process.

FIGURE 6.q

When you buy goods like Car, Mortgages (high involvement goods) CSR activities play a role in the decision making process.

101 responses



INFERENCES

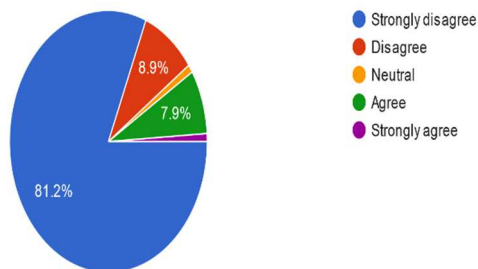
On the same lines as above, we see that the majority of people do not look into the CSR activities before making the purchase of a high involvement good. High involvement goods are believed to call for more attention from the customers' side because they are high in price and the customer doesn't make its purchase very frequently. But even in such a case the results show, that 78.2% of the sample strongly disagreed that CSR will affect their buying decision and 10.9% disagreed for the same.

This means that even in the case of high priced, high involvement goods CSR will not play a major role in the decision making process.

FIGURE 6.r

When you buy goods like Shampoo, Milk etc. (low involvement goods) CSR activities play a role in the decision making process.

101 responses



INFERENCES

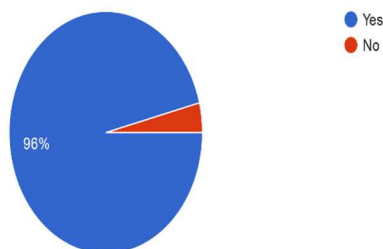
On the same lines as above, we see that the majority of people do not look into the CSR activities before making the purchase of a low involvement good. Low involvement goods are believed to not call for much attention from the customers' side because they are low in price and the customer makes its purchase very frequently. But even in such a case the results show, that 81.2% of the sample strongly disagreed that CSR will affect their buying decision and 8.9 % disagreed for the same.

This means that even in the case of low priced, low involvement goods CSR will not play a major role in the decision making process.

FIGURE 6.s

When a product of two different brands is exactly the same, you will choose the brand that practices CSR?

101 responses



INFERENCES

Although CSR does not affect the purchasing decision of the customers, they feel that it is a very important part of the functioning of the organisation. CSR is a great way to market your brand and change the perception of the people positively in favour of your brand. That is the reason why 96% of the people will choose a brand that practices CSR over the brand that does not practise it.

Which means that CSR independently does not have the capacity to affect the decision of customers, but the customers want the corporates to practise CSR because they feel it benefits the society and if they feel that a brand is not practising CSR they will think negative of the brand and switch to the other brand.

FIGURE 6.t



INFERENCES

Therefore, it can be inferred that although CSR independently is not capable in affecting the buying decision of customers, it plays a major role in building the trust of the customers. They feel more loyal to the brand that practices CSR and tend to become long term customers of the brand.

7. FINDING AND CONCLUSION

1. **CSR does not affect the purchasing decision of the consumers.** That is to say that CSR is not an important factor for consumers before buying a product. The product can be a low involvement good or a high involvement, it is not affected by CSR. CSR may affect the decision of the consumer together with other factors but independently CSR does not affect their purchasing decision.
2. **Although CSR does not affect the purchasing decision, it is a great marketing tool for the organisation.** When people see that a brand is making sincere efforts in the welfare of the society, they tend to favour that brand more. It changes their perception of the brand in a positive way. Also with CSR, you can integrate your marketing to reap double benefits. As a result of which the brand recall of your brand in the minds of the consumer increases.
3. **The way the both gender react to CSR has been seen to be quite different.** Female tend to trust the brand that practices CSR more than their male counterparts. Also CSR affects the purchasing decision of women more than men.
4. **CSR helps in building trust of the consumers.** Although CSR may not be able to impact the purchasing decision of consumer, per se, but it helps in building the trust of the consumers significantly. Consumer finds it easier to trust a brand that practices CSR because it shows that the brand is ethical and would not involve itself in unethical measures.
5. People believe that the CSR has positive impact on the society but even then do not take into consideration the CSR activities before buying the product.
6. Also they may trust a brand practicing CSR more but even that does not have any significant effect in making CSR an important factor to be considered before making a purchase.
7. Corporate social responsibility can be performed through various means like philanthropy, volunteering, guiding, charity etc. While taking up all these initiatives the business is not only helping itself **grow by building a positive brand image, it is also enhancing its immediate environment.**
8. Another very important concept of CSR is that it helps the companies to build a bond with its outside world and not just stay limited to its internal environment. It helps the companies to better understand the environment they exist in which will only help them to identify opportunities better and will lead to a **better engagement with the end consumers.**

8. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- 1) This is an exploratory study conducted concentrating solely on the salaried class of Noida and Delhi citizens. The sample size is too limited, the research does not reflect overall people's perception and understanding of CSR.
- 2) Only a sample size of 100 respondents was taken, due to time and expense restrictions.
- 3) The sample size being small and random, the analysis does not explain the overall CSR perspective scenario of individuals.
- 4) Since most respondents belong to Noida, which is India's Tier 2 city, they do not reflect the perception of people coming from other communities or from different backgrounds. Therefore the people's true answer can't be accurately depicted.

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