

Corporate Social Responsibility and Consumer Evaluations with Mediating Effect of Marketing Communication: A Pakistani Telecommunication Perspective

Raja Mazhar Hameed^{*}, Kashif Ur Rehman[†] and Irfan Ullah[‡]

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to ascertain the relationship between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and consumers' evaluation of CSR (brand evaluations, word-of-mouth (WOM), customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty/retention) with mediating effect of CSR marketing communication to further enhance sustainability, growth, and profitability. This contemporary research was undertaken in five cosmopolitan vicinities of Pakistan (northern region), which includes the cities of Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Lahore, Faisalabad, and Peshawar. The sample consisted of 550 subjects, who were surveyed through a simple random technique. Through empirical findings, the current study revealed that CSR (economic, philanthropic, legal, and ethical) dimensions have positive outcomes if practiced in conjunction with marketing communication and consumers' evaluation of CSR. This study is the first to apply consumers' construct in assessing consumer response towards CSR propositions within the domains of consumer marketing.

Keywords: CSR; Brand Evaluation; Word-of-mouth; Customer satisfaction; Customer loyalty; Marketing communication; Pakistan

Introduction

The interest and passion for corporate social responsibility has been widely documented in marketing literature (Bhattacharya & Korschun, 2008; Fornell, Mithas, Morgeson III, & Krishnan, 2006; Maignan & Ferrell, 2004). The subject matter of CSR remained the most important research premise within management literature for the last few decades and continues to persist with more emphasis (Pino, Amatulli, De

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Angelis, & Peluso, 2016; Zhu & Zhang, 2015). During the last 50 years, the nature and extent of marketing has widened to incorporate apprehensions towards social and consumer welfare, in addition to the systems for the consideration of CSR in strategic marketing (Maignan & Ferrell, 2004). While marketing has speared ahead of the limits of economic trade, it has evolved into an order in which coordination with the society has resulted in being progressively vital for accomplishment. Hayek (1948), economics proponents relayed that the primary function of business was to earn and maximise profits or earnings, and serve the society to the best of their abilities, while firms maximised returns for their stockholders (Agrawal & Sahasranamam, 2016). Schuster, Lund-Thomsen, and Kazmi (2016) detailed that in the global context of CSR, South Asia has in recent times attracted greater concentration amongst business leaders and scholastics alike. Several multinational companies consider that South Asia has the most dynamic, emerging, and fast-growing regions globally, with important strategic and market growth potentials for their business activities and interests. Azizi and Jamali (2016) depict that the interest and inclination towards South Asian countries is determined by the emergence of the relative approaches towards management being utilised to emphasise in shaping CSR equally within the developed and towards the developing countries.

Marketers are expected to be responsible, to understand how their activities influence the society, and to comply with laws and regulations. Public policy decision makers are investigating the marketing activities that could harm the society and are developing the requirements for responsible marketing activities (Ferrell et al., 2014). Azizi and Jamali (2016), confirmed that high intensity initiatives of marketing have a positive effect on societal prosperity. Indeed today, pundits maintain that organizations are not well prepared to handle social issues and endeavours to position a business at a focused inconvenience (Vogel, 2007). Carroll (1979); Carroll (1991), social execution CSR model which has four facets, namely, economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic, elucidates the entire scope of a business' commitment. Carroll (1991), details that the economic strata of this model registers that, before all, a business organization must generate products and services that the society needs, and then offer them at a financial premium. The legal proposition approaches organizations to satisfy their economic goals within the requirements of the parameters of the given laws. The third classification, ethical obligations, envelops all organizations' practices and exercises that are not ordered by law, but are expected by the society. Philanthropic CSR proposition, being the pivotal, is being assessed in relation to the charitable aspiration of the society. Hill and

Langan (2014), depicts that ‘the social obligation of business incorporates the economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic desires that the society has of firms at a given point in time’. Earlier debate has recognised that CSR affects customer reactions towards a company, its products, and brands trustworthiness. McDonald, De Chernatony, and Harris (2001), elaborate that service brands are generally tagged as corporate brands, and corporate relationships, such as CSR relationship, can influence service brand trustworthiness more strongly. Word-of-mouth (WOM) communiqué plays a vital role in formulating Harrison-Walker (2001) consumers’ approaches and attributes of behaviours. Considering this reason, it is vital for an organization to generate (Sundaram, Mitra, & Webster, 1998) an environment with an optimistic WOM. Day (1971), elaborates that WOM is nine times more effective when compared to advertising at turning an adverse approach into an optimistic one. Sundaram et al. (1998), detail that the following four kinds of motivations encourage consumers to interact within the WOM communiqué: message involvement, self-enhancement, product involvement, and other involvement. The message involvement classification is mostly utilised in WOM communiqué for CSR initiatives or activities, as the consumer presents an account of the organization’s CSR communiqué. Within marketing literature, the proposition of customer satisfaction has been accepted as a vital component of corporate strategy (Fornell et al., 2006), and an important driver of an organization’s long-term profitability (Gruca & Rego, 2005) and future market worth. Engaging in CSR could permit organizations to better comprehend their generalised customers and accordingly enhance their customer-specific comprehension Sen and Bhattacharya (2001) considering that enhancing customer knowledge correspond to another antecedent ((Jayachandran, Sharma, Kaufman, & Raman, 2005) which has been established to improve customer satisfaction (Mithas et al., 2004). Customer loyalty is frequently considered as an emotional obligation towards an organization and that it is generated when customers’ expectations are completely honoured. Consumers consider organizations’ obligations towards CSR inventiveness while assessing organizations and their products (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, & Murphy, 2013). Trust is considered vital in developing customer loyalty (So, King, Sparks, & Wang, 2013), provided firms pursue the path of CSR inventiveness. CSR marketing communication practices is crucial as customers who are attentive of CSR inventiveness have more optimistic approaches and behavioural intents (Öberseder et al., 2013). An organization’s efforts to disseminate socially responsible marketing

communiqué practices will build higher customer advocacy (Bowen & Chen McCain, 2015).

Pakistani CSR context

It has been argued that CSR is passing through an evolutionary stage in Pakistan (Khan & Lund-Thomsen, 2011) and that there are common variations in the manner in which CSR is perceived. Some consider CSR as compliance with state laws, paying taxes, and employee welfare; while others focus on corporate philanthropy (Naeem & Welford, 2009).

One-third of Pakistan's population is under the poverty line, not able to manage the expense of essential sustenance, attire, and shelter. Pakistan is known to have sufficient policies and strategies, but not adequate action. However, in the light of previous experience, where various Pakistani governments have proved to be efficient at devising plans, policies, and legislation among others, they have failed to implement them. It is yet to be seen to what extent the Pakistani government's initiatives to promote CSR in Pakistan will come to fruition (Malik, 2014). CSR in Pakistan is still in its infancy stage. There is limited knowledge among Pakistani consumers, thus there is an urgency to inculcate and develop CSR in relation to consumer marketing through aggressive marketing communications (electronic and print media) within the Pakistani consumer markets, which can lead to a better understanding of consumers' evaluation of CSR and quality of life sustainability among all the society stakeholder stratifications.

The lack of research on consumers' assessment towards CSR is likewise associated to the manner in which the previous period's marketing research frequently absorbed socially capable consumer conduct to ecologically cordial customer conduct (Antil, 1984; Antil & Bennett, 1979; Osterhus, 1997). Thus, previous research was restricted only towards the dimensions of responsible consumer behaviour (environmental and philanthropic). Some of the examples are as follows:

- Consumers' preoccupation with the Earth (Antil, 1984; Singhapakdi & LaTour, 1991)
- Utilisation of green products (Obermiller, 1995; Samdahl & Robertson, 1989; Schuhwerk & Lefkoff-Hagius, 1995)
- Conservancy exercises (Berger & Kanetkar, 1995; McCarty & Shrum, 1994; Schwepker Jr & Cornwell, 1991; Taylor & Todd, 1995)
- Public health social marketing (Truong, 2014)
- CSR and development in Pakistan's philanthropic perspective (Malik, 2014)

Consequently, previous research has principally concentrated on consumers' general temperament to environment and philanthropic

activities, and in particular, their inclination to participate in atmospherically gracious initiatives. Previous investigations have not analysed whether consumers are more faithful to businesses that demonstrate sympathy towards the ecological propositions within the context of Pakistan's consumer markets. Therefore, previous studies do not comprehend the consumer marketing perspectives in a real sense. The current study has contributed by proposing a conceptual paradigm, which has not been tested earlier.

There is a dire need for significant initiatives in the corporate sector to create awareness and develop relationship in consumer marketing which drives social responsibilities associated with various stakeholders in Pakistan. This study will enhance and narrow the gap by developing an understanding between company and end consumers that CSR is almost directly proportional to consumer marketing, while pursuing the proposition of business sustainability and growth of stakeholder marketing in the telecommunication (telecom) sector of Pakistan. By providing an in-depth understanding of CSR within a particular industry context, this study investigates Pakistan's telecom sector. The telecom industry is deemed appropriate as it is anticipated to hold close international benchmarks. Consequently, it is expected to be influenced through global benchmarks and policies relating to CSR. This contemporary study will further contribute to existing knowledge paradigms by contemplating on CSR within the telecom sector of Pakistan. Possessing a country perspective, the research study aims to answer the following research question: 'How does CSR impact consumer behaviour, sustainability, growth, and financial performance reactions towards the organization' and operationalizing the CSR concept itself from the consumer perception, 'What does a consumer consider recognising a firm as socially responsible.

Furthermore, this research will inculcate a thought process to better understand a firm's status in the business arena to set future objectives to attain in the market, resulting in raising revenues and contributing to the gross domestic product of Pakistan. The study results will also be of utmost importance to the government, regulatory bodies, and policy makers. Furthermore, the Security and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) would be able to develop rules for enhancing organizational performance (commercial) by increasing revenues and this will contribute towards CSR and the exchequer (Pakistan).

Literature Review

According to Agrawal and Sahasranamam (2016), substantial literature streams concentrate on strategic CSR. Agrawal and Sahasranamam (2016), further contemplate that CSR creates social value, whereas

making profits necessitates individual motivation and organizational competencies. The theoretical definition of CSR has two different branches with diversified perspectives, an instrumental approach and an integrative approach. The perspective of instrumental approach argues that CSR is a means towards the end of economic benefits, by creating a 'business case' for CSR (Akond et al., 2017; Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997), while the integrative approach, as illustrated by Porter and Kramer (2003); and Wen and Song (2017) recommend that CSR must be considered as a means of honouring social demands as the success of a business relies on the society's continuity and growth. The current study combines both the perspectives of instrumental and integrative dimensions, arguing that enterprise CSR initiatives must focus on balancing the interests of all the stakeholders and honouring both the perspectives (economic intentions and social demands). It has been proposed that being socially dependable; marketing can accomplish more prominent benefits for organizations and a higher personal satisfaction for the society (Marsden, 2005). This is reflected in the recent changes in the meaning of marketing by the discipline's overwhelming enrolment body, the American Marketing Association (AMA), which encourages a move far from an accentuation on offering to a more cognizant difference of marketing's effect on society. In 2008, the AMA consequently made a noteworthy upgrade of the meaning of marketing transforming to 'a hierarchical capacity and a set of procedures for making and conveying worth to customers, and for overseeing client connections in ways that advantage the association and its stakeholders' (AMA, 2008).

CSR conceptualisation as registered by Carroll (1979), emphatically persists as detailed by Kolk, Dolen, and Ma (2015), and dominates existing and contemporary literature (Boateng and Abdul-Hamid, 2017). The business component does prevail within the domains of CSR and further substantiates through CSR tendencies and practices, such as moral and ethical components in relation to social responsibility (Carroll, 2008). Carroll and Shabana (2010) asserted that the crucial point of convergence was the companies' commitments to society and doing kind hearted ensue for the society. The proposition of a business case is frequently grounded on three key drivers: employees, consumers, and investors, and they consider the means to generate economic rewards for the organization to provide attention to corporate responsibility (Carroll, 1991).

Freeman (1984) first propagated the stakeholder theory which recommends that managers must assert decisions, which should bring and consider firm's stakeholders' interests pertaining to individuals or

groups which can significantly affect or be affected, in relation to the welfare of organizations. Further, Xie, Jia, Meng, and Li (2017) elucidate that stakeholder theory is consistent in value maximisation, where the value-seeking conduct of organizations is facilitated by organizations with a suitable rationalisation of integrating strategic decision-making within the learning's of CSR activities. Stakeholder theory certainly has the element which clearly provides sufficient room to people or a stratum of the society to claim on the organization with the stake perspective. Stakeholder proposition comprises of groups and individuals attaining benefits through the corporate acts of an organization (Freeman, 2010). The stakeholder theory clearly conforms to the stakeholder marketing concept and the required perspective was detailed by the AMA in 2008.

Economic obligation of CSR measurement is measured based on the amplification of shareholders' wealth, creation of benefits, being competitive, maintaining operational proficiency, and being constantly gainful (Carroll, 1991). Additionally, Galbreath (2010) included two extra determinants of economic CSR (ECSR) as employment and items needed by customers. In the recent past, value reasonableness and item quality were used to focus on the degree that an organization hones ECSR (Onlaor & Rotchanakitumnuai, 2010).

Legal obligations of CSR measurement is measured in terms of the degree to which an organization's exercises are compliant with laws and regulations, its repute as a corporate national, its legal commitment, and the level of its products' and administrations' commitment to meet the negligible legal prerequisite (Carroll, 1991).

The legal aspect is being understood as a societal anticipation where organizations accomplish their financial objectives within the limits of the legal structure of working (Pérez, Martínez, & Del Bosque, 2013). The ethical obligation of CSR measurement is measured based on the societal mores and ethical standards, degree that the organizations modifies themselves to developing good standards, level of bargaining ethical measures or standards, corporate citizenship conduct acknowledged by the society, and the degree to which the organization go past the legitimate and regulation necessities to maintain respectability (Carroll, 1991). Additionally, ethical obligations can be dictated by utilising guidelines, standards, and desire (Onlaor & Rotchanakitumnuai, 2010).

For consumers, unethical cues lead to lower ethical assessments and decreased satisfaction towards a firm. More importantly, unethical behaviour (Langan, 2014) could also negatively influence a firm's financial performance (Hill & Langan, 2014). According to Carroll (1991), this is the highest level of CSR which is measured on the basis of

the philanthropic and charitable desire of the society, aid given to fine and performing expressions, degree that supervisors and representatives of the organization intentionally contribute to charitable exercises of a group, and support provided by the organization to the ventures that upgrade the 'quality of life' (Carroll, 1991).

Over time, ever-increasing competition owing to globalisation has led to the need for corporate philanthropy to be, at least in part, strategically driven. When successful, this investment can be an effective business tool as consumers have expressed a willingness to support companies that contribute towards the society (Langan, 2014).

It is well recognised that marketing can do miracles for brands (Hall, 2013). In an era where consumers and marketers possess an ever emerging empathy in relation to CSR propositions (Owazuaka & Obinna, 2014), it is significant to accept what the fundamentals necessitate the brands to optimistically change the globe by practicing CSR propositions (Yumurtacı, 2014). Park and Ghauri (2015) detailed that substantial studies have demonstrated that CSR has been strategically used by numerous firms to elevate or enhance brand image (Boateng, Boateng, Abdul-Hamid, & Abdul-Hamid, 2017). The end users' or consumers' perceptions towards a brand are associated with the ethical practices and social responsibility obligation of business firms (Wen & Song, 2017). The effect of CSR on a brand has been broken down to diverse levels, such as brand inclination, brand loyalty, brand mindfulness, brand picture, brand believability, WOM, and re-patronage plans (Torres, Bijmolt, Tribó, & Verhoef, 2012). More specifically, some brand value measurements measured as business sectors and budgetary results, offer a striking opportunity to quantify the relationship in the middle of CSR and execution. Torres et al. (2012) point out that CSR has a constructive outcome on global brand values among different stakeholders, including customers. In addition, strategies that fulfil group diversions help to strengthen the believability of social obligation approaches among different stakeholders. In this vein, CSR is one of the traits that brand chiefs utilise to fabricate an appealing identity with the potential capacity to incite customer's recognisable proof of the firm (Lichtenstein, Drumwright, & Braig, 2004; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). The association with CSR reflects brand positioning, taking into account professional social values (which the general society sanctions) and maintaining the moral premise of relationship marketing, such as truth, value, obligation, and duty (Gundlach & Wilkie, 2010).

Chang, Kang, Ko, and Connaughton (2017) elucidate that in terms of the association between CSR and WOM, marketing research

supports the notion that CSR initiatives can be associated with WOM. Behavioural outcomes are important in positive CSR initiatives or activities, where consumers are eager to converse positively (WOM with friends, colleagues, and along with the family) about a socially responsible organization. Even focus group members who recognised that they did not base their buying decisions on an organization's CSR activities per se, specified that they frequently conversed (WOM) or suggested such organizations to their peer and family (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004).

Previous research shows that there exists a strong positive correlation between service excellence and customer satisfaction in relation to retention (Haghighi, Dorosti, Rahnama, & Hoseinpour, 2012; Zhao, Lu, Zhang, & Chau, 2012). As majority of the experimental studies indicate that improved service excellence is optimistically related to customer satisfaction and that retention directs optimistic WOM, particularly towards socially responsible organizations (Alafi & Hasoneh, 2012). Xie et al. (2017), detail that customer satisfaction is being envisioned as one of the main indirect factors, which is closely associated with CSR. Martinez and Bosque (2013) describes that earlier studies have demonstrated that CSR is an important constituent for customer loyalty and this proposition can influence customer loyalty towards firms in intensely competitive environments (Xie et al., 2017). Therefore, a company's CSR efforts could improve customer satisfaction and retaining loyal customers can yield healthier profits (Xie et al., 2017). Pérez and Rodriguez del Bosque (2015) stated that understanding through the proposition of equity theory, buyers are more likely to be more satisfied if an organization is being socially responsible towards diversified stakeholders, including the buyers themselves. Walsh and Bartikowski (2013) further elaborate that customer satisfaction results from two perspectives: perceptions of service quality and perceptions of the firm's social responsibility temperament. A company's CSR efforts allow customers to distinguish the value attained from organizations that have strong CSR records, such as sensing that they are more respected and better understood (Xie et al., 2017). Bolton and Mattila (2015) emphatically stated that CSR efforts can facilitate companies to enhance the proposition of customer satisfaction by engaging or attracting and maintaining customers, and enhancing customer loyalty (Xie et al., 2017). In addition, Pérez and Rodriguez del Bosque (2015) detail that CSR can improve customer satisfaction by enhancing company's perceived utility and value. There is a rising confirmation that a company's CSR assists in assembling a fulfilled client base (Luo & Bhattacharya, 2006). Corporate capacities, characterised as

inventiveness capacity and item quality, direct the impacts of CSR on consumer loyalty.

Proactive communication strategies tend to result in more favourable attitudes towards the firm as well as stronger purchase intentions (Becker-Olsen & Hill, 2006; Evenou et al., 2009), as consumers perceive these messages as positively motivated (Groza, Pronschinske, & Walker, 2011). Kotler and Zaltman (1971) propagated the much needed social marketing theory, which detailed certain components and became the imperatives of contemporary CSR marketing communications, and include generating audience awareness, aiming at the right audience, underpinning the message, cultivating impressions, inculcating and stimulating interest, and inserting the desired result. Accordingly, stakeholders', particularly consumers' insights and responses towards firms' CSR activities and communiqués, become imperative in determining the accomplishment and failure of this in relation to strategic investment. Wen and Song (2017) detailed that it is essential to comprehend the relationships among different CSR communiqué strategies in relation to consumers' responses. Ihlen, Bartlett, and May (2011), elucidate that communication can be envisioned as being imperative in firms' and organizations' CSR work towards a number of concerns, epistemological being the first one to be noted. Existing knowledge is being generated through socially shared communication and has strong entrenchment that is material and historic. Information on CSR could have a prominent impact on behavioural intents, in addition to assessments of products and organizations. For instance, key stakeholders such as consumers, employees, and investors, are gradually taking actions to reward better organizations that are engaging in CSR and penalising the ones which do not honour the required proposition.

On the basis of previous literature, the following hypotheses are formulated:

Hypothesis: 1

CSR (economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic/discretionary) has a positive relationship with consumers' evaluation of CSR (brand evaluations, WOM, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty/retention).

Hypothesis: 2

CSR marketing communication mediates the relationship between CSR (economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic/discretionary) and consumers' evaluation of CSR (brand evaluations, WOM, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty/retention).

Methodology

Pilot testing was undertaken prior to the study to customise and adopt CSR as consumer marketing derivative scale from business and commercial literature. A panel of telecom mobile industry experts was constituted and they reviewed the survey instrument to authenticate the precision and representativeness of the variable items ahead of the pilot survey. Five professors from academia and 10 experts from the mobile telecom industry served in the panel. A pilot study was undertaken to examine the reliability of the scale variable items, where the participants included 100 working personnel from educational, banking, and fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) organizations. This contemporary research was undertaken in five cosmopolitan vicinities of Pakistan (northern region), which included the cities of Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Lahore, Faisalabad, and Peshawar. All the respondents were surveyed through a probability sampling technique (simple random technique). The data were collected through a survey. Questionnaires containing 74 items (the modified scale is shown in Annexure-A) were distributed among the participants. A sample of 550 persons was organized who could answer the questions in the survey. The response rate was 73%. The written list of questions was distributed personally at all the locations and interactive sittings were held with most of the respondents.

The respondents were categorised into four based on their age, gender, the telecom company they used, and the duration of use of services of the telecom company. All the respondents were requested to fill the survey forms according to the recommended method. The present study is quantitative in nature and deductive in sort. This study depicts the ideas, based on basic theoretical premise, and analyses based on the reasonable information received from the respondents.

The research instrument used was a questionnaire. The questionnaire carried a foreword clarifying the goal and objectives of the current study, solicitation for the respondents' collaboration to support the activity, and a surety for complete anonymity and confidentiality. One of the sections of the questionnaire included the demographic details that comprised of generic information, such as company name, consumer age, consumer gender, and consumer experience with the telecom operator. The other section of the questionnaire contained 74 items/questions which were required to be answered using the 5-point Likert scale.

The survey document with questions was conveyed to 550 individuals and a total of 426 individuals returned the questionnaire. 24 respondents withdrew from the rundown by virtue of outfitting incorrect answers and 124 respondents did not respond. Hence, 402 participants

filled the questionnaire with correct and valid information and a response rate of over 73% was registered. In order to guarantee the reliability and validity of the outcomes, all the standards of exploration techniques were considered. The study was organised in such a manner so as to ensure cross-checks swiftly by separating every question per arithmetical distinctive mark.

Data Analysis and Results

Table 1 shows the age of respondents. Among the 402 valid respondents, those in the age bracket of 20-30 years, 31-40 years, 41-50 years, and above 50 years are 49 %, 44.8%, 6%, and 0.2%, respectively. From the total 402 respondents, 62.9% are male respondents with 253 responses and 37.1% are female with 149 responses. Therefore, the demographics of the above study depicted that the male ratio is more when compared to the female ratio. The respondents from Mobilink, Ufone, Telenor, Zong, and Warid are 26.4%, 27.9%, 20.6%, 9.2%, and 15.9%, respectively. Table 1 is presented based on Napoli's (1999) framework of demographic analysis.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Demographic	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	253	62.9
	Female	149	37.1
Age	20-30	197	49.0
	31-40	180	44.8
	41-50	24	6.0
	Over 50	1	.2
Company	Mobilink	106	26.4
	Ufone	112	27.9
	Telenor	83	20.6
	Warid	64	15.9
	Zong	37	9.2
Experience	1 year	2	.5
	2 years	12	3.0
	3 years	33	8.2
	4 years	118	29.4
	5 and above	237	59.0
Total		402	100.0

0.5%, 3%, 8.2%, 29.4%, and 59% of the respondents have 1 year, 2 years, 3 years, 4 years, and 5 years and more experience, respectively.

Reliability Analysis

Anderson and Gerbing (1988) approach is used to measure the respondents' attitudes towards the CSR questionnaires. The result of reliability analysis is presented in Table 2, which shows that ECSR consists of six items and the reliability of this dimension is 0.81, the reliability of legal CSR (LCSR) is 0.75 with seven items, the reliability of ethical CSR (ETCSR) is 0.68 with 12 items, the reliability of philanthropic CSR (PCSR) is 0.86 with 10 items, the reliability of marketing communication CSR (MCCSR) is 0.79 with 11 items, the reliability of brand evaluation (BECSR) is 0.79 with five items, the reliability of WOM CSR (WOMCSR) is 0.87 with five items, the reliability of customer satisfaction CSR (CSCSR) is 0.81 with 11 items, and lastly, the reliability of customer loyalty CSR (CLCSR) is 0.76 with eight items.

Table 2: Reliability of the Measurement Instrument

Variable/Dimension	No. of Items after CFA	Dimension Reliability	Overall Variable Reliability
ECSR	6	0.81	0.78
LCSR	7	0.75	
ETCSR	12	0.68	
PCSR	10	0.86	0.79
MCCSR	11	0.79	
BECSR	5	0.79	
WOMCSR	5	0.87	0.82
CSCSR	11	0.81	
CLCSR	8	0.76	

Overall reliability of all the variables is above 0.60, which is the minimum requirement for a good result and model fitting. All the items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Table 3: Convergent Validity

Variable/Dimension	No. of Items after CFA	AVE	CR
ECSR	6	0.58	0.89
LCSR	7	0.57	0.90
ETCSR	12	0.64	0.95
PCSR	10	0.56	0.93
MCCSR	11	0.58	0.94
BECSR	5	0.51	0.84

WOMCSR	5	0.50	0.83
CCSR	11	0.63	0.88
CLCSR	8	0.71	0.84

The above table shows each construct's convergent validity. The average variance extraction (AVE) is therefore calculated by the sum of the square of all factor loadings relating to one construct divided by the number of items. A good rule of thumb is an AVE of 0.50 or higher that indicates adequate convergent validity, while the construct reliability (CR) is calculated by using the sum of squared factor loadings and the sum of error variances for the constructs in the above formula. The rule of thumb for a construct reliability estimate is that 0.70 or higher suggests a good reliability. The results of this study are within the accepted range of convergent validity measurements.

Table 4: Discriminant Validity

Variable		SIC	AVE	Decision
MCCSR	<--> ELEPCSR	0.16	0.59	Yes
MCCSR	<--> BWCCCSR	0.20	0.61	Yes
ELEPCSR	<--> BWCCCSR	0.20	0.55	Yes

Discriminant validity is defined to be the degree to which a set of items can differentiate a construct from other constructs. This means that variance shared among the items of each construct should be greater than the variance shared with other constructs. In the above table 4, the diagonal elements are the square roots of the average variance extracted and below the diagonal elements are the correlations amongst the variables. A comparison can be made and the discriminant validity can be assumed if the diagonal elements are higher than other off-diagonal elements in their respective rows and columns. In fact, the results in the correlation matrix illustrated above ensure that the discriminant validity is confirmed.

Hypothesis Testing

A structural equation modelling method was used through AMOS 18 to test the study model. This method was selected owing to its capability to check the causal associations between the constructs with multiple measurement items. Many scholars have anticipated a two-stage model-building process for applying this method. The measurement model was checked for instrument validation, followed by an analysis of the structural model to check the relations conjectured in the study model.

In order to test the fitness of the current study model, the study used a Chi-square and goodness of fit index (GFI), which are the absolute fit measures; comparative fit index (CFI) is an incremental fit

measure; and normed Chi-square and adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) are parsimonious fit measures (Keramati Mehrabi, and Mojir, 2010). The values of different criteria of model fitness, such as AGFI, GFI, Tucker-Lewis coefficient, normed fit index, CFI, and root mean square error of approximation are 0.908, 0.924, 0.942, 0.910, 0.934, and 0.061 respectively. The p-value of this model is 0.000, which shows the model is highly significant; all these values indicate the best fit of the current study model on the recommended level (Browne & Cudeck, 1993).

The results of the measures shown clearly prove the desired fitness of the model (Chi-square/Df = 2.116 and p-value ≤ 0.05); thus, the recommended values discussed by Hair Jr, Anderson, Tatham, and William (1995) have been achieved.

After determining the model fit, the next step is the estimation of the model through regression coefficients. CSR (economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary) has a positive and significant relationship with consumers' evaluation of CSR (brand evaluations, WOM, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty) ($\beta=0.45$, $p<0.05$). It provides support to hypothesis 1.

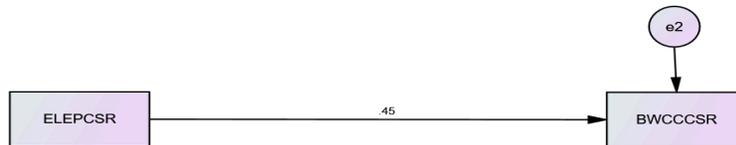


Figure 1: Model 1 Showing the Direct Relationship of Consumers' Evaluation of CSR

Table 5: Regression Weights of Model 1 Showing the Direct Relationship of CSR (Economic, Legal, Ethical, Philanthropic/Discretionary) and Consumers' Evaluation of CSR (Brand Evaluations, WOM, Customer Satisfaction, Customer Loyalty)

		Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Remarks
BWCCCSR <---	ELEPCSR	.448	.022	10.012	***	Accepted

Note: *** $p<0.05$

Note: ELEPCSR: economic, legal, ethical, philanthropic CSR; BWCCCSR: brand evaluations, WOM, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty CSR

The results show a significant and positive relationship ($\beta=0.45$, $r > 0.10$, $p<0.05$), thus showing that direct relationships play a significant role in determining the CSR of an organization.

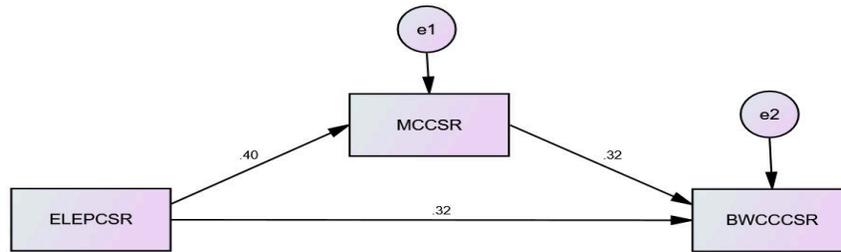


Figure 2: Model 2 Showing the Mediation of MCCR

In order to check the mediating effect of MCCR, the Muthén and Muthén (2012) approach was used to first check the direct relationship of CSR (economic, legal, ethical, philanthropic/discretionary) and consumers' evaluation of CSR (brand evaluations, WOM, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty).

Figure 2 and Table 6 reveal that by introducing the third variable, MCCR, the value of β is reduced to 0.32, which shows partial mediation. Hence, hypothesis 2 is accepted.

Table 6: Regression Weights with Mediation of MCCR

			Estimate	SE	CR	P	Remarks
MCCR	<---	ELEPCSR	.401	.030	8.745	***	Accepted
BWCCSR	<---	ELEPCSR	.318	.023	6.901	***	Accepted
BWCCSR	<---	MCCR	.325	.035	7.057	***	Accepted

Note: ELEPCSR: economic, legal, ethical, philanthropic CSR; BWCCSR: brand evaluations, WOM, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty CSR

Discussion

The primary rationale for the current study is to investigate or distinguish the effect of CSR in relation to consumer marketing within the domain/vicinity of the telecom service sector of Pakistan (northern region). Further, the current research desires to prioritise the significance and importance of CSR in the strategic business plan of an organization, with consumers as the driving force. The following are the main findings of the current study according to data analysis.

The current study endeavoured to answer the complex relationship between consumer marketing and social responsibility, and if consumer marketing has the capacity to consider the wants and needs

of generations of people across nations, cultures, and product categories, then why cannot professional practitioners of the corporate sector use the same skill set for other populations of interest? The simple answer is that they can and they do, or they should do. The current study has developed a cutting-edge framework that not only encapsulated the most important, but also the future areas of this domain.

While examining the domain of CSR and consumer marketing, different dimensions assist in the understanding of this very broad topic. There has been considerable interest in sustainability, growth and profit, and CSR in consumer marketing, with many organizations embracing sustainability, growth, and profitability, and incorporating these into consumer marketing strategies. Organizations attempting to earn the trust of consumers must focus on CSR in relation to MCCSR and consumers' evaluation of CSR.

Through empirical findings, the current study reveals that CSR (economic, philanthropic, legal, and ethical) dimensions have positive outcomes if practiced in conjunction with consumers' evaluation of CSR (brand evaluations, WOM, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty/retention).

A point suggested by Wachtman and Johnson (2009) and further bolstered by Dowling and Weeks (2011) is that each day we are confronted by the overwhelming issues of finding a differential advantage, finding better approaches for contacting individuals, catching their consideration, and above all, convincing them to make a move, such as a purchase decision. With a specific end goal to motivate individuals to act, we should draw them inwardly. This sentiment is reflected in brands where those that are doing well are the ones embracing social good and are best placed to succeed in an ever more connected world (Mantovani, de Andrade, & Negrão, 2017; Rim, Yang, & Lee, 2016). In order to ensure CSR as a driver, organizations have to live the brand first (Ind & Ryder, 2011) as this compassion will be more visible to consumers in an interconnected world. As Tyagi and Tyagi (2012) suggested, these days, in a hyper-connected society, consumers search for these characteristics and bolster firms that show sympathy and have an active social conscience.

While the primary objective of organizations is to accomplish a more elevated amount of monetary advantages, selecting a maintainable unique differential advantage assumes a pivotal role in accomplishing this principal point (Majeed, 2011). Along these lines, the objective of numerous business strategies is to accomplish a maintainable differential gain. CSR endeavours to develop a decent positioning for organizations within and to a great degree focused on differential benefit marketplace

(ACCA, 2009). More elevated levels of differential advantage empower an organization to generate higher worth for its customers (Dunk, 2007), thus, creating unrivalled worth for customers and accomplishing more elevated customer satisfaction, generating higher revenues by presenting high calibre of products and services at a lesser price (Williams & Naumann, 2011).

Conclusion

The current study urges instantaneous temperaments to be followed to incorporate the propositions considered in CSR that can stride the Pakistani telecom business industry into the contemporary environment of business attainment in the global community. Unbiased CSR communiqué depends on clarity, despite the fact that only this is attached to an administration of self-direction. However, both moral and practical basis strengthen the apprehension towards clarity, and this can construct an association of firmness. CSR frames a necessary function of contemporary organizations and social life, regardless of the possibility that its practice is still emerging. Although communiqué around CSR has a fundamental function in the development of what firms do, as well as in the function of whatever remains of the society – whether as a stakeholder, media, or insiders to the firm – plays a role in expressing the significance and exercising the propositions of CSR.

Based on a comprehensive empirical investigation, the current study outcomes demonstrated that customer satisfaction derives an optimistic link in the correlation among CSR and company marketplace esteem along with a legitimate blend inclusive of CSR propositions and product-related capacities that are critical. Such outcomes present the ramifications for both, marketing theory and practice. The findings of the current study further emphatically register that organizations with CSR propositions optimistically add to market esteem, can attain differential advantage, and materialise additional profit by investing resources into CSR (Chernev & Blair, 2015; Mantovani et al., 2017; Rim et al., 2016). A boundless and multi-layered mindfulness drive must be initiated with a specific end goal to ensure that the different stakeholders and organizations comprehend the need and benefits of CSR, and eliminate any misinterpretations identified with it. Spilling out of this enhanced mindfulness involves cross-stakeholder discussion among governments, businesses, civil society, and academia. A pertinent and empowering CSR strategy should be formulated by the government with the contribution of all the stakeholders and this should be made mandatory.

Organizations in Pakistan, particularly the diminutive and average companies that shape the supply chains of significant

organizations, should urge to devise the link among CSR and monetary premiums, in order to ensure that they can change into more proficient companies and move towards monetarily sustainable investments and worth alongside the consumer. CSR determination requires moving towards enhancing inner effectiveness, while utilising CSR as a management device. This can be accomplished by connecting small and medium enterprises with their bigger corporate partners in learning exchange and capacity-building associations that create dependable and financially savvy answers to make a progressively outstretching influence.

It is clear from this study that the long haul of monetary achievements, sustaining development, financial benefits, productivity, and improvement of each firm reside in the execution of CSR propositions. There is a solid urge that the corporate sector of Pakistan needs immediate initiatives to acknowledge and actualise the rapidly developing CSR activism that is being implemented globally, and setting the new benchmarks of monetary triumphs, optimistic social images, and development. On a general premise, the corporate sector in Pakistan is in the infancy phase of CSR activism and requires genuine endeavours to acknowledge and expect the present rapid pace of CSR alongside the latest diversified practices being adopted globally.

SECP promulgated CSR voluntary guidelines in 2013. But the required propositions remained redundant due to its voluntary nature. Further, the guidelines were restricted only to public sector companies, whereas the major chunk of businesses are generated through private sector organizations, both international and national (large or small enterprises). Emerging CSR trends worldwide demand that SECP being a regulatory body should immediately formulate a new comprehensive CSR policy.

The current study endeavours and opens new horizons for research on this subject. First, the present research can be extended by comparing high and low performing organizations in relation to CSR and consumer marketing. Second, the study can be of CSR. Third, industry-wise analysis of the required subject-matter in discussion can be advantageous in the future study. Finally, the determinants of CSR in relation to consumer marketing practices can be compared between service and manufacturing sectors. Future studies could include other attributes of consumer marketing and financial management in relation to CSR practices by using primary and secondary data.

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ANNEXURE-A

QUESTIONNAIRE

Sources

Almeida and Sobral (2010); Alvarado-Herrera et al. (2015); D'Aprile and Talo (2014); Perez, Martinez, and Del Bosque (2013); Turker (2009); Perez and Del Bosque (2015); Chomvilailuk and Butcher (2014); Martinez, Perez, and Del Bosque (2013); Oberseder et al. (2014); Carroll (1979, 1991).

Economic CSR

In my opinion, in relation to the economic objectives, my mobile telecom company

1. *Has always maximized profits in order to guarantee its continuity*
2. *Has built solid relations with its customers to assure its long-term economic success*
3. *Has always improved the quality of the services that they offer*
4. *Has always offered a competitive pricing policy*
5. *Has always tried to be more productive*
6. *Has targeted sustainable growth for future generations*

Legal CSR

In my opinion, in relation to the legal objectives, my mobile telecom company

1. *Has offered products which meet the legal standards, including domestic and international*
2. *Has complied with legislation regarding health and safety towards consumers*
3. *Has respected and complied with legal norms regulating competition towards products*
4. *Has complied with environment protection legislation*
5. *Has complied with legislation on business transactions*
6. *Has always respected consumer rights beyond the legal requirements*

Ethical CSR

In my opinion, in relation to the ethical objectives, my mobile telecom company

1. *Has undertaken honest and transparent advertising of products*
2. *Has purchased environmentally friendly technology*
3. *Has monitored and minimised the negative impact of business activity on the environment*
4. *Has disclosed to its customers the imperfections and risks of products*
5. *Has developed initiatives that promote consumer's environmental awareness*
6. *Has the main principle to honesty deal in every business*
7. *Has always competed with its rivals in an ethical framework*
8. *Has always avoided unfair competition*
9. *Has always communicated to its customers its environmental practices*
10. *Has always participated in environmental certifications*
11. *Has a comprehensive code of conduct towards business operations*
12. *Has salespersons and employees who have always provided full and accurate information to all customers*

Philanthropic CSR

In my opinion, in relation to the philanthropic objectives, my mobile telecom company

1. *Has always provided details to improve the image of its product*
2. *Has always provided details to improve perception of its business conduct*
3. *Has always provided details to improve its corporate image*
4. *Has always provided help to the poor and needy*
5. *Has always contributed towards bettering the local community*
6. *Has always fulfilled its social responsibility*
7. *Has always helped solve the social problems*

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8. *Has always used part of its budget for donations and social projects to advance the situation of the most unprivileged groups of the society*
 9. *Has always contributed money to cultural and social events (e.g., music and sports)*
 10. *Has always played a role in the society beyond the economic benefits for future generation*

Marketing communication CSR

In my opinion, in relation to the marketing communication objectives, my mobile telecom company

1. *Has always provided information to its customers on its products/services attributes through aggressive electronic (popular and trusted television channels with the highest viewership) and print (popular and trusted newspapers with the highest circulation/readership) media campaigns frequently*
2. *Has always provided detailed authentic information through its Website about its product/services to its customers*
3. *Has always provided accurate information about its products complying with the national and international standards*
4. *Has always provided full and accurate information about pricing in comparison to its competitor's pricing*
5. *Has always provided access to customers to provide feedback and register complaints through its Website by understanding the needs and demands of our community/society*
6. *Has always provided provision through its advertisement campaigns (electronic and print media) by requesting feedback on its social responsibility/products/services activities from non-governmental and public institutions.*
7. *Has always advertised through its Website and print/electronic media to protect the environment and adopted eco-friendly business policies*
8. *Has always advertised through its Website and print/electronic media for the acquisition of the latest and efficient technology*
9. *Has always carried out market surveys through its Website and print/electronic media to understand consumer habits*
10. *Has always taken feedback from consumers and general public on how to be more innovative towards socially responsible marketing campaigns through its Website and print/electronic media*
11. *Has always advertised long term policy for CSR through its Website and print/electronic media*

Consumers evaluation CSR

(a) Brand evaluations CSR

In my opinion, in relation to brand evaluations, my mobile telecom company

1. *Has always met my expectations with its brands*
2. *Has always met the standards/benchmarks at the desirable level with its brands*
3. *Has always satisfied me with its brands*
4. *Has always brought happiness and delight above the satisfaction level with its brands*
5. *Has substantial benefits/characteristics to recall with its brands*

Consumers evaluation CSR

(b) Word-of-Mouth CSR

In my opinion, in relation to word-of-mouth for my mobile telecom company

1. *I always say positive things to friends, relatives, and other people*
 2. *I always recommend buying products/services of my company to friends, relatives, and other people*
 3. *I always intend to mention favourable things about my company to my friends, relatives, and other people*
-

-
4. *I always devote myself primarily to the products/services of my company*
 5. *I always blog in favour of my company*

Consumers evaluation CSR

(c) Customer satisfaction CSR

In my opinion, in relation to customer satisfaction, my mobile telecom company

1. *Has always treated its customers honestly*
2. *Has always used customers' satisfaction as an indicator to improve the product/service marketing*
3. *Has always made an effort to know its customers' needs*
4. *Has always been committed to well establish ethic principles*
5. *Has always communicated openly and honestly with the customers*
6. *Has always implemented fair sales practices*
7. *Has always met quality standards*
8. *Has always provided provision to customers to file complaints to improve products/services standards*
9. *Has always offered high performance products/services*
10. *Has business partners who have always followed the professional standards*
11. *Has always been recognised as a trustworthy company*

Consumers evaluation CSR

(d) Customer loyalty/retention CSR

In my opinion, in relation to customer loyalty/retention, my mobile telecom company

1. *Has always been recommended by me, when other consumers ask me for advice*
 2. *Has enjoyed positive temperament through myself, when other consumers ask me about it*
 3. *Has always been there when I needed a new telecom service*
 4. *Has always been my first choice when I needed to contract a new telecom service*
 5. *Has always provided products/services which makes me strongly committed to stay with it*
 6. *Has personal meaning to me*
 7. *Has positive emotional relationship with me*
 8. *Has always offered sustainable products/services, which comprehend my financial make and mend*
-

Note: Five-point Likert scale was used with the following propositions:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree to some extent	Uncertain	Agree to some extent	Strongly agree