

Corporate Social Responsibility as a Customer Retention Strategy in the Coffee Shop Industry in India

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of customers' perceptions of multidimensional corporate social responsibility (philanthropic, ethical, legal, and economic) on coffee shop customer retention, which examines the case of Starbucks in India. The findings show that economic CSR, ethical CSR, and philanthropic CSR are all important contributors to enhanced brand attitude and service quality, according to PLS structural equation modelling of 300 survey responses. Client retention improved as a result of the relationships. The current study contributes to a broader understanding of CSR strategy in the coffee shop business, as well as valuable insights into the same, by revealing how various CSR actions impact customers' views of brand attitude, service quality, and customer retention.

Keywords

Corporate Social Responsibility, Customer Retention, Customer Satisfaction, Service Quality and Coffee Shop Industry.

1. Introduction

According to Euromonitor International, with a market size of Rs 2,570 crore in 2018, India is the world's 10th fastest growing business sector for freshly prepared café chains. The café business, which is dominated by Tata Starbucks and Cafe Coffee Day, is also one of the fastest expanding categories of the consumer food industry, with esteem agreements estimated to rise 6.9% annually to Rs 4,540 crore by 2023 at constant prices excluding growth (The Economic Times, 2019). The Indian bistro industry is assessed to show improvement at a CAGR of more than 12% during 2019-2024. The market's outcome may be linked to growing demands from the young population, increased disposable income, corporate culture, rapid urbanisation, and a global way of life. In addition, the increasing number of two-income households, increased global openness, expanding development, and media entry are all driving growth in the Indian espresso bistro industry. Moreover, the growing amount of double pay residences, expanded global openness, expanded advances, and media access all contribute to the growth of the

Indian espresso bistro sector (Research and Markets, 2019). The Indian bistro sector is dominated by Tata Starbucks Limited (India), Cafe Coffee Day, Costa Coffee, Barista Coffee Co Ltd., McCafe, Mocha, Indian Coffee House (ICH), and The Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf Restaurant and Cafe (CBTL). The European Commission characterised CSR as an intentional responsibility by organizations to address the social and ecological worries of their partners (Lai et al., 2015). Corporate social obligations are founded on financial gains, such as productivity; as a result, all resulting charitable, moral, and legal obligations are dependent on this (Carroll, 1979). Furthermore, because the client is the primary revenue generator, the individual is regarded as extremely important for the business's exhibition metric (Rivera et al., 2016). Various examinations have demonstrated that customer retention is basic for the shopper food administration industry's presentation, as the expense of holding a current client is generally not the expense of acquiring another client, while looking, showcasing, and coordination costs are considered (Rahimi and Kozak, 2017). Subsequently, it is basic to inspect CSR from the client's point of view and to comprehend what CSR means for customer retention to understand the monetary advantages of Corporate Social Responsibility. It is basic for the organization's business achievement not exclusively to draw in an enormous number of first-time shoppers but in addition to convey brilliant customer service quality, surpassing customer satisfaction while prompting rehash visits (Hwang and Lyu, 2019). On the off chance that clients are satisfied with their post-buy decision, they will purchase the organization's items and recommend them to family, friends, and others (Manosuthi, Lee, and Han, 2020). Developing customer retention is basic for eatery proprietors since it safeguards their organization's drawn-out endurance in the inexorably troublesome and serious café business (Hwang, Kim, and Gulzar, 2020). A few explorations have shown that assistance quality attributes, as well as brand disposition, are primary determinants of fulfilment appraisal and customer retention (Foroudi, 2019). Scholastics and business experts stand out enough to be noticed to get the specific course of benefactors' connection to a solitary brand or organization (Song et al., 2019). A wide number of studies propose that organizations that effectively participate in CSR exercises receive huge reputational and monetary rewards over the long haul (Davvetas and Diamantopoulos, 2017., Farmaki, 2019.). Current cordiality concentrates generally center around the immediate connection between CSR and customer, but neglects to represent other significant components all the while, bringing about lacking outcomes (Alamgir and Nasir Uddin, 2017., Wang, 2020.). An incredible number of studies have found that customer retention is basic for a chain's exhibition since the expense of holding a current client is generally less expensive than the expense of getting another client, while looking through costs, showcasing costs, joining costs, etc. are totally included (Rahimi and Kozak, 2017). As a result, a number of relevant scholarly investigations have been completed. "How does CSR impact corporate monetary execution (CFP)?" is a repetitive subject in CSR-related investigations. Notwithstanding conflicting outcomes in earlier examinations, the ideal impact of CSR on CFP overwhelms the writing across a few spaces (Inoue, Kent, and Lee, 2011., Jahmane and Gaies, 2020.). The organisation of such café brands covers numerous aspects of daily life, and emphasising these activities may directly build trust among clients and organisations (Y. J. Kim and Kim, 2013). In spite of its importance, CSR's viability in laying out solid customer retention for eateries has not been completely experimentally settled. Most of the exploration focused on the general effect of CSR as opposed to explicit parts of CSR and monetary accomplishment because of CSR (S. Lee, Singal, and Kang, 2013). In the profoundly cutthroat chain business, it is basic to reveal insight into viewpoints that might influence visitors' great post-buy conduct. The sociology scholarly writing definite how brand attitude, service quality, and customer satisfaction, as well as an association's CSR exercises, are basic thoughts in understanding the buyer's dynamic interaction and post-buy conduct (Chua, Lee, Goh, and Han, 2015., Han et al., 2020., Oliver, 2010.). This management concept enabled Starbucks to not only form long-term relationships with its customers, but also to become more competitive than other brands (Harnrunghalotorn and Phayonlerd, 2015). Regardless of its pertinence, CSR's viability in laying out solid customer retention for cafés has not been completely experimentally settled. Most exploration focused on the general effect of CSR as opposed to explicit parts of CSR and monetary achievement inferable from CSR (S. Lee, Singal, and Kang, 2013). Therefore, the reason for this study is to get superior information on a chain eatery and its image disposition and service quality, as well as to approach the connections that add to client joy and shopper maintenance. In the profoundly aggressive eatery market, it is basic to set the chain cafés' CSR direction. Starbucks has long been recognized for its outstanding corporate responsibility, as well as its commitment to manageability and local government support. Starbucks claims to have followed many CSR principles from its inception. These objectives, according to its 2020 Global Social Impact Report, include obtaining 100 percent morally obtained espresso; fostering an overall organisation of cultivators and supporting them with 100 million trees by 2025; creating green designs in its stores; and providing hourly local area administration. Additionally, it creates an excellent school programme for its employees. 5,000 veterans and 10,000 evacuees will be recruited; the environmental impact of its cups will be reduced; and a person will be appointed to monitor the situation. Starbucks' endeavors to help the globe in battling the Covid pestilence were likewise unveiled in the 2020 report. The organization's way to deal with the pandemic is comprised of three essential parts:

- Focusing on the wellbeing of your buyers and laborers.
- To help medical care and organization experts in their endeavors to moderate the pandemic's belongings.
- Being available in networks by acting dependably and productively.

Today, numerous socially dependable organizations, like Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream, have brands that are famous for their CSR drives.

1.1 Objectives

1. To determine the influence of consumers' perceptions of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on customer retention.
2. To define the distinctive impact of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in customer retention while accounting for the moderating effects of service quality, brand attitude, and customer satisfaction.

Table 1. Key Constructs

Constructs	Measures	Description of Factors
Economic CSR	EC1	EC1 - measure of importance to maximising earnings per share
	EC2	EC2 - measure of importance of being profitable
Legal CSR	LEG1	LEG1 - measure of importance to committing to regulations
	LEG2	LEG2 - measure of importance of providing legal goods
Ethical CSR	ETH1	ETH1 - measure of importance to prevention of compromise of ethical norms
	ETH2	ETH2 - measure of importance given to good corporate citizenship
Philanthropic CSR	PHIL1	PHIL1 - measure of efforts towards exhibiting philanthropic and charitable behavior
	PHIL2	PHIL2 - measure of efforts towards improving "quality of life"
Brand Attitude	BA1	BA1 - positive customer perception towards CSR activities
	BA2	BA2 - negative customer perception towards CSR activities
Service Quality	SQ1	SQ1 - measure of overall Service quality
	SQ2	SQ2 - measure of fast service
	SQ3	SQ3 - measure of accurate service
Customer Satisfaction	CSAT1	CSAT1 - measure of experiential satisfaction
	CSAT2	CSAT2 - measure of service meeting/exceeding expectations
Customer Retention	CRET1	CRET1 - measure of being re-chosen as a coffee shop
	CRET2	CRET2 - measure of being re-chosen as a dining option

2. Research Methodology

2.1 Research Method

In this research, a convenience sampling method and a voluntary sampling method that focused on people living in India and who were customers of Starbucks coffee were administered. A web-based survey was designed and distributed to the respondents, as well as posted on online survey forums like Survey Swap with inclusion criteria applied to filter respondents. A self-administered survey questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale, with "strongly agree" being the highest scale and "strongly disagree" being the lowest, was used to collect and analyse data using statistical techniques. A sample size of 300 was taken for coffeehouse customers. To evaluate the hypothesis, the proposed study framework is examined using factor analysis and factor loading, with the factors being further examined using SEM.

2.2 Measures

To assess the factors under research, measures were derived from current hospitality and consumer behaviour studies (e.g., Han et al., 2020., Henning-Thurau, 2004., Hwang, Cho, and Kim, 2019., Kim et al., 2020., Oliver, 2010., Ryu, Roy, Kim, and Ryu, 2020.). All of the items were scored on a five-point Likert scale (ranging from "strongly disagree" [1] to "strongly agree" [5]). Two metrics were used for economic CSR, legal CSR, ethical CSR, and philanthropic CSR, respectively. To assess brand attitude, we employed three separate measuring items. Additionally, two items were used to assess service quality and two things were used to assess customer retention.

2.3 Research Gap

Café chains, like Starbucks, can significantly affect CSR strategies since they have countless outlets all over the planet and their items are attached to many regions of the planet, similar to the climate, human wellbeing, creature government assistance, work issues, and fair exchange. The organization of such eatery brands addresses numerous parts of human existence, and underlining these drives can straightforwardly construct trust among clients and organizations. In spite of its importance, CSR's viability in laying out solid customer retention for cafés has not been completely settled. Most examinations focused on the general effect of CSR as opposed to explicit components of CSR or monetary accomplishment because of CSR.

Understanding the distinct impact of each component is critical because CSR is comprised of several aspects. Previous studies on this issue have also been conducted in several nations, but no articles on the subject could be discovered. Furthermore, recent research has focused on CSR from the perspective of workers rather than customers. To fill a research gap, this study uses Carroll's (1991) four key aspects of CSR (economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic CSR) to fully understand the relevance of each component in connection to customer retention in the coffee shop business.

2.4 Research Models

The model (Figure 1 and Figure 2) revealed that both brand attitude and service quality have a significant impact on client retention. Clients will want to return and become loyal customers if favourable brand mentalities and customer satisfaction are developed via client experiences, resulting in a large slice of the pie and cash for café chains.

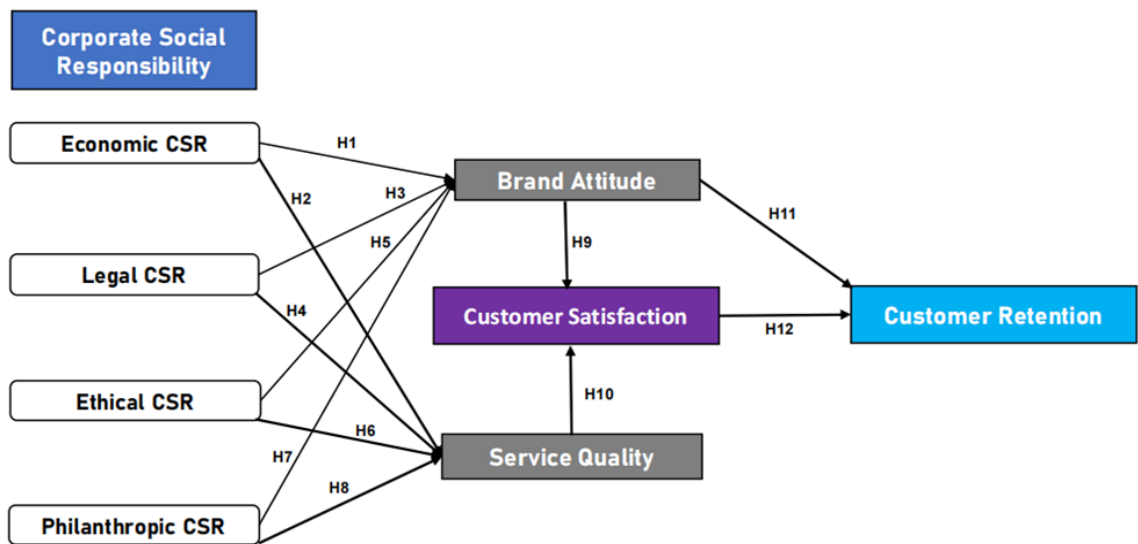


Figure 1. Research Model

2.5 Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

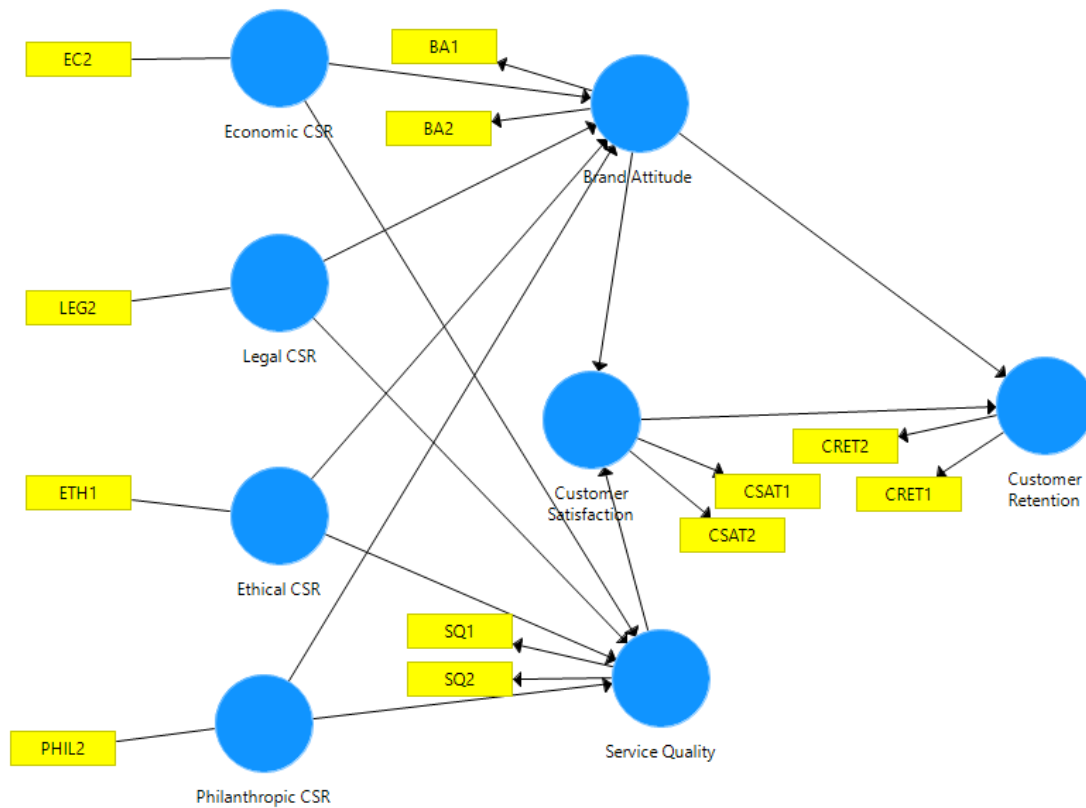


Figure 2. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

3. PLS- SEM

The SmartPLS 3 was utilised in the current investigation to perform partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) rather than covariance-based structural equation modelling (CB-SEM). PLS-SEM offers a number of benefits, including its applicability for exploratory research and target prediction, as well as its flexibility in dealing with non-normal data and small sample sizes. As a result, SmartPLS 3 was employed in this study to evaluate the hypotheses suggested. Measurement and structural models were evaluated using a two-step analytical method technique (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988).

Table 1. Factor Loading

	Brand Attitude	Customer Retention	Customer Satisfaction	Service Quality
Brand Attitude		0.911	0.815	
Customer Retention				
Customer Satisfaction		0.898		
Economic CSR	0.802			0.939
Ethical CSR	0.963			0.864
Legal CSR	0.897			0.908
Philanthropic CSR	0.809			0.905
Service Quality			0.811	

Factor loadings are a part of factor analysis, which is a data reduction strategy aiming at explaining the relationships between observed variables with a smaller number of factors. "The above Table 1 interprets the correlation in it that shows the correlation between the variables and the fundamental element known as the latent variable. The factor loading scale ranges from -1.0 to +1.0, with higher ratings indicating a stronger link between fundamental values and the hidden component. Hence, the above table shows the factor loading for the variables and the hypothesis".

Table 2. Assessment of Reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Brand Attitude	0.803	0.911	0.784	0.526
Customer Retention	0.975	0.787	0.852	0.515
Customer Satisfaction	0.816	0.726	0.748	0.565
Economic CSR	1	1	1	1
Ethical CSR	1	1	1	1
Legal CSR	1	1	1	1
Philanthropic CSR	1	1	1	1
Service Quality	0.796	0.801	0.883	0.524

Cronbach's alpha was developed by Lee Cronbach in 1951 to assess dependability or internal consistency. Consistency is frequently referred to as "reliability." The validity of Likert scale surveys is determined using Cronbach's alpha testing. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) were used to assess the factors' reliability. The entire sample was analysed, and the factors with factor loadings greater than 0.006 were excluded. For the whole sample, the findings for reliability and validity with factor loadings are shown in Table 2. All of the alpha values and CRs were greater than or close to 0.700 and greater than 0.800, respectively. Because the Cronbach's Alpha value of the entire questionnaire is extremely high and the data is reliable because the benchmark is 0.7, we can proceed with our data from 300 respondents.

3.1 Assessment of Validity

The discriminant validity was evaluated using the criterion by Fornell-Larcker and the Heterotrait- Monotrait Method (HTMT). The results of both are shown in Table 3 and Table 4. The squared foundation of each construct's AVE must be more notable than its relationship with some other to confirm the discriminant validity. AVE states that the average variance shared between constructs and their measures should be greater than that shared with the other constructs (Couchman & Fulop., 2006). The cut off for AVE is 0.50 or higher. For any item containing a value of less than 0.50 it indicates more errors in the items than the AVE explained by the constructs.

Table 3. Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	Brand Attitude	Customer Retention	Customer Satisfaction	Economic CSR	Ethical CSR	Legal CSR	Philanthropic CSR	Service Quality
Brand Attitude	1							
Customer Retention	0.824	0.717						
Customer Satisfaction	0.824	0.812	0.752					
Economic CSR	0.225	0.59	0.163	1				
Ethical CSR	0.579	0.147	0.04	0.603	1			
Legal CSR	0.137	0.04	0.812	0.814	0.304	1		
Philanthropic CSR	0.38	0.859	0.601	0.158	0.147	0.91	1	
Service	0.851	0.212	0.621	0.268	0.84	0.516	0.085	1

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Table 4. Path Coefficients – Hypothesis Development

	Original Sample (O)	Standard Deviation (Std Dev)	T Statistics (O/Std Dev)	P Values
Brand Attitude -> Customer Retention	0.512	0.761	7.125	0.047
Brand Attitude -> Customer Satisfaction	0.515	0.04	6.129	0.031
Customer Satisfaction -> Customer Retention	0.099	0.064	6.115	0.049
Economic CSR -> Brand Attitude	0.201	0.065	5.072	0.05
Economic CSR -> Service Quality	0.639	0.084	5.058	0
Ethical CSR -> Brand Attitude	0.664	0.077	7.064	0.008
Ethical CSR -> Service Quality	0.464	0.089	6.063	0
Legal CSR -> Brand Attitude	0.597	0.082	3.061	0.015
Legal CSR -> Service Quality	0.607	0.057	7.064	0.024
Philanthropic CSR -> Brand Attitude	0.010	0.035	7.064	0.938
Philanthropic CSR -> Service Quality	-0.112	0.064	2.136	0.843
Service Quality -> Customer Satisfaction	0.405	0.086	6.061	0.004

Path Coefficients is a statistical technique that assesses a single dataset to generate a large number of replicated models.

4. Findings

According to our findings, financial CSR influenced brand disposition but had no effect on help quality. This has all the earmarks of being the case since brand mentality is an insight that customers judge totally whether or not they really see it or not. Service quality is a genuine and prompt discernment that is assessed in light of what the buyer truly sees. This outcome is consistent with the findings of a past report by Wu and Wang (2014), which tracked down a solid and ideal relationship between monetary CSR practices and brand disposition. Be that as it may, this goes against the discoveries of Huang et al. (2014), who observed that CSR usefully affects service quality. Lawful CSR significantly affects both brand mentality and service quality. This tracking down gives experimental premise to earlier research showing that CSR drives will create client perspectives and quality evaluations of organizations' items and administrations in an assortment of settings (Han et al., 2020; Li et al., 2019; Lo, 2020). Our findings can assist café chains in developing viable strategies for retaining current customers through CSR initiatives and practices. Moral corporate social obligation enormously affects brand mentality and service quality. Therefore, while advancing CSR drives and overseeing business, the café chain should effectively meet the moral/moral requests of the local area.

Then again, it was found that generous CSR essentially affects either brand disposition or service quality. This is viewed because of the respondents' inability to see the café chain's obligation to magnanimous undertakings and the outcomes uncovered a solid impact of brand disposition and service quality on customer satisfaction. This conclusion is consistent with previous research that found a good brand disposition increases consumer satisfaction with a certain brand (Foroudi, 2019., Schivinski and Dabrowski, 2016., Wang et al., 2019.). Furthermore, it is consistent with consumer behaviour, which has proven that service quality has a significant impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty (Jiang and Wang, 2006., Nejadi et al., 2009., Tariq et al., 2020.). When all of this information is considered, it reveals the significance of brand attitude, service quality, and customer satisfaction in the bistro business. The findings are consistent with prior research that has emphasised the basic intervening potential of these components.

Our findings revealed that both brand attitude and customer happiness have a significant impact on client retention. Clients will want to return and become loyal customers if favourable brand mentalities and customer satisfaction are developed via client experiences, resulting in a large slice of the pie and cash for café chains.

4.1 Recommendations

In recent years, India's coffee shop business has seen tremendous expansion; a number of new cafes have opened, and the usage of technology has progressed, resulting in strong rivalry in the field. To attract clients' attention, firm management and marketing managers must generate a competitive advantage and build a strong reputation for their branches. From this perspective, the current study is significant since it depicts CSR as a strategic marketing tool that will attract customers who share similar beliefs. The study validates its validity and relevance by advising cafés on why they should prioritise CSR activities in order to boost customer retention. The current study reveals that a chain's brand attitude has a considerable mediation influence on customer retention when it engages in CSR. Customers receive a good signal when CSR actions are effectively reported and promoted. Customers love coffee shops that are well known and acknowledged for their societal CSR activities, which leads to high retention. According to the study, café businesses should choose particular CSR objectives, explain these objectives to clients, and leverage them in the image-building process. Another critical component in the current study is customer satisfaction. The analysis reveals that customer satisfaction has a considerable mediating influence between CSR and retention. According to the findings, cafés should prioritize CSR initiatives that improve both the intellectual and emotional sides of consumer satisfaction. This implies that when services meet the expectations of the consumer and promise long-term mutual advantages (both monetary and non-monetary), it results in high customer satisfaction.

Customers prefer customer-focused CSR activities such as great service quality, improved operations, community development, and so on, and they demonstrate their support by returning to the cafés. As a result, coffee shop chains and their marketing professionals should evaluate the impact of consumer satisfaction on retention. The marketing program must concentrate on the aspects of client satisfaction that are relevant to their offerings. Based on the results of the mediating and moderating effects of C-C identification, the study reveals that social identity theory is extremely important in leveraging the influence of CSR on customers. Cafes must develop and implement CSR initiatives with the goal of developing social identity among consumers. While designing these CSR activities, the marketing team should focus on creating social or self-identities for customers. Customers' dedication and good attitude toward the businesses' operations are enhanced by a high level of self-identity.

5. Conclusion

In this research, we attempted to make sense of the impact of coffeehouse industry CSR on consumer retention. Other important perspectives in developing customer retention (such as brand attitude, service quality, and consumer happiness) were also incorporated as intervening elements into the proposed hypothetical framework. On account of café chains, scholarly writing has for the most part disregarded experimental exploration on CSR and its connection to development factors affecting visitors' post-buy conduct. The reasonable system used in this study provides useful insight into the influence of CSR on the customer retention process in the coffeehouse industry. Our applied model properly depicted the variability of client retention in the café industry. As a bridge, the effect of brand attitude, service quality, and consumer enjoyment was evaluated. The current study goes above and beyond by integrating the several components of corporate social responsibility, brand attitude, service quality, and customer pleasure in the coffeehouse business into a single applicable system.

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Biography

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