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CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND CONSUMER CHOICES: TESTING THE MEDIATION OF REPUTATION AND CAPABILITY

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The influence of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on customer buying choices is substantial. Modern consumers increasingly prefer businesses engaged in ethical practices and contributing positively to society. Companies that actively participate in CSR programs often enjoy a favorable brand reputation, increased customer loyalty, and a competitive advantage. Purpose: This concise research endeavor seeks to examine the function of business reputation as a mediator and organizational capability in the connection between CSR and consumer purchasing behavior. The research employs the causal stages technique to assess mediation. Methodology: The objective of this study is to examine the role of business reputation and corporate capacity in influencing the connection between CSR and customer *purchasing behavior. The researcher utilizes a simple random selection method to choose a total of 120 participants for the sample. Research Instrument: The questionnaire included of two sections. Part one consisted of four demographic profile questions that were assessed using nominal and ratio scales. The second section of the questionnaire pertained to the fundamental aspect of this study, with fourteen items that were assessed using a five-point Likert scale. Results: The study reveals that corporate reputation and corporate ability do not serve as mediators, meaning they do not have an indirect influence, between consumer purchasing behavior and corporate social responsibility. Nevertheless, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has a direct and substantial impact on customer buying behavior.*

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility - Corporate reputation - Corporate ability – Consumer buying behaviour - Mediating variables.

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1. Corporate Social Responsibility

According to Vats and Mittal (2021)[i], companies who engage in corporate social responsibility are perceived as being more socially and ecologically aware. They also tend to make beneficial contributions to the local communities surrounding their facilities. Visser's (2009)[ii] research underscores the growing interest and importance of exploring Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in emerging nations, offering a significant opportunity to advance CSR studies that have been surprisingly overlooked in research. MigleSontaite-Petkevicience (2012)[iii] found that CSR is increasingly becoming a pivotal factor shaping the public's perception of companies. The impact of CSR on a company's reputation is intricately tied to its categorization into areas such as human responsibility, environmental responsibility, and product responsibility (Narsis I and Bhuvaneswari N (2025)[iv]. In their article "CSR Themes, Opportunities, and Challenges" (Crane & Glozer (2016)[v], the authors emphasize that effective communication with stakeholders is vital for the successful planning, implementation, and impact of CSR initiatives. This focus has led to an increasing amount of written works on the communication of corporate social responsibility (CSR).

Premlata and A. Agarwal (2013) [vi] delve into the implication of CSR for firms, questioning the reasons for advocating the promotion of economic growth. They posit that CSR is indispensable because companies have a responsibility to support their communities, particularly in rural areas. The Friedman model (1962–1973)[vii], developed between 1962 and 1973, highlights the notion that it is both the social and moral responsibility of a businessman to fulfill their duties. The sole obligation of a businessman is to his shareholders and investors. Corporate Social Responsibility: Transforming the concept of development According to Michael Blowfield (2005)[viii], CSR can have advantages in some situations. However, it is important to recognize its limitations in order to prevent economic interests from taking precedence over the development goals while engaging with developing nations (Mageshwari, G., & Narsis, I. (2023)[ix].

1.1 CSR and the Reputation of a company

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and company reputation are intricately intertwined, exerting a substantial influence on each other. Engaging in CSR projects has the potential to develop a company's standing, while a positive reputation can amplify the perceived value of CSR initiatives. By adeptly managing CSR and reputation, organizations can build trust, attract stakeholders, and contribute meaningfully to long-term sustainable prosperity (Narsis, D. I. (2022)[x]. The perceived CSR and business reputation are closely linked, requiring a certain level of credibility for CSR projects to be effective. Customers may be skeptical of initiatives accepted by companies with corporate image matters ((Liebl, 2011)[xi]. Therefore, firm reputation stands as a valuable and challenging-to-replicate intangible asset (Rodríguez, 2002) [xii], significantly impacting customer purchase intentions (Pirsch et al., 2007[xiii]; Aksak et al., 2016[xiv]) and corporate reputation (Park et al., 2014)[xv]. Corporate reputation heavily relies on stakeholder groups' opinions of an organization's CSR. Specifically, it is determined by how well the organization's CSR programs and outcomes align with stakeholders' social and environmental values and expectations. In this specific context, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) possesses the ability to effect these insights, thus contributing to the maximization of the financial benefits linked to a company's reputation (Unerman, 2008)[xvi]. Empirical analysis supports a positive correlation between CSR and company reputation. According to Husted & Allen (2007)[xvii], raising awareness among consumers and stakeholder groups about the significance of social responsibility of corporate (CSR) may have a beneficial impact on the organization's image.

According to Bayoud & Kavanagh (2012) [xviii], CSR reporting improves business reputation and financial performance. It also has the potential to attract international investment and increase consumer satisfaction and staff loyalty. Research conducted by Husted & Allen (2007) clearly shows that a strong business reputation has a considerable capacity to generate value and is challenging to duplicate. Corporate reputation is a crucial competitive advantage in marketplaces where it is challenging to distinguish products from one another. Melo & Galan (2011)[xix], assert that the utilization of CSR enhances this competitive advantage.

Brammer and Millington (2005)[xx] found a direct correlation among corporate social responsibility and an organization's reputation. According to Roberts (2003)[xxi] , a positive image enhances the perceived worth of an organization and influences its behavior and statements. Likewise, a negative reputation diminishes the worth of an organization's products and services, serving as indicators that provoke more disdain. According to Whooley (2005)[xxii], the importance of reputation is not something that can be considered trivial or insignificant. Proper utilization of reputation may bolster the profitability and long-term viability of an organization.

1.2 CSR and Corporate capability:

CSR and corporate capability are closely linked and can significantly impact each other. Companies can enhance their corporate capabilities by integrating CSR into their business plans and operations. CSR activities have the potential to positively influence various aspects of a company's performance, including reputation, stakeholder relationships, risk management, innovation, talent acquisition, and financial position. The affiliation with an organization refers to the perception or belief associated with the organization, including its reputation, information about the organization's history, and attitudes and evaluations towards the organization (Brown and Dacin, 1997)[xxiii]. Therefore, an organization's capacity is determined by society's expectations of the organization, which are influenced by its actions, as well as the level of trust and distrust towards the institution. The link between consumers and firms may be categorized into two components: CSR and corporate ability (Berens, 2004)[xxiv]. This implies that customers' perception of organizations has an impact on their appraisal of products. Hence, both corporate competence and CSR impact the assessment of a firm in addition to its goods. Research indicates that corporate ability significantly influences the reputation of firms and their corporate social responsibility. Additionally, CSR has a strong impact on the adoption of endorsed strategy and a unified branding plan (Berens et al., 2005)[xxv].

Corporate ability refers to the proficiency of a firm in creating and delivering products and services, as described by Brown. In this research, CSR and corporate ability are treated as distinct concepts and measured individually. This allows for a thorough analysis of the individual impacts of each set and a comparison between the influence of social factors (CSR) and economic variables (CA). This is done despite Deng (2012)[xxvi] suggestion to combine CSR and corporate ability into a single construct. Deng argues that a company can obligate both social responsibility and produce high-quality inexpensive products, and that the resources of a firm should be used to support its social responsibility behavior. Investing in CSR, or corporate social responsibility, enhances the new product development process and boosts production competence. Hence, people anticipate that the firm's new product would possess superior quality. Green and Peloza (2014)[xxvii] identify customers' expectations as one of the two primary factors that significantly influence the outcome of a CSR investment. As a result of the higher standards for quality, buyers now experience less satisfaction from the firm's new product.

Corporate ability encompasses proficiency in generating highly inventive products/services and providing high-quality commodities. The corporate abilities and CSR of a firm have a significant impact on consumers' impressions of its products. (Lii, J.K.R.; Stutts, M.A.; Patterson, L. 1991)[xxviii]. Sen and Bhattacharya (2001)[xxix] found that prioritizing CSR above corporate capabilities negatively affected customers' buying intentions. Positive corporate culture is likely to promote better employee affiliation with a central organization for at least two reasons. Positive corporate reputation (CR) generates external admiration, respect, and status, which are appealing to workers and foster the development of organizational identification (OID). Prior research has shown that factors indicating a company's capacity, such as consistent financial success, innovation, and the production of high-quality products, are highly indicative of how external evaluators perceive the company (Lange, Lee & Dai, 2011; Rindova et al., 2005; Walker, 2010)[xxx].

1.3 CSR and Consumer purchasing behaviour:

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can significantly influence customer purchasing decisions. There is a growing trend among consumers to favour corporations that uphold ethical practices and actively contribute to societal well-being. Businesses engaged in CSR programs often enjoy a positive brand reputation, increased customer loyalty, and a competitive advantage. Consumers are keen to pay further for products associated with CSR, and positive word-of-mouth can also drive sales. CSR needs a substantial and positive impact on purchasing decisions, fostering a favorable brand image among consumers, ultimately influencing their buying choices (Widiyantoro & Sumantri, 2017)[xxxi].

According to Sugi & Khuzaini (2017)[xxxii], Lachram & Sharif (2020)[xxxiii] and Fatmawati & Soliha (2017)[xxxiv], there is clear evidence that corporate social responsibility has a major impact on buying decisions.

Mohr, Webb, and Harris (2001)[xxxv] discovered that customers' purchasing behavior is influenced by their understanding of a company's CSR initiatives pertaining to environmental or social concerns. Consumers exhibit a greater sense of social responsibility and are more drawn to companies that actively engage in corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. According to Sen and Bhattacharya (2001)[xxxvi] study, the way customers respond to CSR has a direct impact on their propensity to buy items from the company.

1.4 Mediation Effect:

A mediating variable acts as a channel through which the influence of an independent variable affects a dependent variable (MacKinnon DP et.al, 2007)[xxxvii]. The widely employed method for assessing mediation is the fundamental phases approach, defined in the seminal works of Baron & Kenny (1986)[xxxviii] and Judd & Kenny (1981)[xxxix]. Their strategy for establishing mediation involves four phases. First and foremost, it is crucial to notice a substantial correlation between the variable that is independent and the dependent variable. Furthermore, it is essential to show a strong association between the variable that is independent and the putative mediating variable. Furthermore, it is crucial for the mediating variable to have a strong correlation with the variable that is dependent when both the variable that is independent and mediating variable are examined as predictors of the dependent variable in question (Narsis, I. (2023)[xl]. Moreover, the magnitude of the coefficient connecting the variable that is independent to the dependent variable must exceed the magnitude of the coefficient connecting the independent variables to the dependent variables in the model of regression where both the independent variables and the mediating variable predict the variable that is dependent. The current study has utilized a causal stages approach to evaluate mediation.

1.5 Objectives

This short term research paper intended to analyse the mediate effect of corporate reputation and corporate ability in between CSR and Consumer Purchase behaviour. With this primary purpose, the following objectives constructed.

To know the indicators reflect the corporate responsibility, corporate ability, CSR and consumer purchase behaviour.

To analyse the correlation among the four variables entered in the path model.

To analyse the possible mediation effect of corporate reputation and corporate ability

1.6 Hypothesis

This research paper proposed the following alternative hypothesis based on the objective of the research proposed earlier.

Ha1: Company reputation serves as an intermediary between consumer buying behavior and company social responsibility.

Ha2: Corporate capability serves as an intermediary between consumer buying behavior and CSR

2. Methodology

This is an exploratory study with an objective to know the mediate effect of corporate reputation and corporate ability in between CSR and consumer purchase behaviour. The researcher adapt a simple random sampling to choose 120 sample respondents. The sample respondents are residential at Tiruchy city. Selecting an adequate sample from a larger population using simple random sampling is well-established and reliable (Jiang Y, Wu,G & Jiang L 2023)[xli]. Its simplicity, openness, and impartiality and generalizability justify its usage in manuscripts. Simple random sampling minimizes selection bias by randomly picking population members or pieces (Mujere, N 2016)[xlii]. This strategy is useful for homogenous populations and when researchers want to draw reliable population-wide conclusions from a controllable sample. Simple random selection improves the study's external validity, boosting confidence in its generalizability (Rubin D B & Schenker N 1986)[xliii].

The questionnaire was consisting with two parts. Part one included with four demographic profile questions measured with nominal and ratio. The second part of the questionnaire related to core area of this research consisting fourteen questions measured with five point Likert's scale (1 as Not at all, 2 as Slightly, 3 as Moderately, 4 as Very and 5 as Extremely). At the end questionnaire issued were return back. The computerised analysis was done with a help of statistical software SPSS 20 and AMOS. The primary information gathered via the structure questionnaire. 116 of the 120 given questionnaires were returned. This analytical study incorporates the four factors such as CSR, Corporate Repuation, Corporate ability and Consumer purchasing behaviour. The CSR factor consist with four commonly accepted corporate social responsibility indicators. The CSR factor consider as a exogenous factor in the path model. The second factor named as Consumer purchasing behaviour consist with four indicators which reflects the consumers minimum expected CSR in their purchasing products (Jayakumar, G. D. S., & Narsis, I. (2011)[xliv]. This consumer purchasing behaviour factor consider as endogenous factor. The remaining two factors such as corporate ability and Corporate reputation consider as a mediators in the path analysis comprises with three indicators in the each factor.

Table 1. Distribution of sample respondents based on personal demographic factor

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Gender</td><td colspan="4">Female</td><td colspan="4">Male</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Count</td><td colspan="2">Row N %</td><td colspan="2">Count</td><td colspan="2">Row N %</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">33</td><td colspan="2">28.4%</td><td colspan="2">83</td><td colspan="2">71.6%</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Age</td><td colspan="2">20-30</td><td colspan="2">31-40</td><td colspan="2">41-50</td><td colspan="2">Above 50</td><td colspan="2">Total</td></tr>
<tr><td>Count</td><td>Row N %</td><td>Count</td><td>Row N %</td><td>Count</td><td>Row N %</td><td>Count</td><td>Row N %</td><td>Count</td><td>Row N %</td></tr>
<tr><td>37</td><td>31.9%</td><td>43</td><td>37.1%</td><td>21</td><td>18.1%</td><td>15</td><td>12.9%</td><td>116</td><td>100.0%</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Education</td><td colspan="2">Graduates</td><td colspan="2">Professional</td><td colspan="2">Diploma</td><td colspan="2">Others</td></tr>
<tr><td>Count</td><td>Row N %</td><td>Count</td><td>Row N %</td><td>Count</td><td>Row N %</td><td>Count</td><td>Row N %</td></tr>
<tr><td>37</td><td>31.9%</td><td>43</td><td>37.1%</td><td>21</td><td>18.1%</td><td>15</td><td>12.9%</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Occupation</td><td colspan="2">Salary class- Public Sector</td><td colspan="2">Salary Class – Private sector</td><td colspan="2">Self Employed</td><td colspan="2">Others</td></tr>
<tr><td>Count</td><td>Row N %</td><td>Count</td><td>Row N %</td><td>Count</td><td>Row N %</td><td>Count</td><td>Row N %</td></tr>
<tr><td>54</td><td>46.6%</td><td>34</td><td>29.3%</td><td>28</td><td>24.1%</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr>
</table>

The demographic makeup presents a gender distribution with males comprising the majority at 71.6%, while females represent 28.4%. Within the age spectrum, individuals aged 20 to 30 constitute 31.9%, indicating a sizable proportion of young adults. The subsequent age brackets display a progressive trend: 31-40 years at 37.1%, 41-50 years at 18.1%, and those above 50 years at 12.9%, signifying a diverse range of age groups. Educational attainment reveals 31.9% as graduates, 37.1% as professionals, 18.1% holding diplomas, and 12.9% falling into other categories. Economic engagement is characterized by a distribution across sectors, with 48.6% of the workforce in the public sector, 29.3% in the private sector, and 24.1% self-employed. This multifaceted overview underscores a dynamic composition, reflecting both gender and age diversity, educational achievements, and occupational engagement patterns.

Table 2. Frequency distribution shows the respondents opinion over the measured indicators

CSR Indicators		Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Very	Extremely
CSR1- A business that is dedicated to environmental sustainability.	Count	0	19	40	34	23
	Row N %	0.0%	16.4%	34.5%	29.3%	19.8%
CSR2- An organisation that practises ethical business.	Count	0	23	39	30	24
	Row N %	0.0%	19.8%	33.6%	25.9%	20.7%
CSR3- Company engages in charitable giving and community involvement.	Count	0	6	51	30	29
	Row N %	0.0%	5.2%	44.0%	25.9%	25.0%
CSR4- Business focuses on stakeholder engagement.	Count	1	17	42	25	31
	Row N %	0.9%	14.7%	36.2%	21.6%	26.7%
CorReputation1 - Do you believe the business has a stellar reputation?	Count	0	24	46	27	19
	Row N %	0.0%	20.7%	39.7%	23.3%	16.4%
CorReputation2 - Do you believe the business is widely recognised to the general population?	Count	0	38	34	28	16
	Row N %	0.0%	32.8%	29.3%	24.1%	13.8%
CorReputation3 - Are you familiar with the goods that businesses offer to customers?	Count	1	6	54	23	32
	Row N %	0.9%	5.2%	46.6%	19.8%	27.6%
CorAbility1- The company's product has a pleasing appearance.	Count	0	26	45	20	25
	Row N %	0.0%	22.4%	38.8%	17.2%	21.6%
CorAbility2- The business continuously looks for novel concepts	Count	1	28	36	24	27
	Row N %	0.9%	24.1%	31.0%	20.7%	23.3%
CorAbility3- The business offers customers high-quality, innovative goods and services	Count	0	5	48	27	36
	Row N %	0.0%	4.3%	41.4%	23.3%	31.0%
ConPurBeh1- Verify the Products of Companies Known for Being Socially Responsive.	Count	1	29	53	19	14
	Row N %	0.9%	25.0%	45.7%	16.4%	12.1%
	Count	0	36	42	19	19

ConPurBeh2- My top option was the firm that engages in CSR.	Row N %	0.0%	31.0%	36.2%	16.4%	16.4%
ConPurBeh3- It matters a lot to me whether the businesses I support have a reputation for doing ethically.	Count	0	6	57	26	27
	Row N %	0.0%	5.2%	49.1%	22.4%	23.3%
ConPurBeh4- I wouldn't purchase anything created using child labour.	Count	2	23	47	17	27
	Row N %	1.7%	19.8%	40.5%	14.7%	23.3%

The survey results reflect a diverse range of sentiments among respondents concerning various aspects of corporate values and practices on CSR. Notably, 34.5% of respondents show a moderate level of acceptance towards the concept of "A business that is dedicated to environmental sustainability," indicating a significant recognition of the importance of eco-friendly initiatives. Similarly, 44.0% of respondents moderately accept the notion of a "Company participates in charitable giving and community involvement," suggesting a prevailing appreciation for companies that actively contribute to the betterment of their communities. Additionally, 26.7% of respondents express an extremely high level of acceptance for a "Business focuses on stakeholder engagement," underscoring the growing significance of involving stakeholders in shaping business strategies. The data also reveals that 46.6% of respondents moderately accept the idea of businesses offering familiar goods to customers, indicating the importance of brand recognition and familiarity. Moreover, 31.0% of respondents highly value "The business offers customers high-quality, innovative goods and services," reflecting the enduring importance of product excellence. Interestingly, for 31.0% of respondents, their top preference is a firm that engages in CSR, highlighting the growing role of ethical considerations in shaping consumer preferences.

3. Data Analysis – I Measurement model

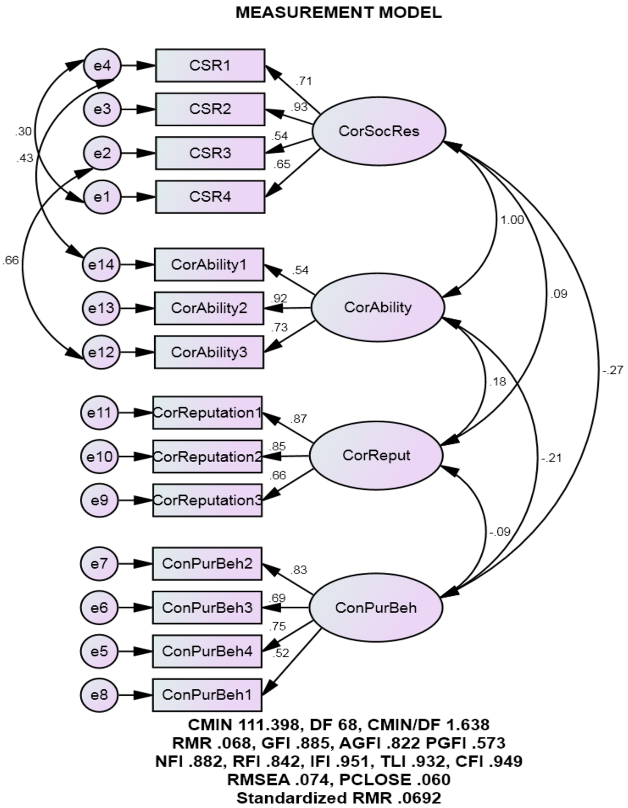

Figure.1 Measurement model

Model Fit: The provided model seems to have a reasonably good fit to the data. Chi-Square: The model's chi-square statistic (111.398) suggests a decent fit, considering the degrees of freedom (68). Ratio (CMIN/DF) The chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio (1.638) is within an acceptable range, indicating reasonable fit. The root mean square residual (RMR) and standardized RMR values (0.068 and 0.0692) are relatively low, suggesting good model fit. Goodness of Fit Indices: Various indices (GFI, AGFI, PGFI, NFI, RFI, IFI, TLI, CFI) show that the model fits well, with values close to 1 in most cases. RMSEA: The root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) value (0.077) indicates a reasonable fit. Overall, based on the provided fit indices, the model appears to be a reasonable representation of the data. However, it's important to consider these values in the framework of the research question and the specific goals of the analysis.

Table 3. Covariances and correlation between the three latent factors

Correlation between		Covariance's	S.E.	t value	Correlation	Sig.
Corporate Social Responsibility	Consumer Purchase Behaviour	-.151	.066	-2.286	-.269	.022*
	Corporate Reputation	.039	.046	.837	.090	.403
	Corporate Ability	.465	.092	5.084	.997	***
Consumer Purchase Behaviour	Corporate Reputation	-.047	.058	-.811	-.090	.417
	Corporate Ability	-.116	.063	-1.831	-.208	.067
Corporate Reputation	Corporate Ability	.076	.047	1.609	.178	.108

* Significant at 0.05 level, *** Significant at 0.001 level.

The relationship between CSR and Consumer Purchase Behavior reveals a noteworthy negative correlation, as indicated by a statistically significant t-value at the 0.05 level ($p < 0.05$). The evidence suggests that close is a substantial basis for this correlation, with a probability of obtaining a critical ratio as large as 2.286 in absolute value being 0.022. In simpler terms, the covariance between CSR and Consumer Purchase Behavior significantly deviates from zero at the 0.05 level, with an estimated correlation of -.269.

Conversely, a robust positive correlation is observed between CSR and Corporate Ability. The high t-value, coupled with a significance level below 0.001, underscores the highly statistically significant nature of this correlation. The probability of achieving a critical ratio as substantial as 5.084 in absolute value is less than 0.001, indicating a significant departure of the covariance between CSR and Corporate Ability from zero. The estimated correlation between the two stands at .997.

While a positive correlation (.090) exists between CSR and Corporate Reputation, the associated t-value is relatively low, and the significance level exceeds 0.05. Consequently, this correlation is not deemed statistically significant. Similarly, a negative correlation (-.047) is identified between Consumer Purchase Behavior and Corporate Reputation, with a t-value of -.811 and a significance level above 0.05, indicating its lack of statistical significance. The estimated correlation between Consumer Purchase Behavior and Corporate Reputation is -.090.

A negative correlation (-.208) is observed between Consumer Purchase Behavior and Corporate Ability, with a probability of obtaining a critical ratio as large as 1.831 in absolute value being 0.067. Despite a moderately good t-value of -.1.831, the significance level surpasses 0.05, rendering this correlation statistically insignificant. In contrast, a positive correlation (.178) is noted between Corporate Ability and Corporate Reputation. However, the t-value is relatively low (1.609), and the significance level exceeds 0.05, indicating that this correlation lacks statistical significance. The estimated correlation between Corporate Reputation and Corporate Ability is .178.

3.1 Data Analysis – II Structural model

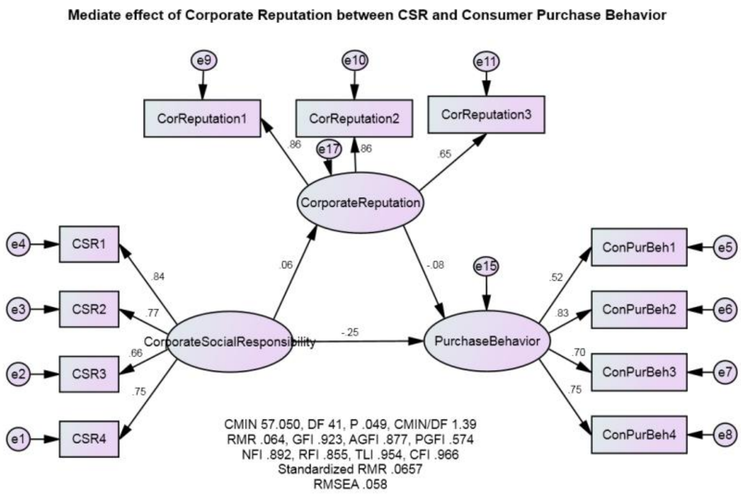

Figure.2. Mediate effect of corporate reputation

Table 4. Standardized Estimate: CSR-CR-CPB

Latent Variables	**Estimate**	**S.E.**	**C.R.**	**Standardized Estimate**	**P**	**Result**
CSR on Corporate Reputation	.069	.123	.556	.060	.578	Not Significant
Corporate Reputation on Purchase Behaviour	-.075	.104	-.715	-.077	.475	Not Significant
CSR On Purchase Behaviour	-.270	.123	-2.207	-.246	.027	Significant

This table shows estimates, standard errors, critical ratios (C.R.), standardized estimates, and p-values for the relationships between latent variables in the study. The following interpretation were brought:

1. The analysis indicates a positive correlation (0.069) between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Corporate Reputation, implying that CSR has a favorable impact on

a company's reputation. Nevertheless, the estimate lacks statistical significance, as evidenced by the p-value (0.578) exceeding the conventional significance threshold of 0.05. This suggests that the observed correlation may have been a result of random chance.

2. The estimated value of -0.075 indicates a negative correlation between Corporate Reputation and Purchase Behaviour. However, like the prior association, the estimate lacks statistical significance (p-value = 0.475), suggesting that the observed link may be attributed to chance fluctuations.

3. CSR on Purchase Behaviour: The negative estimate (-0.270) indicates a negative relationship between CSR and Purchase Behaviour. In this case, the estimate is statistically significant (p-value = 0.027), suggesting that the observed relationship is questionable to have occurred by casual. A standardized estimate of -0.246 indicates that the strength of this relationship, though negative, is of moderate magnitude.

3.2 Hypothesis Testing

Ha1: Corporate reputation acts as a mediator between consumer buying behaviour and CSR

The direct impact of CSR on Corporate Reputation is 0.06, but it is not statistically significant. Similarly, the direct influence of Reputation of Corporate on Consumer Purchase Behavior is -0.08, and it is also not statistically significant. Thus the calculated total indirect effect was to be (.06 x -.077) -0.00462. Both indirect path are insignificant; The direct effect of CSR on Consumer Purchase Behaviour = -.246 (Significant negatively).

The standardized indirect influence of CSR on Purchase Behavior, mediated by Corporate Reputation, is -0.005. This occurs as Corporate Social Responsibility indirectly affects Purchase Behavior by influencing Corporate Reputation. Research indicates that nearby is a negative correlation between an increase in CSR by 1 standard deviation and a drop in Purchase Behaviour by -0.00462 standard deviations. The data from the table indicates a significant and direct detrimental influence of corporate social responsibility on consumer buying behavior. The regression weight for Corporate Social Responsibility in predicting Purchase Behaviour (direct effect) is statistically substantial at the 0.05 level. An increase of 1 standard deviation in CSR leads to a decrease of 0.246 standard deviations in Purchase Behaviour. There is evidence that company reputation does not serve as an intermediary between consumer purchasing behavior and CSR.

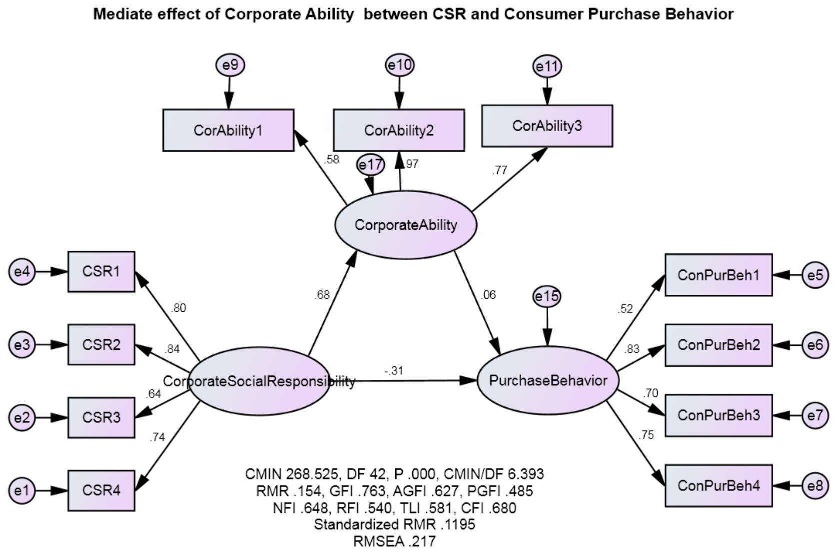

Figure.3. Mediate effect of corporate ability

Table 5. Standardized Estimate: CSR-Corporate Ability-CPB

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	Standardized Estimate	P	Result
CSR on Corporate Ability	1.064	.147	7.254	.675	***	Significant
Corporate Ability on buying Behaviour	.041	.097	.426	.065	.670	Not Significant
CSR on buying Behaviour	-.309	.162	-1.908	-.307	.056	Not Significant

The direct consequence of CSR on Corporate Ability = .675 (significant); The direct effect of Corporate Ability on Consumer buying behaviour = .065 (not significant); Thus the calculated total indirect effect was to be (.675 x .065) 0.0438. Both indirect path are insignificant; The direct outcome of CSR on Consumer Purchase Behaviour = -.307 (Not Significant).

The table presents estimates, standard errors, critical ratios (C.R.), standardized estimates, and p-values for the associations between latent variables in the research. The following interpretations were presented.

1. There appears to be a strongly positive correlation between Corporate Social Responsibility and Corporate Ability. This infers that there is a direct relationship between the

rise in CSR and the development in Corporate Ability. The association has a acceptable levle of statistical significance ($p < 0.001$), suggesting that the likelihood of this outcome occurring by chance is quite low.

2. Relationship between Corporate Ability and buying Behaviour: There appears to be a positive but modest correlation between Corporate Ability and Purchase Behaviour. Nevertheless, the association lacks statistical significance ($p > 0.05$), indicating that any observed impact might be attributed to random chance.

3. There appears to be an adverse connection between CSR and Purchase Behaviour. This indicates that there is a tendency for Purchase Behaviour to drop as Corporate Social Responsibility grows. However, it is vital to note that this link is only marginally statistically significant ($p = 0.056$), suggesting that further data or study may be required to form a definitive conclusion.

Ha2: Corporate ability acts as a mediator between consumer buying behaviour and CSR.

The standardized indirect effect of CSR on buyiing Behaviour, mediated by Corporate ability, is 0.0438. Specifically, the increase in CSR, which is influenced by corporate ability, has an indirect impact on buying Behaviour. When CSR increases by 1 standard deviation, buying Behaviour increases by 0.0438 standard deviations. This statement pertains to the potential effect of CSR on buying Behavior, considering any additional influences. The regression weight for Corporate Social Responsibility in predicting consumer buying Behaviour is not significant at the 0.05 level. There is a negative correlation between an increase in CSR by 1 standard deviation and a diminution in consumer buying Behaviour by 0.307 standard deviations. Corporate capability does not serve as an intermediary between consumer purchasing behavior and CSR.

4. Findings:

The findings of the study reveal important insights into the demographic, attitudinal, and relational aspects of consumer perspectives on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The demographic profile shows a male majority (71.6%) with females at 28.4%, and a sizable proportion (31.9%) of young adults aged 20–30 years. Educationally, 31.9% are graduates, 37.1% professionals, 18.1% diploma holders, and 12.9% belong to other categories, while occupationally, 48.6% work in the public sector and 29.3% in the private sector. Attitudinal responses indicate that 34.5% moderately accept businesses devoted to environmental sustainability, 44.0% moderately accept companies engaged in charitable giving and community involvement, and 46.6% moderately value businesses offering familiar goods, highlighting the significance of eco-friendliness, community engagement, and brand familiarity. Importantly, 31.0% of respondents show a strong preference for firms engaging in CSR, underscoring its growing relevance in consumer choices.

Correlation analysis reveals a negative relationship between CSR and consumer purchase behavior, a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between CSR and corporate ability, and a weak, statistically insignificant positive relationship between CSR and corporate reputation. Furthermore, a negative but statistically insignificant relationship exists between consumer purchase behavior and corporate ability, while a positive yet insignificant relationship is found between corporate ability and corporate reputation.

Mediation analysis indicates that corporate reputation does not mediate between CSR and consumer purchasing behavior; however, CSR has a direct significant negative effect, whereby a one standard deviation increase in CSR leads to a 0.246 decrease in purchase behavior. Similarly, corporate ability does not serve as a mediator, with results showing that CSR increasing by one standard deviation raises purchase behavior by only 0.044, a statistically insignificant effect. Overall, while CSR strongly enhances corporate ability, its direct influence on purchase behavior appears negative and significant, with no meaningful mediating role played by either corporate ability or corporate reputation.

5. Conclusion

In summary, the exploration of correlations among CSR, Consumer buying Behavior, Corporate Ability, and Corporate Reputation has yielded valuable insights. Notably, a negative correlation has been observed between CSR and Consumer buying behaviour, suggesting a potential impact of CSR on consumer's choices.On the other hand, a robust positive correlation was observed between CSR and Corporate capability, suggesting a strong connection between a CSR initiatives and its overall abilities. However, the positive correlation between CSR and Reputation of Corporate, although existent, lacked statistical significance due to a relatively low t-value and a significance level exceeding 0.05. Further, the analysis revealed a negative correlation between consumer purchase behavior and Corporate Ability, though this correlation did not attain statistical significance. Similarly, the positive relation between Corporate capability and Corporate Reputation, while observed, lacked statistical significance based on a low t-value and a significance level higher than 0.05. Additionally, the role of Corporate Reputation as a mediator amongst CSR and Consumer buying behavior was dismissed, as the direct result of CSR on Purchase Behavior proved to be statistically significant. Conversely, the findings indicated that corporate ability did not act as a mediator among CSR and consumer purchasing behavior, with the direct impact of CSR on purchase behavior remaining statistically insignificant. In summary, while certain correlations highlight potential connections, careful consideration of statistically significance is essential. The intricate relationships among CSR, Consumer Purchase Behavior, Corporate Ability, and Corporate Reputation warrant further exploration and nuanced understanding within the broader context of corporate dynamics and consumer choices.

5.1 Managerial Implication

Managers should recognize that strong CSR efforts may not immediately boost consumer buying behavior. Instead, they should balance CSR initiatives with targeted consumer engagement strategies. The favorable correlation between CSR and Corporate Ability implies that incorporating social responsibility into overall corporate strengths can provide a competitive advantage. However, the non-significant link among CSR and Reputation of Corporate implies that companies need additional efforts to enhance their overall brand image. The complex interactions among Consumer Purchase Behavior, Corporate Ability, and Corporate Reputation indicate a need for nuanced strategies, emphasizing the importance of context-specific decision-making for sustainable business practices.

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