



Corporate social responsibility (CSR) and its impact on developing brand attitudes in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) market in India

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MSc. in management

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Submitted to the National College of Ireland, August 2020

Abstract.

Anuj Bolia: Corporate social responsibility (CSR) and its impact on developing brand attitudes in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) market in India

The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has been discussed and handled in many ways, in recent years, by different businesses and organisations. This has prompted managers and academics alike to express diverse concerns in integrating this idea into their practices. Accordingly, this dissertation aims to link the idea of CSR to brand attitudes through the use of primary research and existing literature. The FMCG market of an Asian country (India) is looked at within the framework of this dissertation. To develop a strong and informed understanding of attitudes, the tricomponent model of attitude was adopted after considering different attitude models. The primary research was then designed to assess the three components – cognitive, affective and conative. A mono-method research design involving quantitative data collection was employed for the same. Web-based questionnaires were used to gather data. A mix of analytical tools and techniques were made use of. The results indicated that CSR engagement generally has a positive impact on brand attitude, with the cognitive and affective components showing greater impact as compared to the conative component. Built on a sound primary research resulting from an extensive review of literature, make the findings of this dissertation significant for future examinations.

Declaration.

Submission of Thesis and Dissertation

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Acknowledgement.

I would like to acknowledge the support of all the people, who have been part of this weird yet unique journey.

The constant presence of Mr. David Hurley as my supervisor ensured that an environment of learning was always maintained, no matter where I was working from. His influence is highly acknowledged.

Thanks to all the participants for devoting their valuable time.

Lastly to all my friends, thanks for all the radical and diabolical suggestions.

Anuj Bolia

August, 2020

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List of Abbreviations.

CSR: Corporate Social Responsibility

FMCG: Fast Moving Consumer Goods

HUL: Hindustan Unilever Limited

P&G: Procter and Gamble

CAGR: Compound Annual Growth Rate

DTA: Domex Toilet Academy

Chapter 1: Introduction.

1.1 Background to the study.

Amid increasing concerns among stakeholders for society and environment, businesses find themselves under immense pressure to identify ways of sustainable growth that can help them fulfil their corporate social responsibilities (Zafran, 2018). Sustainability and corporate social responsibility (hereafter, CSR) have become the talk of the town in today's business environment, largely affecting corporate managerial policies (Zafran, 2018).

A relatively young concept lacking a generally accepted definition (Mihalache, 2011), CSR according to the European commission is, when "companies decide voluntarily to contribute to a better society and a cleaner environment ... going beyond compliance and investing into human capital, the environment and the relations with stakeholders" (European commission, 2001)

In recent years, organizations have addressed and managed CSR in several ways. With growing number of organizations initiating, developing and promoting sustainability and CSR either to meet the obligatory requirements or as a part of public relations, the power of these activities to develop a purchase intention as well as increasing recommendations by existing consumers is a key question which needs to be understood (Chouthoy and Kazi, 2016).

1.2 Gaps in literature.

In spite of the growing popularity of CSR concept, little is known about its ability to influence consumer attitudes and decisions (Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001). Additionally, most of the existing literature results from the study of consumers in the U.S. (Maignan, 2001). Hence, making it interesting to understand the impact of CSR in an Indian setting.

The existing research gets more complex when the factor of consumer awareness is brought in. Beckman (2007), suggests that individual interest drives the resultant impact that CSR has on attitude and behaviour. Therefore, in a case where a consumer is not aware of CSR or lacks knowledge, such impact might not be present

(Belk, Devinny and Eckhard, 2005). This indicates that lack of awareness may negate the intended impact of CSR on consumers. However, in cases where consumers are highly educated and aware, the intended impact would be seen in their decision making (Mohr, Webb and Harris, 2001). Such contradiction and complexities make the study of CSR from a consumer perspective interesting.

Indian companies are increasingly expanding their CSR spending across various sectors ranging from child education to health care and environment (Ramesh, Saha, Goswami, Sekar and Dahiya, 2018). Such expansion is driven by the belief that goodwill resulting from CSR will drive competitive advantage, consequently triggering sales growth and business sustainability (Ramesh *et al.*, 2018). While undertaking the review of literature, the sources exploring CSR from an Indian company and consumer perspective were few and far between. Considering the fact that CSR is now a mandatory obligation for major Indian corporations, such lack of research is difficult to explain. Hence, indicating a lack of research in an Indian setting.

Given that both, CSR and marketing, are mainly concerned with interaction of the corporation and the society, suggestions have been made that a leadership role should be taken by marketing in exploration of CSR (Lantos, 2001). Commonalities can be found in various aspects of CSR and marketing related concepts. Such consistencies could be found in concepts like societal marketing, socially responsible buying, environmental marketing, cause related marketing and sustainable consumption (Valaand, Heide and Grønhaug, 2008). Therefore, exploiting these areas to effectively fulfil the CSR as well as the marketing objectives is vital from an organizational point of view.

Relative to the goals of the analysis, this research first targets an analysis of the theoretical framework linking CSR and different aspects of marketing, branding and consumer conduct. The research will then examine the link between CSR and brand attitudes, presenting in detail the mechanisms through which CSR affects these factors. Finally, the research will discuss how CSR plays a role in influencing consumers by affecting their brand attitude in context of the Indian FMCG market.

1.3 Academic justification.

With consumers today being more organized, better informed, more involved and demanding than before, an increasing consumer interest can be seen in CSR activities of firms (Kiessling Isaksson and Yasar, 2015; KPMG, 2011; Appiah-Adu and Singh, 1998). This has forced the firms to adopt a broader market approach, to better serve the firm objectives and CSR objectives (Kang, 2009; Luo and Bhattacharya, 2009; Lopez, Garcia and Rodriguez, 2007).

Generally, a company can communicate its CSR initiatives in numerous ways, depending on who it is to be communicated to. However, such communication rarely targets general public as an audience (Dawkins, 2004). But with growing interests, consumers are demanding more information so as to punish “bad” companies and reward “good” ones (Lewis, 2001). Thus, rather than focusing on stakeholders in general, firms should focus directly on consumers in this respect (Wood, 2010). This makes it important to understand CSR from a consumer perspective, to better predict consumer behaviour and understand attitudes to fill gaps in existing literature. A similar opinion is shared by various authors, for instance, Sen and Bhattacharya (2001), Mohr *et al.* (2001).

With the awareness about CSR growing rapidly over the last few years, understanding its relevance and what it means for the FMCG industry is important. Bearing in mind that India is one of the major manufacturing hubs for global companies, one of the fastest growing economies and a huge consumer base (Gupta and Hodges, 2012), sustainable and socially responsible action is important on part of companies. Thus, the study aims to understand the attitude that consumers in India have towards CSR and specifically its pursuit in the FMCG industry.

1.4 Research aims.

Although certain literature does exist in the area of CSR and consumer behaviour, the impact on brand attitude in response to CSR activities is yet to be thoroughly explored in developing countries. Considering this substantially unexplored area, the research aims to dive into it to bridge the gap in literature. By highlighting the impact on brand attitude, the research aims to contribute in an area which usually is not

apparent, but has the power to influence behaviour for a long-term. Further, the examination of CSR from an Indian consumers' perspective will elucidate how they perceive CSR.

1.5 Research questions.

In pursuit of the aims, certain questions have been developed to give nucleus to the research and keep the efforts focused on targets. These are as follows:

RQ1: What are the differentiating factors of a CSR initiative that attracts the attention of a wider audience?

RQ2: What changes occur in consumers' brand attitude, subsequent to obtaining knowledge about a company/product's CSR initiatives?

The use of primary research methods is made to answer the research questions.

1.6 Methods and Scope.

Considering the research aim and questions, the basic direction of the research is proposed to be an empirical one, with adoption of a descriptive research design. This is followed by the methodological choices open to the researcher – mono and mixed. The mixed method choice has been disregarded due to lack of controls and the limitation of time. Under the mono method, quantitative approach will be adopted due to the nature of research topic, which focuses on gathering and exploring subconscious consumer knowledge. Through a cross-sectional time-horizon, a survey questionnaire will be used to collect the required data. The sample for collection of this data, is to be selected through use of non-probability sampling techniques of convenience and snowball sampling. The methodologies have been discussed in detail in chapter 3.

The research focuses on the concept of brand attitude which is a part of consumer behaviour. Therefore, the research will restrict itself to the study of this concept. Only the brand attitude aspect of behaviour will be explored. Further, CSR and consumer interaction involves variety of aspects across different fields and exploring every aspect in detail will be too vast and difficult under the circumstance. Hence, for the purpose of research, a small number of questions from every aspect are

included in the questionnaire, based on the tricomponent attitude model i.e. cognitive, affective and conative components.

1.7 Dissertation structure.

The dissertation follows a naturally evolving structure to give the reader a clear understanding of what the research intends to establish. Consisting of six chapters, which are demonstrated as below:

Chapter one introduces the topic in brief, highlighting the background and the gaps in that background. Consequently, justifying the rationale for research including the aims and questions that research intends to answer.

Chapter two deals with the existing literature on the selected topic, which is an extension of the background mentioned in chapter one. The literature relevant to research questions will be explored in-depth.

Chapter three highlights the philosophical position of the research and subsequently decides on the methodological choice within the philosophy, justifying the approaches taken. Further, elucidating the data collection and analysis techniques to be used.

Chapter four will present the data collected through the use of primary data collection techniques, specified in the previous chapter.

Chapter five will make use of analysis techniques to decode the data into useful information. Thenceforth making a critical reflection in relation to theory examined in chapter two.

Chapter six is the conclusion of the entire research process. This will be done by assessing whether the research congregated the aims and objectives it set out to achieve. Recommendations for future research are then made based on conclusions.

Chapter 2: Literature review.

2.1 Introduction.

Any research that is socially significant, is bound to have a relevant literature. This is because a research does not occur in vacuum. Therefore, identification of relevant literature in order to familiarise the reader with the existing theory base is vital. It lays a foundation on which the research is built (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). This review helps in providing an overview of what has been done before (Hofstee, 2006).

2.2 Content of literature review.

The review of literature attempts to explore the topic from an academic as well as an industrial standpoint. The review offers a holistic view of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) by examining the business perspectives of CSR. The motives for undertaking CSR activities are explored to understand the relevance of CSR in the business environment. The review also provides insights into brand attitude by scrutinising brand attitude models and discussing attitude formation and changes.

Next, an analysis of Indian FMCG market addresses the industrial aspect of the literature. Consumer's perception towards CSR is investigated by deducing consumer's CSR awareness and its resultant effects. Further, the Indian aspect of CSR is examined, identifying the key CSR initiatives undertaken and understanding the consumer identification of the same. All parts of the literature review then converge, presenting evidence for the emerging research question.

2.3 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

As mentioned earlier, CSR lacks any generally accepted definition. However, most descriptions of CSR connect it to an organization's voluntary social and environmental aspects (Žemigala, 2017). Such connection could be found in the definition provided by Van Marrewijk and Werre (2003), where they define CSR as a set of voluntary activities demonstrating "the inclusion of social and environmental concerns in business operations and in interactions with stakeholders". Further, their

research indicates how companies today are increasingly focusing their efforts and embracing sustainable development and CSR.

The emergence of the CSR concept could be found in the western developed economies resulting from the concerns of investors, stakeholders and activists (Palihawadana, Oghazi and Liu, 2016). However, the need and importance of CSR is felt more in the developing countries, rather than their wealthier contemporaries (Khan, Lew and Park, 2015), as there is usually a lack of social goods provided by institutions in such countries (Samy, Ogiri and Bampton, 2015). Such deficiency is generally due to the absence of an institutionalized CSR practice (Lund-Thomsen, Lindgreen and Vanhamme, 2016). This absence leads to companies acting in a manner which would be deemed negative and socially irresponsible (Palihawadana *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, understanding why a company engages in socially responsible behaviour and what motivates this decision is imperative.

2.3.1 The business case perspective of CSR.

A business case refers to the documenting of rationales, that lead to adoption and advancement of CSR cause (Carroll and Shabana, 2010). For many years, organizations have been asking their managers to identify win-win situations or opportunities that lead to a better environmental and social performance, while having a positive impact on profits as well; thereby, it could be said that the business case perspective of CSR has been a part of management literature for many years (Hart, 1995). Today, the concept of business case could be found in many eminent books, reports and articles which explain how the linking of financial targets with social improvements lead to better performance (Vogel, 2005).

The use of business case as an assumption can be observed in many CSR theories. Therefore, CSR research has been dominated by studies on the business case, even though data required to establish a link between CSR and profit maximization is not robust (Margolis and Walsh, 2003).

However, it can be contended that the idea behind the business case is to make CSR and its adoption more attractive and alluring to managers and organizations (King and Toffel, 2009). Thus, the literature on business case and CSR practices attempts

to aid managers in understanding the business's social & environmental aspects and why these require attention. Further, it introduces CSR as a subject capable of influencing and adding to shareholder value (Blowfield and Murray, 2008).

2.3.2 Motives for adopting CSR.

Understanding the reasons that lead to or deter the socially responsible behaviour of an organization is an important aspect (Campbell, 2007). While the consideration of financial benefits as the key motivating factor for adopting a CSR approach is common, certain intrinsic factors may also drive CSR (Graafland and Mazereeuw-Van der Duijn Schouten, 2012; Van Beurden and Gössling 2008). These intrinsic factors may be certain altruistic motives or the perception that CSR is a moral duty (Brønn and Vidaver-Cohen, 2009). Therefore, the motives for CSR adoption could be either extrinsic or intrinsic.

An organization's CSR contribution could be a result of various extrinsic objects. With empirical evidence suggesting a positive co-relation between profitability/stakeholder value and CSR, the first and the most common motive is to improve the financial performance (Tudway and Pascal, 2006; Orlitzky, Schmidt and Rynes, 2003). Some studies cite the role of governments, to make organizations socially responsible through the use of regulation, support, guidance and partnerships, as a key driver of CSR contribution (Moon and Vogel, 2008; Aguilera, Rupp, Williams and Ganapathi, 2007). Further, competitive pressures may also drive adoption of certain CSR practices (Hess, Rogovsky and Dunfee, 2002).

On the other hand, intrinsic motives are the non-financial motives driving CSR. The key differentiating factor is that, here CSR is an end in itself which is not concerned with the concurrent benefits (Graafland and Mazereeuw-Van der Duijn Schouten, 2012). Some Managers and organizations view CSR as moral duty and embrace it because it is the right thing to do (Etzioni, 1988). While some view CSR as means of doing good for the society and ensuring well-being of others, demonstrating an altruistic motive (Husted and Salazar, 2006). Thus, altruism and moral duty can be viewed as the factors causing intrinsic motives.

2.3.3 Challenges.

Corporations face a difficulty when ensuring an efficient implementation of their CSR programs (Jonker and Witte, 2006). This difficulty stems from multiple reasons which may include lack in understanding, availability of trained personnel, measuring reach and effectiveness to name a few (Nadaf and Nadaf, 2014; Jonker and Witte, 2006).

Further, the argument of CSR being merely an attempt at window-dressing, made by Henderson (2001), cannot be completely denied. Furthermore, the profitability of CSR in long-term is debatable as corporate analysis failed to draw a clear picture (Kuepfer and Papula, 2010). In literature, both supporters and critics have found data and results in their favour. Thus, the only emerging result from contrary studies is the inability to determine whether CSR adoption truly pays out in financial terms, over a period of time (Kuepfer and Papula, 2010; Griffin and Mahon, 1997).

Lastly, the two-facedness of corporations towards CSR is another widely discussed topic (Poonamalle, 2012). The line separating cynical and credulous organizations is very miniscule and thus, makes it very important to distinguish the corporations engaging in truly responsible behavioural practices from those superficially undertaking CSR (Werther and Chandler, 2006). The case of Enron, a firm having powerful CSR credentials on surface, is used by Werther and Chandler (2006) to better explain this point. Therefore, considering the conflicting views, to understand the contrary viewpoints, is crucial to address the challenges represented.

2.4 Brand attitude.

Attitude is a highly popular and widely researched marketing topic. As a result, wide range of definitions from different perspectives can be found about attitude. Mitchell and Olson (1981, p. 318) define attitude as “an individual's internal evaluation of an object such as a branded product”, thereby connecting attitude to brand.

Brand attitude is a combination of a variety of factors such as brand image, awareness, associated brand attributes and benefits, that lead to an overall brand evaluation (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). One reason why brand attitude attracts such great interest of literature is the belief that attitudes are comparatively stable and long-lasting; thus, useful in predicting consumer behaviour (Mitchell and Olson,

1981). Further, consumer purchase intention is closely linked and is impacted by the brand attitude (Sicilia, Ruiz and Reynolds, 2006).

Brand attitude can be identified as one of the communication effects (Adis and Jun, 2013). The understanding of this effect, is essential to understand the ultimate purchase of the brand. However, the ultimate purchase made by a customer is, without a doubt, a behavioural aspect and may not particularly indicate the same attitude towards the brand (Ramesh *et al.*, 2018; Spears and Singh, 2004). Nevertheless, brand attitude may be identified as a motivator of the ultimate action (Ramesh *et al.*, 2018)

2.4.1 Attitude formation and change.

The understanding of how attitudes are formed or how change is brought about in an existing attitude, is likely to lead to identification of such attitude-forming/changing behaviours. This identification gives marketers an ability to predict and influence such behaviours (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015). In relation to attitude and these behaviours, Schiffman and Wisenblit (2015) identified certain key characteristics of attitude. The first being the identification of attitude as a “learned predisposition”. Secondly, understanding that attitudes and behaviours are consistent and lastly, realizing that attitudes are results of situation (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015). Thus, comprehending that attitudes are circumstantial, experiential and substantial, is vital to create a foundation for understanding attitude formation and change.

To understand attitude, identify its underlying components and understand behaviour, researchers proposed certain models. Some of the more researched and commonly used models are discussed below.

2.4.1.1 The tricomponent attitude model.

The tricomponent model proposed initially by Rosenberg and Hovland (1960) and widely researched upon thereafter, emphasizes that attitude comprises of three main components, namely cognitive, affective and conative components (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015; Chih, Liou and Hsu, 2014). The cognitive component comprises of the stage where the consumers acquire knowledge, leading to forming of

perceptions; such knowledge is a result of consumers' experiences and attained information. This knowledge leads to development of emotions and feelings towards the brand, which can also be classified as the affective component. The conative component indicates how likely an individual is, to undertake an action in response to an attitude object. The conation or action dictating the purchase intention, is largely a result of the first two components (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015).

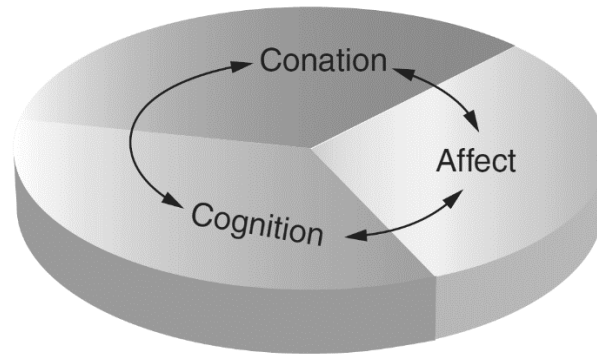


Figure 1: The tricomponent attitude model (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015)

Once the brand attitude drives the consumer to purchase the product, this tricomponent process repeats itself and can be observed in the consumer's decision of repurchase or alternative search. Hence, it is a cyclical process.

2.4.1.2 The Attitude-towards-object model (A multi-attribute model).

Martin Fishbein attempted to better explain attitude through his multi-attribute model, which was, overtime, developed into better and specific models like the attitude-towards-object model. The attitude-towards-object model emphasizes that, brand attitude is a function of the existence or non-existence of certain attributes and how important these attributes are to the consumer (Ramdhani, Alamanda and Sudrajat, 2012). Put simply, consumers usually view those brands favourably, which perform satisfactorily on the attributes that are important to them (Fishbein, 1967; Fishbein, 1963).

The following equation is used for depiction of this model:

$$A_0 = \sum_{i=1}^n b_i e_i$$

Where, " A_0 " is the overall attitude towards the object,

" b_i " is the strength of belief that attribute 'i' is present in the object,

" e_i " is the evaluation of attribute 'i' and

" n " is the number of beliefs relevant.

2.4.1.3 The elaboration likelihood model (ELM).

The elaboration likelihood model explains how a change can be brought about in attitudes (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986). The ELM suggests that such change could be through any one of the two means of persuasion – the central route or the peripheral route, depending upon the level of involvement (Kotler and Keller, 2016).

Amid the central route, attitude change will occur from thoughtful consideration of information, highlighting the merits of product under consideration. A high-involvement purchase is likely to require a high level of elaboration and cognition (Kotler and Keller, 2016). With consumer focusing on the central product information, the resultant attitude change is likely to be long-term and predictive of behaviour (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986). On the other hand, via the peripheral route, attitude change results from simple inferences made by the consumer about the brand and its associated cues. Such cues usually are unrelated to the product under evaluation. Thus, involving a low level of elaboration (Kotler and Keller, 2016).

In other words, the evaluation made by a consumer would be extensive if the purchase is very relevant, while the evaluation would be limited if the purchase holds little relevance (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015).

2.5 Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) market.

Due to lack of exact definitions and explanations, disparities can be observed between the general use and the conceptual explanation of FMCG (Broadbent, 2009). Usually, 'fast moving' refers to those goods that are bought by households frequently, the frequency being weekly or every few weeks. Such goods include non-durable goods like packaged groceries, toiletries and other consumables. FMCG is also referred to as consumer-packaged goods (CPG) in certain parts of the world (Broadbent, 2009).

With the focus of the modern-day business studies shifting towards the Facebooks and the Googles of the world, the FMCG business is being looked as an outdated concept gathering dust in the aisles of brick and mortar stores (Thain, 2014). Yet, from a revenue perspective, both industries seem to have neck to neck contest. Further, FMCGs could be said to be the driver of all the online advertising on Google and Facebook. Slowly and steadily, FMCGs have become part of people's everyday life and this fixed attachment makes it a vital market area (Thain, 2014).

2.5.1 The Indian FMCG market.

With a GDP of about US\$2.94 trillion, India is one of the largest economies of the world (Bajpai, 2020). The fourth largest sector in this economy is the FMCG sector (IBEF, 2020). This market grew at 13.8% in 2018 to reach a revenue of US\$ 52.75 billion (IBEF, 2020).

With an estimated growth of 9-10% and a CAGR of 23.15%, the revenue for 2020 is expected to reach US\$ 103.70 billion (IBEF, 2020). Household and personal care was the largest segment of the Indian FMCG market, accounting for the 50% of the sector. While food & beverages (f & b) and healthcare accounted for the remaining 19% and 31% respectively (IBEF, 2020).

Further analysis of the market to understand the forces driving the Indian FMCG industry is represented below.

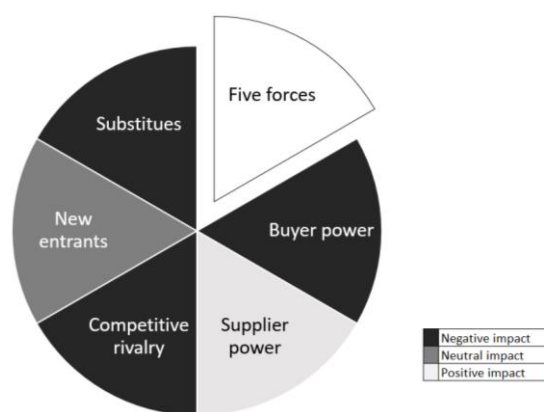


Figure 2: Five force analysis (Adapted from IBEF, 2018)

The Indian FMCG market is highly fragmented. With multiple brands present in the market and low product differentiation across those brands, the potential

impact/threat from substitutes is high (IBEF, 2018). The bargaining power possessed by buyers is high as the switching costs are negligible and the alternatives available are similar. The key local suppliers are fragmented and the FMCGs usually dictate the price, thereby indicating the power possessed by the suppliers. The requirement of huge investments for promotion and distribution keeps the threat from new entrants at a moderate level. Further, due to price wars and a highly fragmented market, the competitive rivalry is high (IBEF, 2018).

2.5.2 Major players in the Indian FMCG market.

Taking into account the Indian FMCG market, the market capitalization and revenue of companies that trade on the stock exchanges of the country have been considered (Chauhan *et al.*, 2019). With a market capitalization of over US\$ 20 Billion, these companies occupy a dominant position with an ability to influence the market proceedings. Their position and success in the market warrants further investigation to better understand the market.

Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL).

The Indian subsidiary of British multinational Unilever PLC, HUL is considered to be one of the oldest and largest companies in the Indian FMCG market with presence across all consumer product categories (MarketLine, 2020; Poonamalle, 2011). Employing over 18,000 people across its business units, its brand equity is unrivalled. With deep local roots, it is widely recognised by consumers. The company is considered a role model for its efforts of harmonizing public concern with its profit targets (Poonamalle, 2011).

Procter and Gamble (P&G).

P&G India is considered to be one of the fastest growing FMCG companies in India (Chauhan *et al.*, 2019). The company controls more than 50% of the market in certain product categories like shaving products and sanitary products, more than a quarter in the shampoo and laundry markets (Malviya, 2019). Such market leaderships are a direct result of its enhanced product propositions and continuous innovations. Its innovative approach could also be observed in its efforts to ensure sustainable

development. The Ohio based global consumer product giant considers India an important hub for innovations (Malviya, 2019).

Nestle India.

The Indian subsidiary of the international giant Nestle S.A., Nestle India Limited occupies significant market in the food and beverage consumer segment (MarketLine, 2019). With various exceptional manufacturing operations and branches across India, the products manufactured are also exported to various countries. Nestle's ideology of 'creating shared value' drives many of its policies in the manufacturing and marketing (MarketLine, 2019; Singh *et al.*, 2016).

2.5.3 FMCG and Brand.

The principal premise of the FMCG ideology triggers two important consequences. One that FMCG goods are purchased frequently and to be bought frequently the goods have to be cheap (Broadbent, 2009). The other that, except the first time, the purchases are routine and automatic. These two consequences form the foundation of understanding the FMCG market which is explained exquisitely by Broadbent (2009).

FMCG products are usually cheap costing less than a few euros or dollars in most instances (Broadbent, 2009). This means that the margin on each FMCG unit is usually low and thus, a high sales volume is targeted for profits. To reach the volume targets, the advertised brand has to be purchased regularly by buyers (Ehrenberg, 1972). On the other hand, to alter prices for maintaining profits, the brand should have the ability to command price premium (Feldwick, 2002). Therefore, building brand loyalty and brand equity into the FMCG business model is essential for maintaining the cheap nature of products (Broadbent, 2009).

From the view point of a consumer, the initial or the first buy of a FMCG brand is similar to first of many regular journeys that are to follow (Broadbent, 2009). As it happens with regular journeys, the routine becomes almost automatic and same happens with familiar FMCG brands. The sheer idea of evaluating every alternative brand before such a purchase is appalling and as a result, buyers usually go for familiar brands (Schwartz, 2004). Thus, FMCGs have to ensure that their brand

building activities not only induce the initial purchase but also generate repeat purchases (Broadbent, 2009).

2.6 CSR and consumer.

Over the past decade, corporate social responsibility (CSR) has become an important area of interest for consumers (Maignan, 2001). The rising interest could be attributed to two key reasons. One being the increased scrutiny, by the consumers, of companies engaging in socially irresponsible behaviour through boycotts and advocate groups (Snider, Paul and Martin, 2003). Other being its response, the increasing contribution to CSR by companies and its communication (Snider *et al.*, 2003). The growing attention compels us to understand its impact on the consumer and for the same many studies and experiments have already been conducted (e.g., Mohr and Webb, 2005; Maignan, 2001).

However, as highlighted by Oberseder, Schlegelmilch and Gruber (2011), the connection between CSR and consumer behaviour remains an “unresolved paradox”. While consumers desire more CSR engagement from companies, the role of CSR on the purchase intent of consumer could be classified as limited, from the existing literature (Oberseder *et al.*, 2011).

2.6.1 CSR awareness.

The awareness of a company’s CSR activities among the consumers and the buying decisions of such consumers are positively-linked (Lee and Shin, 2009). However, a major part of literature assumes the existence of this awareness or artificially induces such awareness (Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001). This creates a distortion when the understanding from such studies are exercised in reality, as the awareness is usually limited. As the concept of CSR is multifaceted and extensive, the activities undertaken by companies on this front may be difficult for the consumers to understand and act upon (Mohr *et al.*, 2001).

Although limited in the real setting, those aware, corroborated the findings by having a positive attitude in terms of the purchase intent (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2004). Thereby indicating that if companies are to reap benefits of this unintended tool of promotion, they have to work towards increasing the awareness levels of their CSR

activities. A trustworthy and clear communication is required on the part of companies to make consumers aware of their socially responsible actions (Mohr and Webb, 2005). Mohr and Webb (2005) further suggest that this may be accomplished through green certificates, environmental labels etc.

2.6.2 Effect of CSR on consumer.

Traditionally, brands proposed better goods and service to win over customers (Chouthoy and Kazi, 2016). But now, brands are being perceived in roles of doing 'good' and giving back to their co-existing environment (Chouthoy and Kazi, 2016). An analysis of CSR and the capability of CSR to build consumer relations favouring companies, motivated by brand notions and drives linked to CSR, could be found in the work of Sen, Du and Bhattacharya (2016). With companies increasingly investing in CSR, the effort to understand CSR and its true meaning has gone up significantly. Based on studies conducted over the years, products that are socially responsible are more likely to get picked in controlled environment as well as in real life, indicating that CSR certainly affects the impulse for a product purchase (Sen *et al.*, 2016). Further, a very interesting observation made by both Sen *et al.* (2016) and Chouthoy & Kazi (2016), was the ability of firm to shield itself through CSR after a product calamity, by triggering an acuity that the crisis was due to a factor that was external.

Creation of a long-term relationship between the enterprise and the consumer as well as strengthening the consumers' identification with the brand, are a direct result of fulfilment of social responsibility (Wu and Lin, 2014; Lee *et al.*, 2011). A continuing commitment to CSR is more likely to result in the generation of a positive corporate image for the enterprise (Mohr and Webb, 2005). Further, fulfilment of social responsibility is likely to generate a positive consumer value perception in turn leading to a greater consumer satisfaction (Matin, Ruiz and Rubio, 2009).

Past research concerned with CSR and luxury brand/product perception appeared to suggest that luxury consumer's decision making was apparently unaffected by CSR initiatives (Davies *et al.*, 2012; Griskevicius *et al.*, 2010); in fact, one study found that CSR could negatively affect luxury consumer's brand perception (Achabou and Dekhili, 2013). However, despite previous findings, sufficient evidence is available to

indicate a compatibility between CSR and luxury branding (e.g., Amatulli *et al.*, 2018; Janssen *et al.*, 2014).

2.6.3 Consumer perception of CSR motives.

While companies may have their own motives to engage in CSR, understanding the consumer perception of company's motives is essential. This is because such perception shapes consumers' response (Vlachos *et al.*, 2009). In relation to this, Ellen, Webb and Mohr (2006) identified three key attributions - self-centred, other-centred and win-win. Self-centred attribution signifies that consumers perceive company's CSR engagement as a strategic (for instance, to enhance profits); other-centred signifies that, in consumers' opinion, company considers CSR as moral duty and responsibility. While the common ground, which is perceived by many consumers as the ideal scenario for CSR engagement, is a mixture of strategic and morally-driven attributions (i.e. win-win) (Ellen *et al.*, 2006).

The reflection being that, a socially motivated CSR program is likely to have a positive consumer perception, while a profit motivated one is likely to have a negative perception (Becker-Olsen, Cudmore and Hill, 2006). Vlachos *et al.* (2009) make a similar observation, showing that a morally-driven engagement has a positive response, while a strategically-driven has a negative or neutral response.

2.7 CSR in the Indian context.

With the global evolution and growth of the CSR concept, emerging economies like India are also experiencing a growing number of organizations engaging in CSR activities (Shiva Kumar and Satyanarayana, 2019). Historically, Indian businesses have been consistently involved in the social causes as part of nation building (Gautam and Singh, 2010). As CSR was traditionally a voluntary act, the performance was neither measure nor documented. However, in recent times there has been a growing realization to improve the immediate environment by contributing to global social activities. The globally accepted reality of socially responsible brands being favoured and preferred by consumer, has driven the rise in attention towards CSR in India (Gautam and Singh, 2010).

One unique and key feature in the Indian CSR context is the state mandated CSR spending (Jammulamadaka, 2018). A change made by the Companies act, 2013 made it mandatory for certain companies to spend 2% of their profits on CSR. The idea was to emphasize corporate philanthropy and to curb the usage of strategic CSR (Gupta and Gupta, 2019). As a result, the number of companies engaging in CSR has increased significantly. With such increase, the challenges of measuring, replicating and accelerating CSR are also growing (Gupta and Gupta, 2019). Thus, indicating that the concept of CSR has significantly evolved in the past few years.

2.7.1 CSR initiatives.

Far from becoming a disincentive, Indian FMCGs have embraced the corporate social responsibility assigned to them and have briskly incorporated CSR into their brand communications. The companies are increasingly diversifying their CSR efforts by giving attention to every possible CSR cause, be it health, sanitation, education and the likes.

Likewise, Hindustan Unilever (HUL), one of the leading players in the Indian FMCG market, aims its CSR efforts towards sustainability (HUL, 2019). With education, livelihood enhancement and healthcare being the areas in which its CSR efforts are concentrated. The most widely recognized initiative being 'Project Shakti' (power), which educates, trains and subsequently enables rural women to deal in HUL products for attaining financial independence. Apart from this, DTA, Prabhat (dawn) are some of the other programs promoting healthcare and community development (HUL, 2019).

While another giant, P&G has adopted initiatives true to its global CSR ideology of "Live. Learn. Thrive" (P&G, 2019). "Shiksha" (education) being its flagship programme based on the same ideals in India. The programme focuses on providing underprivileged children with access to education. P&G has smartly linked this scheme to its brand and products, thereby giving consumers a feeling of direct contribution (P&G, 2019).

A key contributor when CSR in the Indian FMCG sector is looked at, is an Indian company - Dabur India limited. Project 'Desert bloom' initiated for water

conservation and management, has helped solve the problem of water scarcity across various regions of the country (Dabur (a), 2018). Another project “7 steps towards dignity” focuses on ensuring good sanitation for women through construction of appropriate facilities (Dabur (b), 2018). Its initiatives have received large support from public and communities alike and have propelled its image as a corporation (Dabur (b), 2018).

2.7.2 CSR and the Indian consumer.

Studies about CSR under this context have been few and far between (Gupta and Wadera, 2019). However, the literature available indicates similar results to those done globally i.e. a positive relation between the two factors. Similarly, Planken, Sahu and Nickerson (2010), observed that an Indian consumer’s buying behaviour is likely to be positively influenced by a CSR-based marketing engagement. In another study, the CSR awareness among the Indian consumers was found to be greater than their American counterparts (Gupta, 2011). Although another study did corroborate the positive influence of CSR on purchase intent, it did not support the high awareness assertion (Gupta and Hodges, 2012). However, the awareness of CSR as a concept among consumers was found to be high in most studies (Gupta and Wadera, 2019). Subsequently, the impact of any CSR initiative is dependent on the levels of CSR awareness (Lee and Shin, 2010).

2.8 Conclusion.

The review highlights the literature available on CSR and its effects, which is abundant but gaps still exist in assessing and understanding other variables of a brand’s CSR initiatives, affecting the attitude towards the brand.

With marketing coming under heavy criticism in recent times, the identification of CSR as a tool to influence consumers in a way not considered negative, has potential. However, a lack of research in the current literature, connecting these dots, is what eludes organizations to explore CSR and its consequent ability to influence consumer brand attitudes. Based on the information garnered above, a gap in existing literature can be identified, which is intended to be closed by exploring CSR and its resultant impact on brand attitude in the Indian FMCG context, through a primary research.

Chapter 3: Methodology.

3.1 Introduction.

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) describe research as a systematic act, undertaken to find out things, that will increase knowledge. As part of this systematic act, the methodology could be viewed as well-equipped toolboxes carrying the essential tools (i.e. methods) (Moses and Knutsen, 2019). Accordingly, this chapter intends to identify the toolbox for drawing the desired tools. Further, the philosophical argument behind selection of every tool i.e. method is presented. Apart from this, the methodology, population, sample selection, ethical consideration and concurrent analyses are addressed in this part of research.

3.2 Aims and objectives.

The research intends to provide insights into the extent of impact a brand's CSR program, has on its consumers' attitudes. To gain more understanding from a research, it is important that the aim should be narrow (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Hence, the same is looked at within the context of the Indian FMCG market by gathering sufficient and appropriate data.

To fulfil the aim, setting the objectives of research is important. The idea here is to develop the objectives by effectively breaking down the primary aim of the research, as suggested by Cooper and Schindler (2011). Once the objectives are specifically and precisely stated, the path for achieving the targets of research become clear.

An attempt to argue the role of brand attitude, as a key metric in evaluating the performance of CSR, has been made in this research. In response to CSR communication, people make different cognitions (attributions) (Mar Garcia-De los Salmones and Perez, 2017). A brand personality characterized through CSR is based somewhat, on altruistic values (Rivera, Bigne and Curras-Perez, 2016). Based on the above, it is important to identify the factors in a CSR initiative that tempt the consumers to take notice. Thus, leading us to our first research objective:

Research objective 1: To explore the differentiating factors of a CSR initiative that attracts the attention of a wider audience.

Next, the focus of the research shifts to assess the impact of CSR on consumers' brand attitude by affecting consumer's decision. Previous research has focused on this factor considering the perspective of luxury goods (Amatulli *et al.*, 2018). Considering the same, we aim to identify the impact of CSR on the brand attitude towards FMCG products, which include certain luxury products. Leading to our second research objective:

Research Objective 2: To assess the changes, if any, that occur in consumers' brand attitude, subsequent to obtaining knowledge about a company/product's CSR initiatives.

Based on the information garnered above, the research aims to fill the gap connecting CSR, brand attitude and FMCG products.

3.3 Proposed research methodology.

The methodology is an overall strategy which outlines the path for undertaking research (Howell, 2013). The framework guiding this methodology was derived from the research onion elucidated by Saunders *et al.* (2012). As the research process moved ahead, each layer was peeled to obtain guidance for the next step.

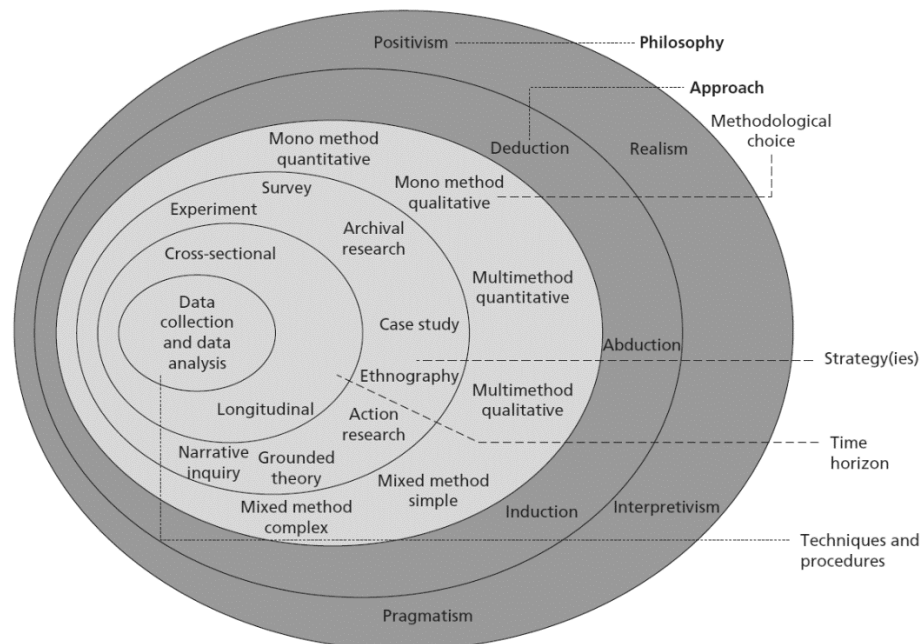


Figure 3: The research onion (Saunders et al., 2012)

By the time the central point of the 'onion' (i.e. data collection and analysis) is reached, the methodology would have explained all the layers peeled off (i.e. choices taken) prior to it (Crotty, 1998).

3.4 Research paradigm and philosophy.

A research is guided by assumptions and such assumptions are a result of researcher's view of the world (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). These assumptions influence the philosophical choices. Saunders *et al.* (2012, p. 128) describe research philosophy as "an over-arching term relating to the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge". The philosophical position of a researcher and the possible ways of understanding research are closely related. Hence, a suitable research philosophy is vital for development of an appropriate research strategy.

However, the establishment of a paradigm prior to discussion of philosophy is considered important by some academics (Mayer, 2015). The understanding and sharing of problems among scientists are done through certain common set of beliefs and agreements, which is referred to as the research paradigm (Kuhn, 1962). In a similar disposition, Saunders *et al.* (2012) identifies three different paradigms concerning research philosophies, namely epistemology, ontology and axiology, all representing specific approaches. Epistemology refers to what in researcher's opinion will be considered as acceptable knowledge. While, Ontology refers to how the researcher views reality or the nature of being. Whereas, Axiology refers to researcher's belief about the nature or role of values in research.

The research here follows an epistemological paradigm through the study of knowledge, where the motive is to understand the impact of CSR on developing brand attitudes through the consideration of acceptable knowledge. Further, data collected through questionnaires about people's view, was considered as acceptable knowledge.

Once a paradigm is established, the philosophical choices are simplified. As the outer layer of the figure indicates, Saunders *et al.* (2012) underpin four major philosophical choices for undertaking research viz. positivism, interpretivism, realism and pragmatism. The difference between each being the view on acceptable knowledge.

With positivism relying on observable phenomena as acceptable knowledge, interpretivism trusting subjective and social phenomena, realism focusing on accurate interpretation of observable phenomena and pragmatism following any one or combination of above as acceptable knowledge (Saunders *et al.*, 2012).

Credible data resulting from observable phenomena was considered as acceptable knowledge under this research. Hence, the position adopted in the research was of positivism. A positivist researcher works with an “observable social reality” (Remenyi *et al.*, 1998). As a result, positivism could be considered as an epistemological position which advocates the study of social reality through use of methods of natural sciences (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Knowledge for the research was obtained by gathering facts, guided by the principle of inductivism. Emphasis was placed on quantitative data for the resultant statistical analysis, compiled through the use of questionnaires. Epistemological ideology and the ensuing positivism combined to establish causality and generalization of the phenomena observed by the researcher (Saunders *et al.*, 2012; Bryman and Bell, 2011).

3.5 Research approach.

Collection, analysis and interpretation of data and facts is done in accordance with well-defined procedure, collectively known as research approach. This approach should be consistent with the research objectives. Depending on the nature of research, an inductive approach or a deductive approach are the alternative prominent logics that are widely suggested and applied (Silverman, 2016).

An inductive approach is concerned with development of new theory and model for application, resulting from the observation of data already collected (Frels and Onwuegbuzie, 2013). While, a deductive approach involves testing the existing theories and concepts relevant to study, through the use of a specifically designed research strategy (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). From a theoretical perspective, induction involves theory building whereas deduction involves theory verification or falsification (Saunders *et al.*, 2012).

A deductive approach was employed for this research. The theories suggested in the literature review served as the starting point of the path that was followed. Based on

these theories, the research objectives were developed. This was subsequently followed by the development of data collection methods for accumulation of data, which was then tested statistically for verification. The results are then used to evaluate propositions and reach conclusions. Thus, through the use of a deductive approach, application of existing theoretical concepts for undertaking research is facilitated (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Further, the desire to use quantitative data justifies the use of deductive approach (Saunders *et al.*, 2012).

Moving ahead, selection of a nature further narrows down the research by making an attempt to reach the exact purpose of research. In relation to this, Saunders *et al.* (2012), identify three different natures of study. Exploratory research, true to its name, explores the topic on-hand by asking new questions to develop a better understanding. While descriptive research uses data collection process to understand the behaviour of target population. Whereas explanatory research is causal and tries to explain the relation among variables (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). This dissertation made use of descriptive research as the target here was to understand the behaviour and attitudes of the targeted population. This was achieved through collection of data to describe, explain and validate the findings.

3.6 Research strategy.

The way in which the researcher intends to answer the research question is indicated by research strategy (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Research strategy links the philosophical position to the appropriate data collection method and analysis technique, methodologically (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Therefore, it could be said that the chosen philosophy and approach influence the strategy. As indicated by the strategy layer of the research onion, various strategies have been identified based on different research traditions (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). These include experiment, survey, case study, ethnography, grounded theory, narrative inquiry, archival and action research.

The research adopted a survey strategy for data collection. The philosophy of positivism blended with the deductive approach of quantitative methods, led the researcher to the survey strategy which was suitable for the research. The use of this

strategy enabled the researcher to have a greater control over research process and further permitted to generate findings that represented total population, through the use of sampling (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Further, when it comes to data collection from particularly large groups, as is the case in this research with FMCG consumers, surveys represent an efficient route.

Additionally, as hinted by previous sections, the research choice adopted was that of mono method. As quantitative method was the single or the mono-method that was used for data gathering and consequent analysis in this dissertation (Saunders *et al.*, 2012).

3.6.1 Time horizon.

The time horizon over which the research is to be conducted is essential to the strategy of the research. Two types of studies viz – cross-sectional and longitudinal, signify the time horizon they make use of. Cross-sectional studies are kind of ‘snapshots’ and represent phenomena at a particular point of time, whereas longitudinal studies are kind of ‘diaries’ and study phenomena over a period of time to track the changes (Saunders *et al.*, 2012).

The given time frame for this research, more or less, meant that cross-sectional study was the only option that could be adopted. Similarly, most academic research is confined to cross-sectional time horizon. Accordingly, to obtain a snapshot, the data collection methods were deployed in the time frame of a week. This static placement meant that tracking of changes was not possible.

3.7 Data collection.

Taking into account the methodology opted, quantitative research approach was deployed for data collection. This decision was driven by the ease and efficiency with which knowledge can be inferred from large volume of quantitative data in comparison to qualitative approach. In view of the fact that a cause-effect relationship was studied, adequate and measurable data was required to fulfil the objectives, making quantitative approach a good fit (Moses and Knutsen, 2019). The quantitative method often facilitates the compilation of a much wider dataset

through a broader study, which would render the results more reliable, which in turn would permit the researcher to make generalizations based on findings.

Validity and reliability were the two key variables to be considered here. Validity is concerned with ensuring what was intended to be measured, is measured exactly. While, reliability is concerned with findings being consistent (Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler, 2011). By ensuring that design of the study was close to a real-world setting, validity was deemed to be established and the findings believed to be generalizable. Further, a clear description of the method followed was furnished, thereby allowing a replication of the adopted approach. Such replication is bound to produce same results as reliability was ensured. Furthermore, the researcher and the influence of researcher's interpretation were decoupled to a certain extent by ensuring reliability and validity.

3.7.1 Quantitative primary data collection.

Although structured observations and structured interviews are considered as alternative data collection methods under the survey strategy, questionnaire remains the most prominent (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). The research followed this prominently used technique of survey questionnaire for data collection, generally understood as a predetermined set of questions posed in the same order to generate response from different people (DeVaus, 2002). These questionnaires could either be interviewer-completed (e.g. telephone questionnaires) or self-completed (e.g. web-based questionnaires), depending upon the amount of contact between the researcher and the respondents (Saunders *et al.*, 2012).

A self-completed, web-based questionnaire was used for the purpose of this dissertation. Since this research sought to find information regarding a certain proportion of chosen population, statistical & quantifiable data was required and the same was obtained through the use of a standardised questionnaire. The survey questionnaire is widely used across different sectors for assessing attitudes and generating feedback particularly from end-users or consumers (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). This made it an appropriate choice for the present research as the focus here was on consumers' brand attitudes. Further, questionnaires inherently equip the researcher with the ability to gather large volume of data and that too with a

negligible level of distortion, making it a highly favourable data collection method (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). The use of web-based form i.e. online questionnaire was made to overcome two major constraints - time and large data sample.

Well-designed questions are the backbone of every successful research (Greener and Martelli, 2018), and the design is determined by the data required. Accordingly, the researcher decided on the questions that were closed-ended allowing the respondents only a limited number to alternatives to answer from (Greener and Martelli, 2018). By their very nature, closed-ended questions are easier and quicker to answer (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Further, the pre-determined aim of having low distortion is also achieved through the use of such questions.

An initial pilot study was carried out by sending the questionnaire to a test group of 12 individuals to determine the accuracy, consistency and to address the issues that are likely to arise, consistent with the advice of Saunders *et al.* (2012). The pilot consisted of 18 questions, consisting of 2 demographic questions, the crux of, 12 brand attitude questions and 4 CSR factor questions. Based on the results of the pilot certain changes were made including deletion of a couple of questions and addition of probing questions to guide the respondent in appropriate direction.

The final survey questionnaire for this research consisted of a total of twenty-four questions. These were divided into five parts – consent, probing questions, brand attitude, factors and demographics. The second and the last part(s) were general questions and as such framed by the researcher, except two questions in second part adopted from Tran, Le and Huynh (2017). Whereas the crux of the questionnaire was adopted from Chouthoy and Kazi (2016) (third part, 11 questions) and Perez and Del Bosque (2013) (fourth part, 3 questions). A five-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neither agree nor disagree, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree) was used for the second and third part. For the demographic and probing questions, multiple choices were provided to choose from.

3.7.2 Sample.

Budget and time constraints coupled with the apparent impracticability involved in surveying entire population, compel the researcher to use the only valid alternative

of sampling (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). The idea being that elements selected through sampling would help researcher to draw conclusions in relation to the entire population (Cooper and Schindler, 2011). Saunders *et al.* (2012), specify two different sampling techniques available – probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Under probability sampling every unit of population has an equal chance of being selected, whereas under non-probability sampling the selection is random & some units might have a higher chance of getting selected (Greener and Martelli, 2018).

The research made use of non-probability sampling because the probability of a unit's selection was not known. Moreover, initially addressed budget and time constraints made it impracticable to use probability methods. Within non-probability sampling, the haphazard route was adopted with sample selection based on convenience (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). As the name indicates, the samples were selected at the convenience of the researcher, i.e. allowing the freedom of selection (Cooper and Schindler, 2011). Additionally, snowball sampling was put into place by briefing the respondents to pass on the questionnaire among their colleagues. The use of convenience and snowball sampling assisted the researcher to overcome the constraints faced and quicken the process of data collection.

A sample of regular retail shoppers across different regions and age groups was targeted. Such participants were deemed appropriate for the research as they were adults, having market awareness and purchasing power. The questionnaires were distributed to respondents through private message which contained the link to the online survey, created through Google forms. The researcher sought help of the initial respondents for generating wider distribution through use of friends and colleagues to reach the targeted samples. The link was kept open for responses for a period of seven days/a week, from 29th July to 4th August. The questionnaire received a total of eighty-nine responses over the period it was kept open.

3.7.3 Analysing quantitative data.

To be productive to the research, the collected 'raw' data should be useful and usefulness can only be established after analysis (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). This research made use of mix of statistical tools for the analysis which included Google analytics, MS Excel and IBM SPSS. The resultant findings were represented through the use of

bar charts and pie charts. The probing questions were then put to use for the initial analysis.

Subsequently, the responses to key parts of the questionnaire i.e. second and third, were tested for internal reliability through the use of Cronbach's alpha, one of the most commonly used measures (Bryman and Bell, 2011). This is done through measuring the consistency of responses to a scale, to comprehend that they are measuring the same thing. The alpha ranges between 0 and 1 indicating no reliability and perfect internal reliability respectively (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). As an ordinarily accepted rule, an alpha in the range of 0.6 to 0.7 is indicative of an acceptable level of reliability, whereas an alpha beyond 0.8 is considered to have a very good level of reliability (Uraschi, Horodnic and Zait, 2015; Hulin, Netemeyer, and Cudeck, 2001).

Lastly, the findings, the graphs resulting from it, initial analysis and reliability analysis were all congregated based on the objectives. The resulting analysis moved the research forward towards its conclusion.

3.8 Ethical issues.

The practice of research brings with it many dilemmas and moral choices which have to be anticipated and dealt with. To deal with the same, appropriate ethical ways have to be identified (Greener and Martelli, 2019). Thus, any research involving or dealing with human subjects, has to be governed by good ethical practices. By safeguarding the privacy and confidentiality of identity and data, the researcher ensures anonymity and confidentiality of participants (Quinlan, 2011).

All the ethical guidelines and practices specified by the National College of Ireland were carefully considered and followed. The research made use of an online survey for quantitative data collection. To ensure the safety of data, no names were documented. The purpose of the study was clearly stated and the participants' consents were obtained. The participants were made aware of their right to withdraw at any given stage. The resultant data was only accessible to the researcher and used for the sole purpose of this dissertation. Further, principles of 'netiquette' were respected since the research was internet-mediated (Hewson, 2003).

Furthermore, an 'ethical review application form' was completed and submitted to the researcher to the National College of Ireland to ensure good ethical practice.

3.9 Limitations to research.

A limitation could be exemplified as any "weakness or deficiency" in the research (Collis and Hussey, 2014). As Silverman (2001) emphasizes, 'there is no correct or incorrect methodology to follow', as every research is bound to have certain limitations and the present research is no different.

The data collected through the use of questionnaires is by and large perceived to be true & honest representation for an accurate analysis. However, analysis of inaccurate data, might limit the correctness of findings generated from such analysis. The use of non-probability method for sample selection meant that generalizability on statistical grounds was not justifiable (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Further, the flaws of convenience sampling could possibly cloud the resultant conclusions, signifying that conclusions might be incomplete. In addition to this, the number of responses received is another limitation as, the larger the sample the better the resulting analysis would be.

Due to lack of any precise study in relation to the research topic, the researcher was unable to identify and adopt a single survey that would be fit for the research. Thus, driving the researcher to build the survey questionnaire by amalgamating three different questionnaires. Regardless of the limitations, the researcher believes that the chosen methodology, methods and the data collected can drive the research towards attainment of its objectives.

Chapter 4: Findings.

4.1 Introduction.

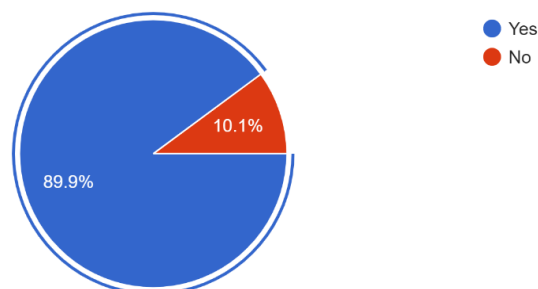
This section of the research presents the findings of the quantitative data collection process, as specified in the previous methodology chapter. An online questionnaire created and circulated by the use of Google forms (See appendix) was used for this process. The questionnaire contained twenty-four questions and were based on the objectives of the research. The questions were structured as followed: Q1: For consent, Q2-Q6: Probing questions to understand knowledge, Q7-Q17: CSR and brand attitude, Q18-Q20: CSR and differentiating factors, Q21-Q24: Demographics. The survey questionnaire received a total of 89 responses, over the period it was kept open. The data resulting from these responses is presented through the use of graphical, numerical and tabular techniques in this part. On the basis of these findings, the next part then goes on to discuss and analyse the data.

The initial question recorded the consent of the respondents. All the respondents voluntarily agreed to be a part of this research. With the consent recorded, the respondents moved to the answer subsequent parts of the questionnaire.

4.2 CSR knowledge.

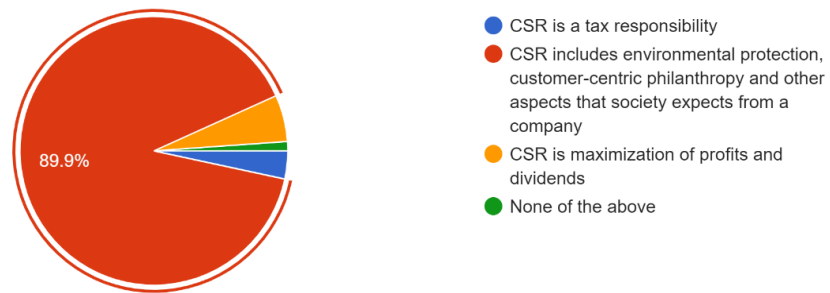
The findings from the second part of the questionnaire are presented here. Probing questions were used to understand the knowledge possessed by the respondents in relation to CSR. Based on the responses to these questions, the researcher decided whether the respondents possessed appropriate knowledge to fittingly answer the next parts of the questionnaire.

Q2. Are you aware of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) concept of business?



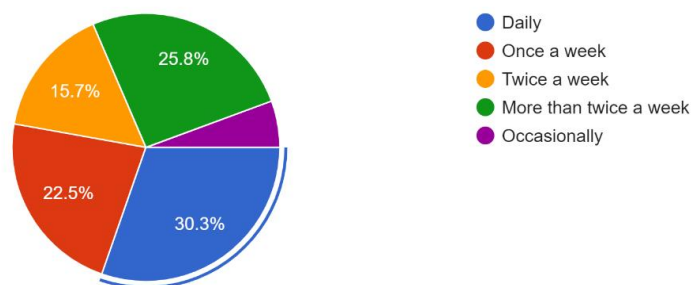
This was a straightforward question and the first step to understand CSR awareness. With 89.9% i.e. 80 respondents saying 'yes', majority indicated that they were aware of the CSR concept. However, 10.1% i.e. 9 respondents said that they are not aware of this concept.

Q3. Which statement best reflects your opinion?



This question explored what, in the respondent's opinion, CSR meant by giving them four alternatives to choose from. Most respondents held the opinion that CSR was a company's responsibility towards the society. With 80 (89.9%) respondents selecting the same, while 5 (5.6%) holding a belief that CSR is maximization of profits, 3 (3.4%) believing that CSR is a tax responsibility and a single respondent (1.1%) considering none of the given alternatives as his opinion of CSR.

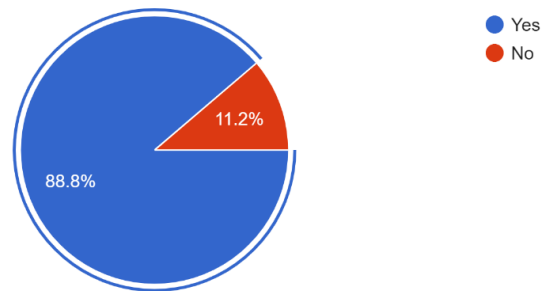
Q4. How often, would you say, you buy an FMCG product (for instance: packaged foods, groceries, cosmetics, chocolates, etc.)



The question here intended to explore the respondent's involvement or purchase frequency of FMCG products. The results were somewhat evenly distributed. 27 (30.3%) respondents indicated their purchases being daily, 23 (25.8%) indicated buying FMCG products more than twice a week, 20 (22.5%) respondents having once

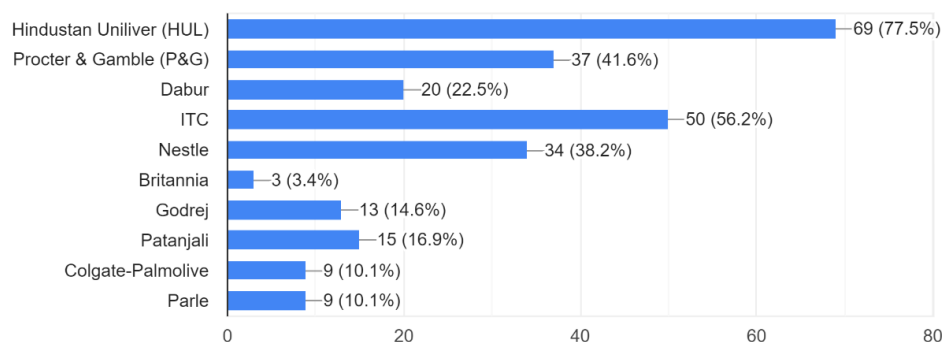
a week purchase, 14 (15.7%) saying that they buy FMCG products more than twice a week and the remaining 5 (5.6%) respondents occasionally being involved with purchase of FMCG products.

Q5. Do you know FMCG companies are involved in CSR activities?



Here, the ideas in previously asked questions were merged to narrow down on the awareness about FMCG sectors involvement in CSR activities. About 79 (88.8%) respondents were aware of the FMCG companies' involvement in CSR, while 10 (11.2%) respondents lacked knowledge about such initiatives or involvements of FMCG companies.

Q6. Which of the below-mentioned FMCG company's CSR initiatives are you aware of? (Select the 3 you are most aware of).



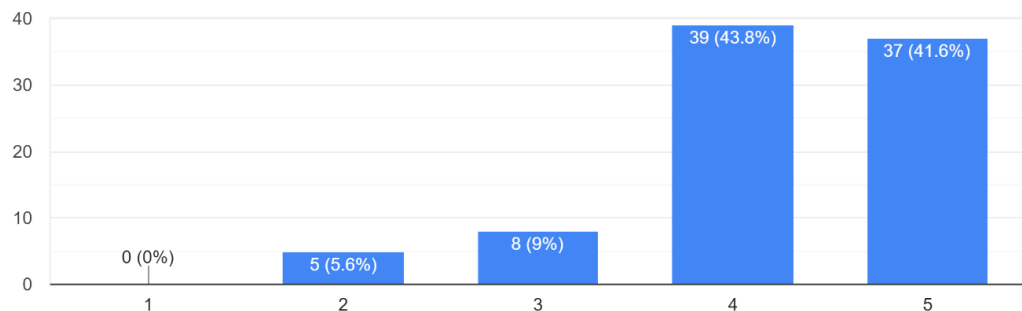
To get a better understanding of attentiveness towards CSR programs of FMCG companies, this question was designed. Respondents were asked to select the companies that they could identify as being involved in CSR. HUL's CSR programs seemed to have the largest reach with 69 (77.5%) respondents being aware of them.

ITC with 50 (56.2%) and P&G with 37 (41.6%) responses seemed to have a good reach with their CSR programs.

4.3 CSR and brand attitude

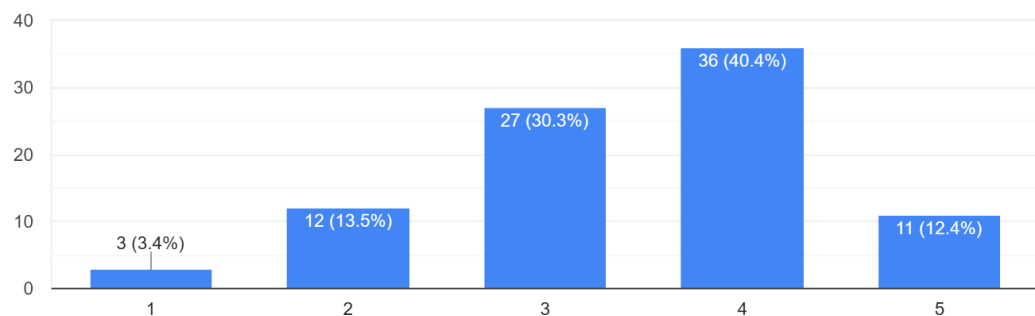
Findings from the third part of the questionnaire are presented in this section. Questions were designed to understand the influence of CSR on consumers' brand attitude, which is in sync with the second research objective. The use of a 5-point Likert scale was made in this section with the following indications 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neither agree nor disagree, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree.

Q7. My respect for brands that do CSR activities grows every time I hear of their efforts in that direction.



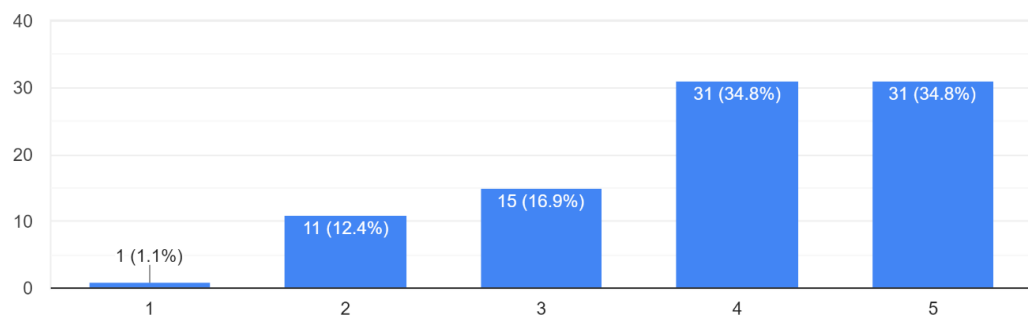
This question scrutinized the basic attitude and admiration consumers have for brands that are engaging in CSR. With 76 (85.4%) respondents strongly agreeing/agreeing, majority indicated a higher respect for brands that practice CSR. Comparatively, only 5 (5.6%) respondents disagreed with the statement, while 8 (9%) respondents neither agreed nor disagreed.

Q8. I can distinguish brands with CSR activities from other competing brands.



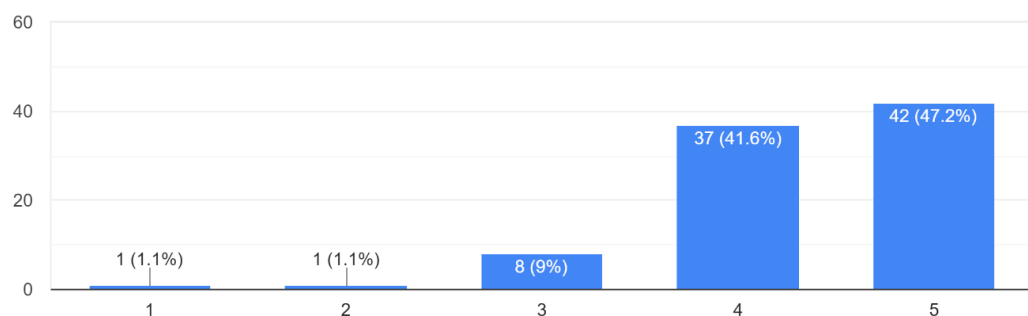
This question is imperative to understanding brand attitude towards CSR, it explores whether a consumer can tell a CSR performing brand from a non-performing one. More than half the respondents strongly agreed/agreed (47 responses, 52.8%) that they could make such distinction. While 27 (30.3%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Besides, 15 (16.9%) respondents disagreed/strongly disagreed and were of the opinion that they could not distinguish such brands.

Q9. I believe brands (like Tata Tea, ITC Ltd, Surf, Whisper, Horlicks and Nestle) that practice CSR are concerned about the best interest of society and contribute to the well-being of its people.



The question intended to understand whether participants believed that a brand performing CSR was really concerned about the society. 62 (69.6%) agreed/strongly agreed to having such belief. 15 (16.9%) participants neither agreed nor disagreed to holding such belief. Comparatively, 12 (13.5%) participants did not believe that CSR practicing companies had such concerns by disagreeing/strongly disagreeing.

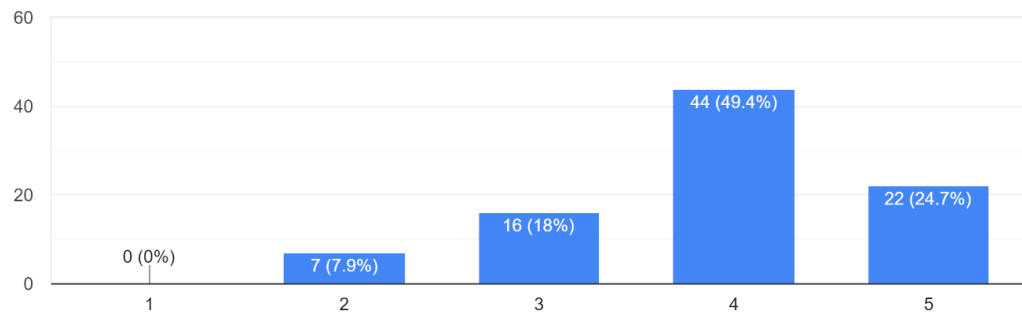
Q10. CSR activities raise the profile of a brand in consumers' minds.



The mental effect that exposure to CSR activities has on consumers' attitude was examined through the use of this question. With about 79 (88.8%) respondents

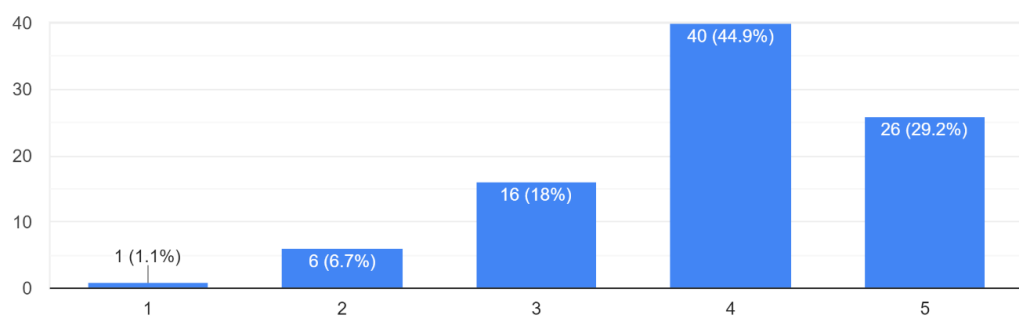
agreeing/strongly agreeing, a high majority accepted this impression of CSR. As regards the same, 8 (9%) if the responses neither agreed nor disagreed. Lastly, only 2 (2.2%) respondents were in disagreement/strong disagreement.

Q11. I believe the brands (like Tata Tea, ITC Ltd, Surf, Whisper, Horlicks and Nestle) that practice CSR offer and market quality products and services.



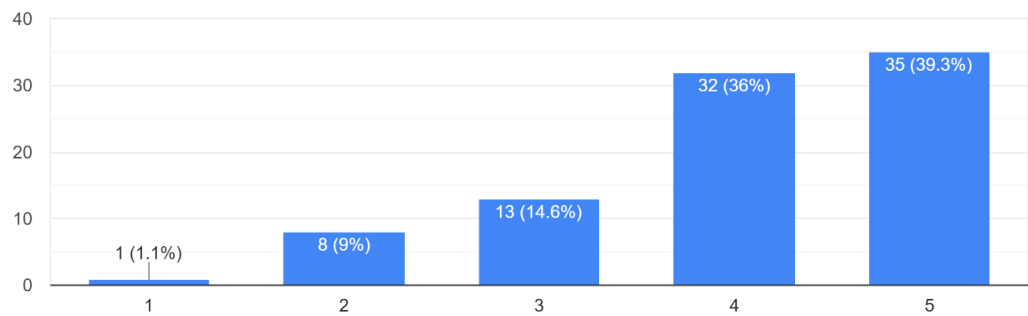
Through the use of this question, the intention was to understand consumers' attitudes towards the products and services of brands that practiced CSR. A total of 66 (74.1%) contributors saw the products and services of such brands as quality by agreeing/strongly agreeing. While 16 (18%) neither agreed nor disagreed to any such connection and the remaining 7 (7.9%) disagreed to CSR practicing brands being quality.

Q12. I can relate to brands which perform strong CSR activities.



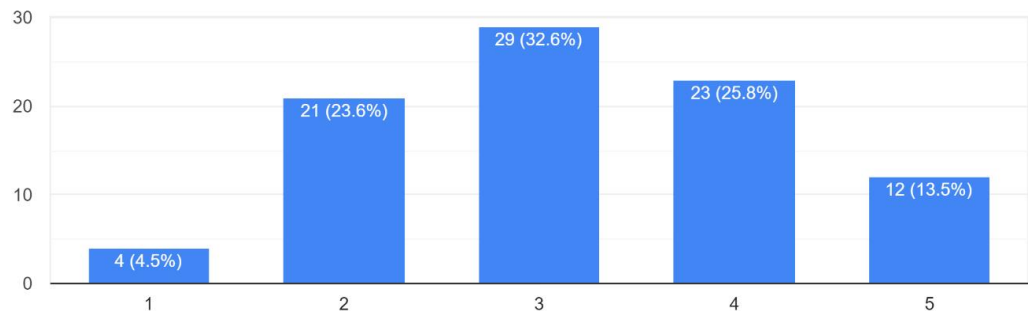
The intention with this question was to understand the relatedness between CSR, consumer and brand attitude. Vast majority could relate to brands with strong CSR performance, with 66 (74.1%) respondents agreeing/strongly agreeing to the same. Comparatively, 16 (18%) neither agreed nor disagreed to such relation and 7 (7.8%) disagreed/strongly disagreed that they could relate to such brands.

Q13. It gives me pleasure to purchase brands that practice CSR.



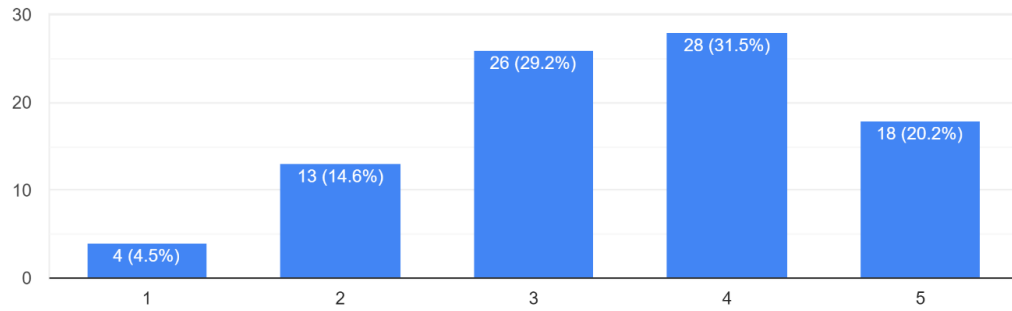
This question gauged the impact on attitude from the act of CSR-informed purchase. A bulk of respondents i.e. 67 (75.3%) said they experienced pleasure in such purchase (agreed/strongly agreed). Whereas, 13 (14.6%) neither agreed nor disagreed to any such emotion. Lastly, 9 (10.1%) respondents disagreed/strongly disagreed to having such sentiment.

Q14. I feel bad when people speak ill of brands (like Tata Tea, ITC Ltd, Surf, Whisper, Horlicks and Nestle), since they practice CSR sincerely.



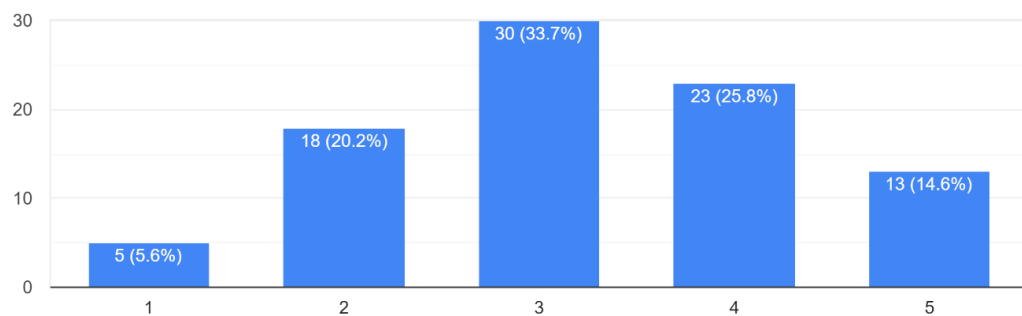
The question assessed the emotional aspect of brand attitude. The results were almost evenly distributed. 35 (39.3%) respondents experienced discontent when bad was spoken about brands practicing CSR (agreed/strongly agreed), 29 (32.6%) were neutral i.e. neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement and 25 (28.1%) were not affected by others negative attitude towards the brand (disagreed/strongly disagreed).

Q15. I consider myself to be loyal to brands that practice CSR, since they are interested in doing more, than just making a profit by selling me a product.



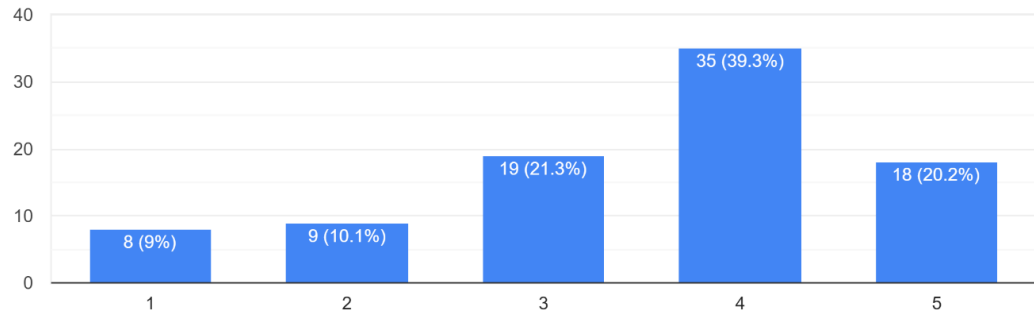
This question sought to determine whether brand attitude resulting from CSR drives loyalty towards those brands. A total of 46 (51.7%) of the respondents agreed/strongly agreed to the thought of being loyal. Whereas, 26 (29.2%) neither agreed nor disagreed to this consideration. But, 17 (19.1%) of the respondents disagreed/strongly disagreed with the statement.

Q16. I will not buy other brands if a similar brand, which is associated with CSR activities, is available.



The above statement was enlisted to understand consumers' attitude towards purchase of similar brands with CSR being the only differentiating factor. A total of 36 (40.4%) respondents agreed/strongly agreed with the statement. On a similar level, 30 (33.7%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Lastly, 23 (25.8%) respondents disagreed/strongly disagreed with the statement.

Q17. I am willing to pay slightly more for a brand/product that practices CSR if I need to.

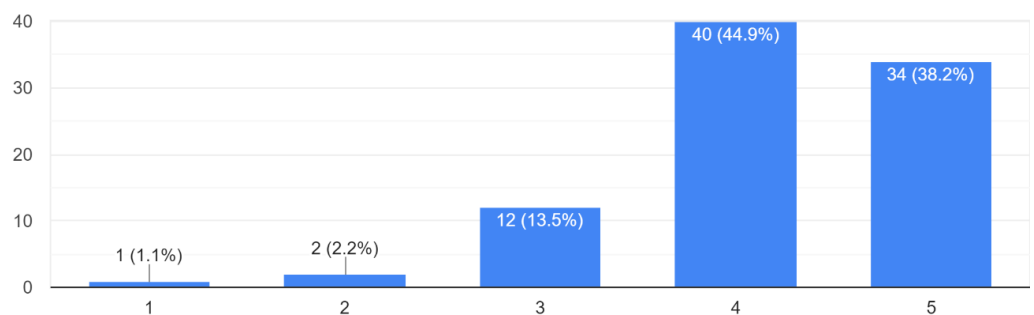


The question ascertained whether consumers would be willing to go the additional distance for brands that practiced CSR, to understand their attitude. Of the total respondents, 53 (59.5%) agreed/strongly agreed to be willing of going the distance, while 19 (21.3%) neither agreed nor disagreed about their willingness to do so. However, 17 (19.1%) respondents disagreed/strongly disagreed to have the willingness to pay more.

4.4 CSR and differentiating factors.

The findings presented in this section are from the fourth part of the questionnaire. The questions focused on understanding consumers opinion, on what would be considered as a good CSR exercise. This was examined by understanding consumers' perception of companies' CSR congruence. A similar 5-point Likert-scale was used in this part.

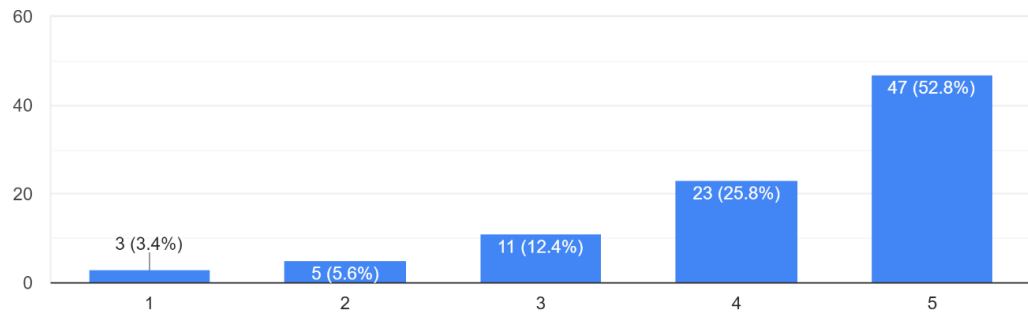
Q18. It makes sense to me that FMCG companies (like Nestle, P&G, HUL) carry out CSR activities.



This question assessed whether FMCG companies engaging in CSR made sense to consumers. Majority of the respondents were in agreement/strong agreement with this viewpoint (74, 83.1%). Except the fractional 3 (3.3%) in disagreement/strong

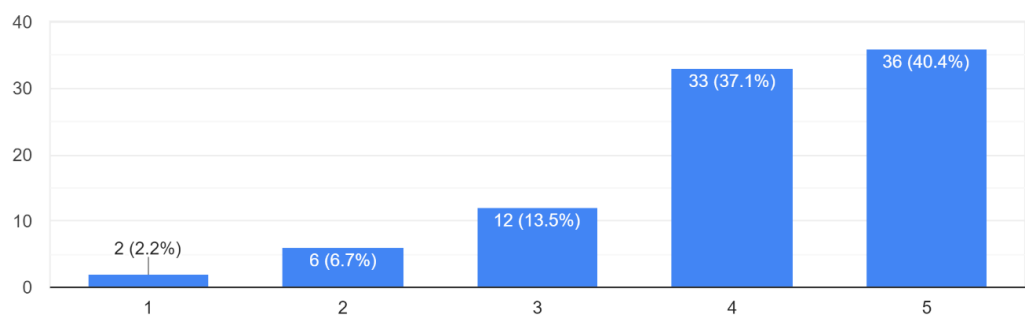
disagreement, 12 (13.5%) respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the presented viewpoint.

Q19. I believe that carrying out CSR activities should be complementary to the FMCG company's core business.



Whether the idea of a company engaging in CSR activities that complement the existing business, would be seen as favourable or not. Significantly, 70 (78.6%) respondents strongly agreed/agreed with the idea. Besides, 11 (12.4%) respondents neither agreed nor disagreed and 8 (9%) disagreed/strongly disagreed with the idea of a company engaging in complementing CSR initiatives.

Q20. I believe that there should be a logical fit between the core business of a company and the CSR activities that it carries out.

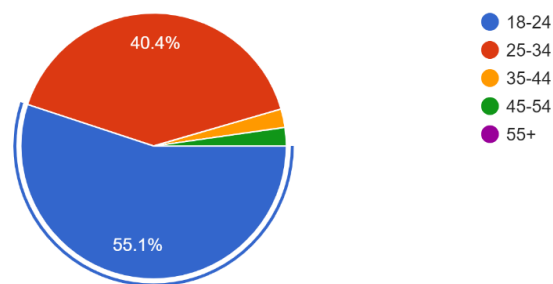


This question probed whether a logical fit between a company's business and the CSR activities was required. The responses were majorly in agreement with 69 (77.5%) strongly agreeing/agreeing, 12(13.5%) neither agreeing nor disagreeing and 8 (6.7%) responses being to the contrary of the presented question.

4.5 Demographics.

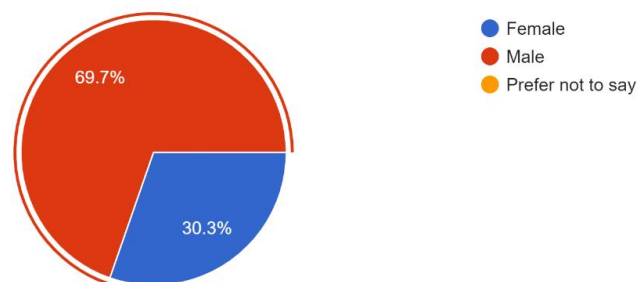
Findings from the last part of the questionnaire are presented here. The demographics relating to participant's age, gender, profession and income were gathered. It was ensured that, at every point, any details which disclosed identity of participants was not asked for. This section was purposely placed as the last part, to avoid any hesitations and yet if the participant did not feel comfortable sharing these details, the option of 'prefer not to say' was included.

Q21. What is your age?



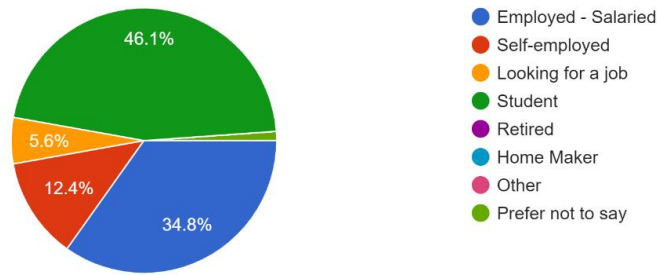
With regards to age distribution, majority of the respondents belong to age group of 18-24 with 49 (55.1%) respondents. The second major age group was between 25-34 with 36 (40.4%) respondents. Further, both the age groups 35-44 and 45-54 had 2 (2.2%) respondents each.

Q22. What is your gender?



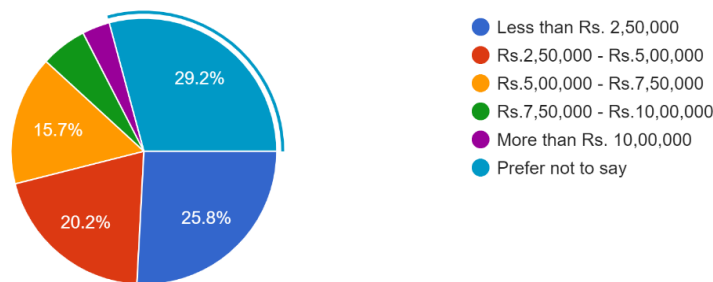
Of the total respondents, 62 (69.7%) identified themselves as male while 27 (30.3%) identified themselves as female.

Q23. What is your occupation?



This question was designed to understand the professional background of the research participants. A drop-down list giving wide-ranging options was provided for selection. Accordingly, 41 (46.1%) participants disclosed that they were students, 31(34.8%) participants were in salaried employment, 11 (12.4%) were self-employed, 5(5.6%) looking for a job and a single participant chose not to disclose this detail.

Q24. Which of these describes your income last year?



This question was designed to understand the monetary background of the research participants. For the ease of understanding local currency (Indian rupee/INR) was used and the groupings were derived based on the Indian income tax slabs. Here 26 (29.2%) respondents preferred not to disclose and 23 (25.8%) had an income of less than Rs. 250,000. While 18 (20.2%) had an income in the 250,000-500,000 bracket, 14 (15.7%) were a part of the 500,000-750,000 bracket. Lastly, 5 (5.6%) respondents belonged to 750,000-1,000,000 slab and 3 (3.4%) had income more than Rs. 1,000,000

In terms of euros/€ (considering a rounded exchange rate of €1 = INR88) the alternatives would be, less than €2,840 or €2,841-€5,680 or €5,681-€8,520 or €8,521-€11,360 or more than €11,360.

With the findings presented, the next part then moves on to discussion of these findings and what it means in terms of research.

Chapter 5: Discussion.

5.1 Introduction.

The purpose of this research was to understand the impact of CSR on developing brand attitudes in the FMCG market in India. Which specifically focused on two key topics, which lead to the objectives of the research. The discussion thus revolves around these two objectives. The findings from the previous chapter are evaluated to provide a critical view on the data collected, by making use of relevant literature.

A mix of different tools and techniques were adopted for analysis including MS Excel and IBM SPSS. Once the data was collected through the use of online survey via Google forms, it was extracted into the worksheet of MS excel. Through this extraction, all the data was organized into different cells of the worksheet and in a structure of rows and columns.

At this juncture, it was important to identify the part of data (or the responses) that could not be a part of further analysis, due to lack of topic knowledge. The probing questions from the first part of the questionnaire were used for such identification. This was done through the use of three questions i.e. Q2, Q3, Q5 and the use of MS Excel's filter tools. Once identified, that part of data was set aside.

In the first run, responses to Q2 were filtered. For the reason that, participants not aware of CSR, could not be deemed to have the required knowledge to answer further questions. Thus, all those responding to Q2 with 'no' were identified. The resulting 9 responses were set aside.

In the second run, responses to Q3 were filtered. As the researcher felt that the respondents' view of CSR was likely to impact the accuracy of their responses. Consequently, the responses opting for 'CSR is a tax responsibly', 'CSR is maximization of profit' and 'none of the above' were identified. The resulting 4 responses (of the remaining responses i.e. 89-9) were set aside.

In the third run, responses to Q5 were filtered. Since the study focused on FMCG market, a lack of knowledge about that market was likely to impact the consequent responses. According, all 'no' responses to Q5 were identified. The resulting 4

responses (of the remaining responses i.e. 89-9-4) were set aside. At the end of this exercise, a total of 72 responses were available. The discussion then moves to the next part.

5.2 Research objective 1.

“To explore the differentiating factors of a CSR initiative that attracts the attention of a wider audience”

The above-mentioned objective intended to understand aspects enticing interest of consumers in the CSR initiatives of brands and corporates. The findings presented in section 4.3 – Q18, Q19, Q20, are concerned with this objective. The questions focused on the aspects and types of CSR initiatives to understand what people believed to be good CSR practice.

At first, the findings of this part were coded into the IBM SPSS, to measure the internal reliability through the use of Cronbach’s alpha. The three-question scale of this part achieved a Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.693 (when part of data was set aside i.e. N=72). On the other hand, the Cronbach’s alpha value was 0.741 (when all the data was considered i.e. N=89) (See appendix). Thus, indicating an acceptable level of reliability in either case (Uraschi, Horodnic and Zait, 2015).

The mandatory nature of CSR in India, has led to a significant increase in investment being made into CSR activities. However, due to the mandatory aspect, the correctness and genuineness of these efforts are often questioned. Further, emergence of instances of greenwashing of various brands across India, have added to the scepticism of CSR. Thus, consumers nowadays are more evaluative of such initiatives and any inconsistency is likely to put off the consumers’ interest.

At the outset, to attract and hold the interest of consumers, the CSR engagement of company should be justifiable. This can be better explained through the attribution theory. The attraction and consumer interest in CSR are likely to be positive, if the consumers’ attribute a belief of genuineness and reasonability to company’s CSR. With majority (83.1%*, 88.9%**) respondents agreeing/strongly agreeing that FMCG companies’ CSR engagement makes sense, the finding is as expected and similar to that of Ellen *et al.* (2006) and Perez and Del Bosque (2013).

On the contrary, any inconsistencies between corporate goals and CSR could result in the CSR program being disregarded or lacking the required attention (Lafferty, Goldsmith and Hult, 2004). Such situation would arise when a company engages in an activity that has no connection to its existing businesses. The findings of this research also painted a similar picture, with a bulk (78.6%*, 80.6%**) of respondents agreeing/strongly agreeing to the belief that CSR activity and FMCG company's core business should complement each other.

Lastly, the level of association, dubbed as the 'fit', is another aspect considered important to CSR reach by researchers. A good fit between the company personality and its CSR is linked with influencing associative networks of consumers positively (Fiske and Taylor, 2008). This belief was widely held among the respondents (77.5%*, 80.6%**) of this research, which was in agreement with the widely recognised study of Becker-Olsen *et al.* (2006) and Perez and Del Bosque (2013).

[*All data (N=89) **Part of data set aside (N=72)]

5.3 Research Objective 2.

"To assess the changes, if any, that occur in consumers' brand attitude, subsequent to obtaining knowledge about a company/product's CSR initiatives."

This objective was the key focus of the research, with the other building up to it. The belief being that interest stemming from altruistic motivations has the ability to significantly influence attitudes (Perez and Del Bosque, 2013). In other words, brand's CSR attraction or desirability leads to development or change of brand attitude. The findings presented in section 4.2 – Q7-Q17, are concerned with this objective. Due to absence of any pre-existing research looking specifically at this particular aspect, the general construct of brand attitude was used to evaluate the findings of this objective.

Similar to the last objective, the measure of reliability of obtained through the use of Cronbach's alpha via IBM SPSS. The eleven-question scale relevant here, achieved a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.855 (when part of data was set aside i.e. N=72). On the other hand, the Cronbach's alpha value was 0.858 (when all the data was considered

i.e. N=89) (See appendix). Thus, indicating a very good level of reliability in either case (Uraschi, Horodnic and Zait, 2015; Hulin, Netemeyer, and Cudeck, 2001).

Here the construct followed was based on the tricomponent model of attitude as reviewed in section 2.3.1 The thought process was to associate the findings with the components and understand the impact of CSR on brand attitude. Further, image, attributes, evaluations of brand merge to form attitude, making assessment of these factors vital to understanding attitude.

Cognitive component: Respondents' cognition towards the FMCG brands (attitude object) were assessed. The assessment was made on the basis of the beliefs about the CSR activities and practices of the FMCG brands. The beliefs were a direct result of respondents' experiences and information exposure. Q9, Q10 and Q11 were used to understand the cognitive aspect of attitude. With a good level of agreement, three consumer cognitions/beliefs about CSR engaging FMCG brands could be identified.

- The brands care about society and its well-being
- The brands are good brands
- The brand's products and services are of good quality

Thus, a consumer is likely to believe that the brand possesses the above three qualities if it engages in CSR. What is important to understand here is, that irrespective of whether a brand really cares or is good or manufactures good quality, its very engagement in CSR would result in these qualities being attached to the brand.

Affective component: Affection is concerned with the feelings and emotions a consumer attaches to the FMCG brand (attitude object). As part of the study, the emotions resulting from evaluation of CSR activities were understood. This component is believed by many researchers to be the most important and central to understanding attitude (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015). The questions Q7, Q12, Q13, Q14 and Q15 were used for evaluations. The respondents were in a highly favourable agreement on Q7, Q12 and Q13. However, for Q14 and Q15 majority agreed but the results were not in clear approval. Based on the same, the following

can be said about the limited emotions studied here, when a consumer has exposure to FMCG brands' CSR initiatives:

	Emotion/Feeling	Level of affection
1	Respect towards brand	Highly affected
2	Relatedness to the brand	Highly affected
3	Pleasure leading to action	Highly affected
4	Loyalty to the brand	Moderately affected
5	Sorrow (in case of disagreement)	Insignificantly affected

In similarity to cognitions, the CSR engagement of a FMCG company would ideally lead to the consumers experiencing the emotions of respect, relatedness, pleasure to a high degree and loyalty to a moderate degree. Such experiences drive emotionally-charged consumer decisions (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015).

Conative component: The likelihood and the manner in which an individual will react towards FMCG brands (attitude object) is based on the conative component. In other words, understanding the intention to buy is the final aspect of attitude. The questions Q8, Q16, Q17 were designed to understand whether the cognitions and affections towards FMCG brands, resulting from CSR, would drive conations.

Although majority were in agreement about all questions, only Q17 could be said to have popular accord. While Q8 and Q16 had respondents' accord to a certain degree. This can be summed up as below:

- Only about half the consumers can distinguish a CSR practicing FMCG brand from a non-practicing one.
- When buying for the first time, a consumer may only slightly favour a CSR practicing FMCG brand.
- However, if a consumer buys a FMCG brand regularly, he would be willing to pay slightly higher for the same brand because of its CSR connection.

According to Schiffman and Wisenblit (2015), cognitive and affective component build a positive attitude that leads to a positive conation/purchase intention. However, this could only be partially established here.

The FMCG companies' CSR affected cognitive component and affective component in a positive manner. However, its impact on the conative component, although positive, could not be seen to the same effect. Overall, based on the tricomponent attitude model, FMCG companies' CSR engagement could be said to have a right impact on brand attitude amid certain shortfalls in some areas.

5.3 Others.

If the consumer is not aware, no gains would be made from the company's CSR activities (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2004). The intent, from the initial set of probing questions, was to understand the awareness and knowledge. With about 20% of responses being set aside due to lack of knowledge, a significant deficiency could be observed in Indian consumers awareness about CSR activities. This is important to be recognized because all the talk of CSR and its influence on brand attitude would be deemed theoretical, if there is no awareness (Pomeroy and Dolnicar, 2009).

Alternatively, those aware, were asked via Q6 about the companies whose CSR initiatives they were most aware of. Based on the findings, a clear pattern was observed, HUL, P&G, ITC, Nestle and Dabur were vastly recognized by respondents. Thus, making it important to understand and evaluate these FMCG brands and their CSR initiatives from a future research perspective.

Chapter 6: Conclusion.

6.1 Introduction.

With too many media platforms and the clutter of advertisements therein, marketers are facing a challenge to attract and hold attention in a manner to influence attitudes. The idea was to figure out if the unconventional route of CSR engagement could be adopted for developing stable brand attitude.

The research focused on understanding the impact of CSR on brand attitude. Over the last few years, CSR engagement of corporations has increased significantly. With this, the innovation of such corporate campaigners has also increased to enhance the level of interaction with various stakeholders. Therefore, the research intended to explore how this interaction impacts the development of attitudes and the subsequent changes that occur in the consumers' subconsciousness.

6.2 Implications.

A theoretical as well as a practical account of CSR and its impact on development of brand attitude in the context of the Indian FMCG market, is presented by this dissertation. The findings prove that CSR engagement has an influence on brand attitudes and that consumers view CSR in positive light. Thus, the results may well be of assistance to firms and corporations initiating or already engaged in CSR. These may also be used to create, frame or modify CSR initiatives in corporations. The research findings from primary data collection, in addition, could help explain the factors that make a CSR program more effective. The appeal could be enhanced by ensuring a few simple things, like making CSR engagement more meaningful, getting involved in activities that are, complementary to the existing business and are in good-fit with the core business.

Further, by understanding what aspects of consumer brand attitude are highly affected by CSR, brands can better allocate their CSR spending. Carrying work forward on the basis of findings presented in this dissertation may bring it to the notice of CSR teams that more focus is required on attitude aspects that boost

conations/actions. Lastly, CSR communicating practices can be improved by presenting information in a better way for better awareness.

6.3 Limitations.

Even though a good deal of research exists on CSR and brand attitude, studies linking the two are limited. Thus, in terms of findings and conclusions, this dissertation is independent from others. As the subject is broad, covering all aspects in every respect was not possible; thus, attention must be drawn to the limitations. The key constraint, as is the case with any dissertation, was the time allotted. With the availability of further resources for the dissertation (e.g. people, time, money), a mix of different techniques could have been adopted to better reach the objectives.

The scope of the survey was a nature limitation, as the results were based on a fairly limited study of 89 respondents. Additionally, the age distribution of respondents was unequal. With major respondents in the 18-24 and 25-34 age bracket, the generalisation of results to entire population is limited. Further, use of only quantitative method for this dissertation could appear as a weakness, since collaboration with other methods could have resulted in solid research. Furthermore, the researcher intended to study the correlation between income and CSR based brand attitude, but many respondents were not comfortable in sharing such information thereby affecting the planned action. Lastly, the research was cross-sectional i.e. captured at a specific moment in time, which may be seen as unsuitable to study attitudes.

6.4 Future recommendations.

Considering the limitations of this dissertation, investigations can be made in the future about the influence of CSR on other aspects of consumer behaviour. The focus of future studies could be on examining the existence of correlation between income-based factors and attitude. The observations made by Tran *et al.* (2017) could support this premise. Additionally, the influence of the demographic factors could be explored in relation to company's communication.

As mentioned earlier, greater benefit could be derived if the research would have been complemented by other data collection methods in addition to the online

survey, for instance interview. Precision could have been added to the findings if quantitative and qualitative techniques were used in parallel. This would have permitted the researcher to ask open-ended questions which would allow a clear view of respondents' reactions and feedbacks. This would also facilitate an in detail understanding of brand attitude from FMCG CSR perspective.

This dissertation made an investigation into brand attitude through the use of tricomponent model. Reflecting on the same, prospective studies are recommended to look more carefully at the respondents' intention, in context of the conative component of attitude. Correspondingly, it will be prudent to study different areas of conation to get a clear picture. Further, use of other models like ELM or multi-attribute models could be made in future research, to get a different perspective of attitude development and change in context of CSR. In view of the discussions, limitations and recommendations, it is possible to develop further research to study the impact of CSR on brand attitudes in the Indian context.

6.5 Concluding point.

This dissertation started off with the thought of how a concept developed for businesses to give back to the society they co-exist in, could result in an unintended marketing benefit and how businesses can intentionally take advantage of this unintended benefit. While the thought was probably too expansive for single limited dissertation like this one, a key aspect of it was picked for study in further detail, in context of a particular industry and a particular market. Thus, leading to the study of brand attitudes in context of FMCG market in the Asian country of India.

Beginning with the justification and questions, the dissertation moved on to a critical review of the existing literature in this area. The methodology was then developed on the back of this critical review, consequently leading to the findings and discussion. Ultimately, the research effectively answered the research questions.

In conclusion it could be said, with reference to the purpose of the dissertation, that, 'CSR activities generally have a positive impact on developing brand attitudes in the Indian FMCG market'. Even so, variations do exist in how positive these acts are

considered. Further, it can be said that the buying actions are also affected, but not to the same extent.

If a brand wants to achieve two aims at once, it should work on its CSR communications and engagement. When positive brand attitudes are developed, they endure for a long period and do not get eroded easily. Thus, protecting the brand even in mishaps. Lastly, integration of CSR activities into the corporate culture, goals and objectives will not only improve the attitudes but also lead to significantly successful business in the long run.

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Appendices.

A. Questionnaire.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) and its impact on developing brand attitudes in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) market in India.

Hello!!

I am Anuj Bolia, a student of MSc. Management at the National College of Ireland. I am undertaking this study as part of my course (Dissertation work).

This study aims to assess corporate social responsibility (CSR) and its impact on developing brand attitudes in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) market in India. I would like to invite you to take part in this study. This page consists of the information about why the research is being conducted and what it would involve for you. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and decide whether or not to take part in this survey.

- Participation in this survey is voluntary. You can opt to exit from this survey at any given point and your responses will not be recorded.
- If you wish to complete this survey, all the responses will remain anonymous and confidential. In order to ensure that we cannot identify you and to keep responses confidential, we do not collect your name and any other personal data from you.
- All the responses are stored in the password-protected file and will be accessed only by my thesis guide and myself.
- The responses will be aggregated, analyzed, and discussed in my thesis and will not identify you individually or your responses.
- It will be deleted after a certain time as per the National College of Ireland guidelines.

This will take about 2-5 minutes, your participation will greatly aid my research. If you have any queries regarding the study or are facing difficulty with answering the survey questions, please feel free to mail me at anujbolia@gmail.com

Thank you.

* Required

I understand the above-mentioned information and voluntarily agree to take part in this research study. *

☐ Yes

☐ No

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CSR, FMCG and Brand attitude

General

Abbreviations:

CSR - Corporate Social Responsibility
FMCG - Fast Moving Consumer Goods

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

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Which statement best reflects your opinion? *

- ☐ CSR is a tax responsibility
☐ CSR includes environmental protection, customer-centric philanthropy and other aspects that society expects from a company
☐ CSR is maximization of profits and dividends
☐ None of the above

How often, would you say, you buy an FMCG product (for instance: packaged foods, groceries, cosmetics, chocolates, etc.) *

- ☐ Daily
☐ Once a week
☐ Twice a week
☐ More than twice a week
☐ Occasionally

Do you know FMCG companies are involved in CSR activities? *

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Which of the below-mentioned FMCG company's CSR initiatives are you aware of? (Select the 3 you are most aware of). *

- ☐ Hindustan Uniliver (HUL)
☐ Procter & Gamble (P&G)
☐ Dabur
☐ ITC
☐ Nestle
☐ Britannia
☐ Godrej
☐ Patanjali
☐ Colgate-Palmolive
☐ Parle

To what extent do you agree with the following statements: (1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree)
(CSR and Brand attitude: FMCG brands)

My respect for brands that do CSR activities grows every time I hear of their efforts in that direction. *

Strongly Disagree ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 Strongly Agree

I can distinguish brands with CSR activities from other competing brands. *

Strongly Disagree ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 Strongly Agree

I believe brands (like Tata Tea, ITC Ltd, Surf, Whisper, Horlicks and Nestle) that practice CSR are concerned about the best interest of society and contribute to the well-being of its people. *

Strongly Disagree ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 Strongly Agree

CSR activities raise the profile of a brand in consumers' minds. *

Strongly Disagree ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 Strongly Agree

I believe the brands (like Tata Tea, ITC Ltd, Surf, Whisper, Horlicks and Nestle) that practice CSR offer and market quality products and services. *

Strongly Disagree ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 Strongly Agree

I can relate to brands which perform strong CSR activities. *

Strongly Disagree ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 Strongly Agree

It gives me pleasure to purchase brands that practice CSR. *

Strongly Disagree ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 Strongly Agree

I feel bad when people speak ill of brands (like Tata Tea, ITC Ltd, Surf, Whisper, Horlicks and Nestle), since they practice CSR sincerely. *

Strongly Disagree ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 Strongly Agree

I consider myself to be loyal to brands that practice CSR, since they are interested in doing more, than just making a profit by selling me a product. *

Strongly Disagree ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 Strongly Agree

I will not buy other brands if a similar brand, which is associated with CSR activities, is available. *

Strongly Disagree ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 Strongly Agree

I am willing to pay slightly more for a brand/product that practices CSR if I need to. *

Strongly Disagree ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 Strongly Agree

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Factors and Demographics

To what extent do you agree with the following statements: (1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree)

(CSR Factors - FMCG brands)

It makes sense to me that FMCG companies (like Nestle, P&G, HUL) carry out CSR activities. *

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

I believe that carrying out CSR activities should be complementary to the FMCG company's core business. *

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

I believe that there should be a logical fit between the core business of a company and the CSR activities that it carries out. *

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

General

Demographics

What is your age? *

- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 45-54
- ☐ 55+

What is your gender? *

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other: _____

What is your occupation? *

Choose ▼

Which of these describes your income last year? *

- ☐ Less than Rs. 2,50,000
- ☐ Rs. 2,50,000 - Rs. 5,00,000
- ☐ Rs. 5,00,000 - Rs. 7,50,000
- ☐ Rs. 7,50,000 - Rs. 10,00,000
- ☐ More than Rs. 10,00,000
- ☐ Prefer not to say

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B. Data from SPSS.

Cronbach's alpha for research objective 1.

*All data (N=89):

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	89	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	89	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Reliability Statistics		
	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardize	N of Items
Cronbach's Alpha	d Items	
.741	.740	3

**Part of data set aside (N=72):

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	72	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	72	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Reliability Statistics		
	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardize	N of Items
Cronbach's Alpha	d Items	
.693	.689	3

Which could have been analysed also as,

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	72	80.9
	Excluded ^a	17	19.1
	Total	89	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Reliability Statistics		
	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardize	N of Items
Cronbach's Alpha	d Items	
.693	.689	3

In either case, the results come out to be the same.

Cronbach's alpha for research objective 2.

*All data (N=89)

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	89	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	89	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Reliability Statistics		
	Cronbach's Alpha Based on	
Cronbach's Alpha	Standardized Items	N of Items
.858	.858	11

**Part of data set aside (N=72)

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	72	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	72	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Reliability Statistics		
	Cronbach's Alpha Based on	
Cronbach's Alpha	Standardized Items	N of Items
.855	.854	11