

Analyzing the Roles of Trust, Commitment, and Brand Image in the Bottled Water Industry

Farhan Helmi Alvindoansyah Siregar, Muhammad Anggraito, Pamela Ayu Otto Libing, Sarah Achsanti Silalahi

Universitas Prasetiya Mulya, Jl. R.A. Kartini, RT.14/RW.6, Cilandak Bar., Kec. Cilandak, Kota Jakarta Selatan, Daerah Khusus Ibukota Jakarta 12430, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

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Partial least square structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM).

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) plays a significant role in marketing activities within the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods sector. The impact of customers' perception of CSR on their purchase intentions is influenced by intermediaries and specific situations. This research aims to explore methods for bottled drinking water companies to shape and influence customer behavior towards consistent support. By harnessing CSR perception, building trust, fostering commitment, and enhancing brand image, these companies can achieve this goal effectively. To achieve this objective, the researchers conducted an online survey among a sample of customers in Indonesia. The collected data was analyzed using linear regression analysis, which allowed for a thorough examination of the relationships between variables. CSR perception has a positive effect on trust, commitment, and brand image. Brand image and commitment have a positive effect on purchase intention, while trust does not.

Kata Kunci:

Persepsi risiko,
Modal sosial,
Kualitas informasi,
Partial least square structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM).

SARI PATI

Tanggung jawab sosial perusahaan memainkan peran penting dalam kegiatan pemasaran di sektor Barang Konsumen yang Cepat Bergerak. Dampak persepsi pelanggan tentang CSR pada niat pembelian mereka dipengaruhi oleh perantara dan situasi spesifik. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi metode untuk perusahaan air minum botol untuk membentuk dan mempengaruhi perilaku pelanggan menuju dukungan yang konsisten. Dengan memanfaatkan persepsi CSR, membangun kepercayaan, mendorong komitmen, dan meningkatkan citra merek, perusahaan ini dapat mencapai tujuan ini secara efektif. Untuk mencapai tujuan ini, para peneliti melakukan survei online di antara sampel pelanggan di Indonesia. Data yang dikumpulkan dianalisis menggunakan analisis regresi linear, yang memungkinkan untuk pemeriksaan menyeluruh hubungan antara variabel. Persepsi tanggung jawab sosial perusahaan (CSR) memiliki efek positif pada kepercayaan, komitmen, dan citra merek. Gambaran merek dan komitmen memiliki efek positif pada niat membeli, sedangkan kepercayaan tidak.

Corresponding author:
farhanhelmi.siregar@gmail.com



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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, business ethics and CSR are important for companies as they can bring strategic advantages, meet consumer demand for ethical products, and inspire consumer purchasing (Kuokkanen & Sun, 2019). This is primarily due to consumers' preference for consumption experiences that are both responsible and sustainable (Ahn and Kwon, 2020). This demand is driven by several factors, including increased awareness of environmental and social issues, concerns about the impact of business activities on communities and society, and a desire for more ethical and transparent business practices (De Grosbois, 2016; Ghaderi et al., 2019, as cited in Ahn & Kwon, 2020).

Many researchers have previously investigated this subject matter. For instance, Li and Xing (2009) propose a conceptual framework that highlights three key points: first, how CSR can enhance a company's image; second, the impact of CSR on customer trust; and third, how CSR leads to increased customer loyalty. Another study by Abbas et al. (2018) found that positive perception of a CSR leads to increased customer engagement, fostering loyalty, word-of-mouth promotion, and active feedback. Furthermore, Ahn and Kwon (2020) indicate that the way customers perceive CSR does not immediately impact their intention to make purchases. What's noteworthy is that behavior intentions are only influenced through the enhancement of trust and commitment.

The fast-moving consumer goods industry has recognized the importance of CSR in shaping consumer perceptions and purchase intentions (Hanaysha, 2018). CSR can present a distinctive proposition that sets a company apart from its competitors and establishes a unique position in the market (Du et al., 2010b). Another study suggests that implementing CSR practices and communicating them appropriately can improve customer loyalty in the dairy products market (Moisescu, 2015).

While several studies have researched the impact of

CSR activities and their relationship with various variables influencing purchase intention, limited research exists concerning the impact of CSR on a company's brand image. Therefore, conducting further research is vital to identify extra elements that could work as intermediaries between CSR practices and positive outcomes, aiming to enhance their advantages.

This research intends to analyze how the perception of CSR directly influences trust, commitment, brand image, and purchase intention within the context of the Bottled Water Industry in Indonesia. Additionally, it seeks to evaluate how trust, commitment, and brand image subsequently affect purchase intention. Furthermore, the study aims to explore how trust, commitment, and CSR might act as mediators in this relationship.

Literature Review

Cognitive Consistency Theory

The theory focuses on individual responses visualized in individual minds to new information that could affect their consistency on prior beliefs (Kruglanski et al., 2018). In relation to CSR initiative, cognitive consistency theory has the capability to explain that CSR affects consumer perception to develop an overall behavior to brand (Bartikowski & Berens, 2021). To explain further, previous study that adopt cognitive consistency theory to analyze the relations between CSR Activities and consumer behavior (Ahn & Kwon, 2020) found that CSR initiatives generates certain judgment on the brand, depending on the outcome, to consumer behavior that could amplifies one emotion and reduce the other emotion. From the perspective of the consumer, another study that used cognitive consistency theory found out that consumers who have a strong environmental beliefs will adjust their behavior to lean toward brands that produce more sustainable and environmentally friendly products and influence people around them to adjust their behavior (Leonidou et al., 2010). Cognitive Consistency Theory also able to explain the relation between

CSR initiative and variable used by the authors, for example in relations between CSR initiative and commitment, consumer is more committed in consuming products from a brand when they build a positive relationship initiated by the brand initiatives (Ahn & Kwon, 2020).

Corporate Social Responsibility

(Donaldson & Walsh, 2015) stated that the main purpose of business is to increase prosperity for all instead of just maximizing profit. CSR is crucial for a brand in effort to follow previously mentioned purposes. CSR itself did not have a one binding definition due to broad interpretations, for example, some parties could limit the definition to legal compliance, and some could interpret CSR as ethical responsibilities (Votaw, 1972). Prior studies has attempted to define CSR from time to time, (Eilbirt & Parker, 1973) use the analogy of 'good neighborhood', while (Drucker, 1984) defined CSR as an effort to score a positive outcome for a brand from socio-economic problems, and International Organization for Standardization (ISO) through ISO 26000:2010 Guidance on Social Responsibility provide detailed definition which is organization responsibilities on their impacts on society and improvement that help sustainable development progress, ensure health and welfare of society, and complies with law and international norms. ISO 26000: 2010 also explained that human rights, labor practice, environment, fair operating practices, consumer, and community development is the core of CSR.

Among all stakeholders that are influenced by a brand CSR initiatives, consumer of brand products is the most significantly influenced by CSR initiatives (Sen & Bhattacharya. 2004). (Mohammed & Rashid. 2016) highlights the importance of mediating factors to determine CSR success and argue that CSR influences may be not directly related to consumer. To prove the statement, authors refer to a prior study, where CSR

relationship to consumer intended behavior is mediated by several factors, such as purchase intention and recommendation (Deng & Xu. 2017). another study find out that CSR is able to affect a brand image, trust, and other positive outcomes (Islam et.al.2021) where the high consumer trust then have a positive effect on consumer intention to purchase brand products (Hanks and Mattila. 2016). (Ahn & Kwon. 2020) findings stated that without mediating effect, the significance of CSR toward consumer intended behavior is low and advised future research to provide various mediators when analyzing the relationship between CSR and behavioral intention.

The Roles of CSR Perception in Consumer Attitudes and Behaviors

The Role of CSR in Influencing Consumer Trust

Trust in the business context means how much customers believe and feel confident in a company, its products, and its advice (Panniello et al., 2016). When companies engage in activities that help society, consumers tend to have more trust in them. This implies that a company's dedication to social responsibility has a positive impact on the level of trust people have in it (Maican, 2015). Castro-González et al. (2021) suggest that engaging in CSR activities can strengthen an organization's credibility and foster trust among consumers. As a result, this has the capacity to influence the decisions consumers make when it comes to their purchases. Moreover, Peters (2014) explains the process of building trust and sustainable relationships can be facilitated by the strategic implementation of CSR practices within an organization. In the context of this research, the authors hypothesize that effective CSR initiatives are linked to customers' tendency to develop a sense of trust.

H1: Customers' positive perception of the Bottled Drinking Water Industry's CSR activities has a positive and significant impact on customer trust.

The Role of CSR in Influencing Consumer Commitment

Customers' propensity to build a mutually beneficial relationship and maintain a long-term relationship with a business is referred to as "commitment" (Su et al., 2017). The cognitive consistency theory (Heider, 1946) states that people maintain psychological consistency by striking a balance between their assessment and perception. A person who views CSR initiatives favorably, for instance, is more likely to see the company's actions favorably than a person who does not. People who have a positive perception of CSR ultimately want to develop a favorable opinion of the CSR-related initiatives of a firm. Sen and Bhattacharya (2001) proposed that in order to achieve a high degree of commitment, a firm must have a positive consumer view of its CSR because this can generate positive customer responses, which in turn can result in commitment. Additionally, Bartikowski and Walsh (2011) discovered a strong mediation role for commitment in the connection between consumers' perceptions and their civic engagement.

A quality connection necessitates commitment in order to develop a continual behavioral intention (Caceres and Pappas, 2007; Sousa and Alves, 2019). According to Dean (2007), customer commitment generates favorable word-of-mouth, patronage, and intention to refer. Bartikowski and Walsh (2011) discovered a substantial relationship between commitment and CSR perception. Customers' positive reactions are increased by CSR perceptions, and this increases their loyalty to a business. Brand loyalty may benefit from a positive perception of environmental CSR. Customers who think favorably of environmental CSR in hotels, for instance, are more likely to believe that the hotel enhances the quality of its offerings and offers sustainable

assistance. Thus, the following theory is developed in light of the literature.

Positive customer impressions of a firm further shape meaningful consumer-business identification, according to social identification theory (Greene, 2004). In this scenario, the company is seen as having similar characteristics and values to the customer. This study shows that consumer commitment to a trusted firm results from consumers' identification with the company being encouraged by their trust in its CSR actions (Fatma et al., 2018).

The results of previous research (Chu and Chen, 2019; Lam et al., 2010; Rather et al., 2022) are in line with these findings. Thus, the subsequent theory is proposed.

H2: Customers' positive perception of Bottled Drinking Water Industry's CSR activities positively and significantly influences commitment.

The Role of CSR in Influencing Brand Image

CSR could become the initiative that increases positive outcomes for a brand performance, including its reputation and brand image (Wang et al., 2020). The definition of brand image is consumer perception on the brand characteristics that are implanted in the consumer mind. Prior studies highlight the importance of brand image and argue consumer perception of product value is influenced by positive brand image (Cretu & Brodie, 2005). The importance of brand image to consumer behavior is to strengthen consumer retention, such as repeat buying, recommendation, and desire to pay more for that brand product (Othman & Hindi, 2015). Previous studies found that if CSR activities impact society and the environment in general can make consumers have a favorable behavior toward the brand and its product (Araujo et al., 2023).

CSR is one of the tools for a brand to plant a point of difference for its products with competitors by establishing a positive brand image to the consumer (Hsu, 2012). Previous studies also find out CSR activities are able to strengthen the

relationship between brands and their consumers (Ricks, 2005). To keep a positive brand image through CSR, brands must position CSR as a routine initiative (Porter & Kramer, 2006). In the context of bottled drinking water brands, which its CSR activities focus on minimize adverse environmental effects, another study found that voluntary activities to promote environmental sustainability can increase favorable brand image from consumer perspective (Minjung et.al., 2020). As a conclusion from previously mentioned literature on Brand Image and CSR, below are the hypothesis:

H3: Customers' positive perception of Bottled Drinking Water Industry's CSR activities positively and significantly influences brand image.

Roles of Consumer Trust, Commitment, and Brand Image on Behavioral Intention

Numerous studies have established a positive association between consumer trust and purchase intention. Consumer trust is a fundamental factor that drives purchase intention (Ha-Brookshire & Bhaduri, 2014). Consumers are more likely to engage in purchasing products or services from a company they trust and perceive as reliable (Chen et al., 2021). Furthermore, trust is also influenced by the perception of the company's commitment to CSR activities (Al-Hadrami & Hidayat, 2019). Consumers who perceive a company as committed to CSR are more likely to trust the company, which in turn positively influences their purchase intention (Zhang & Ahmad, 2021). Building on prior research, this study formulates the hypothesis:

H4: Trust positively and significantly influences customer behavioral intention.

The commitment may play a vital role in relationship between CSR perception and behavioral intention. When consumers perceive a company as committed to CSR, they are more likely

to develop a sense of commitment toward the brand (Valipour et al., 2020). This sense of commitment then positively influences their behavioral intention, leading to an increased likelihood of purchasing products or services from the company (Kuchinka et al., 2018). As a result, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Commitment positively and significantly influences customer behavioral intention.

Research indicates that a company's brand image is improved in the eyes of consumers when it participates in corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, such as environmental protection or charitable donations (Gong et al., 2023). According to Li et al. (2020), a favorable brand image confers a competitive advantage and generates favorable behavioral intentions, such as a higher propensity to make a purchase. Thus, the following theory might be put forth: brand image positively and significantly influence the relationship between purchase intention and CSR perception:

H6: Brand Image positively and significantly influences customer behavioral intention.

This study aims to evaluate the impact of the Indonesian bottled water industry's impression of CSR on trust, commitment, brand image, and purchase intention. Furthermore, this study aims to explore the mediating function of commitment and trust in the industry-specific relationship between CSR perception and purchase intention. The conceptual paradigm proposed by the study is depicted in Figure 1.

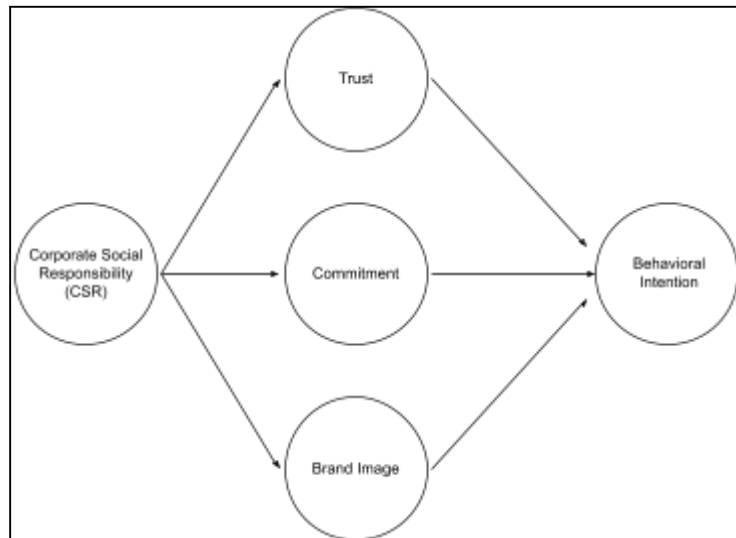


Figure 1.
Proposed conceptual model

METHODS

Data Collection

This study uses the measurement from an established list of questionnaire questions from peer-reviewed literature. Before adopting the questions, necessary adjustment and translation from language used in the literature, English, to Indonesian, with purpose to ensure the questions are easier to understand by our samples. For collecting the necessary data to test the hypothesis, an online survey platform, Google Form, was used with consideration that the platform is easy to access, and spread the questionnaire to our samples who are consumers of two major brands of bottled drinking water. The data collection process through online surveys started from Saturday, 8 July 2023 to 16 August 2023. Questionnaire includes two filter questions which ask if the targeted sample consumed bottled drinking water last month, and if the candidate consumed bottled drinking water from two major brands who actively showed their CSR initiatives.

Samples who consumed bottled drinking

water last month from two major brands in Indonesia are allowed to progress further in this research. With the target of 300 filtered samples, total 390 samples collected during the period mentioned before, with 314 samples passed the filter questions. In order to ensure our samples understand more about the question, definitions for some words that need more context are added in several questions. For example, when the questions want to measure *keberlanjutan* (Sustainability in Indonesian) the definition of that word in the context of our research is added. As seen in Table 1, From 390 samples, 76 decided to be omitted during the data cleansing process, leaving 314 as valid samples. The authors use eight questions as a profiling method, including, gender, age range, education level, monthly income, occupation, domicile, bottled drinking water consumption frequency, and types of bottled drinking water packaging. Gender profile consists of, 42.4% women, 57.6% male, age group 46.5% 25-34, 24.8% 18-24, 18.2% 35-49, and 10.5% over 50. Samples with high school education level became the majority with 43%, followed by bachelor degree 40.8%, 8% diploma,

76% master degree, and 0.6% doctoral degree. For monthly income, 50% below Rp5.000.000. 26.4% above Rp10.000.000, and 23.6% in the Rp5.000.000 to Rp10.000.000 range, with the majority of samples employed with 68.5%. The majority of samples originated from the Jakarta Metropolitan Area. For consumption frequency, nearly half of samples, 41.7% consume bottled drinking water more than 10 per month, 36% consume between 5-10 per month, and 22.3% consume less than 5 per month, and the majority of samples, 98.1%, consume plastic bottled drinking water.

Measures

The authors use a total of 17 measurement items to assess five criteria. Research participants' opinions of the CSR activities in the bottled

drinking water business were ascertained using the two questions (trust and commitment) borrowed from previous studies (De Grosbois, 2016; Ghaderi et al., 2019, as mentioned in Ahn & Kwon, 2020). Four elements of brand image are derived from Araujo et al. (2023)'s work. As in (Ahn & Kwon, 2020), items from (Ajzen, 1985) were used to measure behavioral intention. The adopted items were assessed using a seven-point Likert scale, where 1 represents Strongly Disagree and 7 indicates Strongly Agree.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To look into the link between the variables, a regression analysis was performed, as indicated in the conceptual framework in Figure 1. Exploratory factor analysis and reliability results are provided in Tables 2.

Variable	Frequency	%	Variable	Frequency	%
Gender			Education		
Male	181	58	High-school graduate	135	43
Female	133	42	Vocational school Four-year college	25	8
Age			Postgraduate degree	128	41
18-24	78	25		26	9
25-34	146	46	Monthly bottled water consumption		
35-49	57	18	< 5 times	70	22
>50	33	11	5 - 10 times	113	36
Income			> 10 times	131	42
< Rp 5.000.000	157	50	Types of bottle		
> Rp10.000.000	83	26	Plastic		
Rp5.000.000-10.000.000	74	24	Glass	308	98
				6	2

Table 1. Sociodemographic background of the sample

Construct / Factor	Item	Factor Loading	KMO	Cronbach's α
Corporate Social Responsibility	csr1	0.934	0.728	0.920
	csr2	0.954		
	csr3	0.899		
Trust	trust1	0.942	0.750	0.918
	trust2	0.927		
	trust3	0.911		
Commitment	com1	0.896	0.742	0.876
	com2	0.902		
	com3	0.887		
Brand Image	bi1	0.891	0.735	0.893
	bi2	0.930		
	bi3	0.903		
Behavioral Intention	intent1	0.939	0.874	0.960
	intent2	0.948		
	intent3	0.954		
	intent4	0.941		

Table 2. Exploratory factor analysis and reliability results

The five variables were put to the test of their validity using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). For every variable, the Bartlett's and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) tests were used. All of the variables in Table 2 have values larger than 0.5, suggesting that the data is appropriate for factor analysis. Each variable's Cronbach's alpha value is higher than the required minimum of 0.70, suggesting internal consistency among the variables. Stated differently, the variables are measuring the same thing, thus the data is trustworthy. This indicates that the underlying factors associated with the five variables can be found using EFA.

Relation		p-value	Effect	Adjusted R-squared	Conclusion
Corporate Social Responsibility → Trust	Social	<0.001	Positive	63.5%	CSR has a strong and statistically significant impact on trust.
Corporate Social Responsibility → Commitment	Social	<0.001	Positive	40.8%	CSR has a positive and statistically significant impact on commitment.
Corporate Social Responsibility → Brand Image	Social	<0.001	Positive	37.4%	CSR positively and significantly influences brand image.
Trust, Commitment, Brand Image → Purchase Intention		<0.001	Commitment & Brand Image positive; Trust not significant	46.4%	Commitment & brand image positively influence purchase intention; trust does not significantly affect it.

Table 3. The regression analysis result

The regression analysis revealed a highly significant relationship between CSR and Trust (Table 3): The ANOVA table indicated that the regression model was highly statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). Moreover, the CSR variable exhibited a positive and significant effect on trust ($p < 0.001$). Approximately 63.5% of the variance in trust could be explained by the independent variable, as suggested by the adjusted R-squared value. These findings indicate that CSR has a strong and statistically significant impact on trust. Companies that actively engage in CSR tend to garner higher levels of customer trust. Additionally, the high R-squared value implies that a substantial proportion of variability in trust can be accounted for by factors related to CSR activities.

The regression analysis results reveal a statistically significant relationship between CSR and commitment (Table 3) : The ANOVA table indicates that the regression model is highly significant ($p < 0.001$). Furthermore, it was found that there is a positive and significant effect of CSR on commitment ($p < 0.001$). The adjusted R-squared value suggests that approximately 40.8% of the variance in commitment can be explained by the independent variable, CSR. In conclusion, these findings indicate that CSR has a positive and statistically significant impact on commitment.

The association between CSR and brand image as determined by regression analysis is shown in Table 3: The ANOVA table shows that the regression model is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). Brand image is positively and significantly impacted by the CSR variable ($p < 0.001$). According to the corrected R-squared, CSR accounts for about 37.4% of the variation in brand perception. These results show that CSR has a favorable and significant impact on brand image. Businesses that place a high priority on corporate social responsibility are more likely to have positive consumer perceptions of their

brands.

A statistically significant association between Trust, Commitment, Brand Image, and Purchase Intention is revealed by the findings of the regression analysis (Table 3): The regression model is significant ($p < 0.001$), as the ANOVA table shows. Only Commitment and Brand Image, out of the three predictors, significantly positively affect purchase intention ($p < 0.05$). However, there is no statistically significant relationship between Trust and purchase intention ($p > 0.05$). According to the modified R-squared, the independent factors account for roughly 46.4% of the variance in purchase intention. In summary, our research indicates that commitment and brand image have a favorable impact on purchase intentions as per this model, however trust does not seem to have a substantial impact on buy intentions.

Limitations and future studies

Some limitation of the current research is that it did not compare the effects of different types of CSR activities. Future research should consider comparing how different types of CSR activities within the Bottled Water Industry in Indonesia affect purchase intention. Furthermore, future studies could also explore the moderating effect of customer awareness on the relationship between CSR and purchase intention in other industries or in different geographical contexts.

Furthermore, this study had a limited sample size consisting only of customers in Indonesia and mostly in the Jakarta Metropolitan Area (Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi). Therefore, caution should be exercised when generalizing these findings to a larger population or different cultural contexts.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATION

This study's practical implications shows the CSR role for the Bottled Drinking Water Industry in Indonesia is significant in brand performance. Brands in the previously mentioned industry should ensure that their CSR initiatives are in line with consumer beliefs on what is right, whether it could be community development or environmental sustainability. The study emphasizes variables between CSR and behavioral intention can also become the guide for brands in measuring CSR performance on brand performance in terms of consumer retention and buying intention, where the effect of CSR is influencing consumer commitment and brand images, and both aspects then influence consumer behavioral intention. This is important to ensure the brand did not underestimate the CSR effects on brand performance due to unable to find significant relations between CSR and behavioral intention.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study's findings provided evidence in favor of brand image's role in the relationship between consumers' purchase intentions and CSR in the bottled water industry. Second, the findings demonstrated that customers' increased level of CSR consciousness in the bottled water sector favorably affects the chain interaction between CSR, brand image, and purchase intention. Thirdly, theoretical analysis indicates that these results indicate that CSR perception has a significant impact on trust, commitment, and brand image ($p < 0.05$). Furthermore, in this industry, dedication and brand image both have a positive impact on purchase intention ($p < 0.05$). Nonetheless, in the context of Indonesia's bottled water industry, no appreciable positive correlation between trust and

purchase intention is found ($p > 0.05$). These findings align with previous studies that have emphasized the importance of CSR perception in shaping consumer behavior and purchase intentions.

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