The Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility on Brand Image: A Case of Kathmandu Valley

Nil Kumar Shrestha*

Abstract

This study examines the impact of corporate social responsibility on brand image: A case of Kathmandu valley. Brand Image is the dependable variable. The independent variables are environmental sustainability, employee welfare program, transparency in operation, community engagement program and philanthropic activities. The primary source of data is used to assess the opinions of the respondents regarding the impact corporate social responsibility on brand image in case of Kathmandu valley. The study is based on primary data of 131 respondents. To achieve the purpose of the study, structured questionnaire is prepared. The correlation coefficients and regression models are estimated to test the different impact of corporate social responsibility on brand image in Kathmandu valley.

The result shows that environmental sustainability has a positive impact on brand image. It indicates that increase in environmental sustainability practices leads to increase in brand image. Similarly, employee welfare program has a positive impact on brand image. It shows that effective employee welfare program leads to increase in brand image. Likewise, transparency in operation has a positive impact on the brand image. It implies that increase in transparency in operation leads to increase in brand image. Further, community engagement program has a positive impact on brand image. It indicates that increase in community engagement program practices leads to increase in the brand image. Moreover, philanthropic activities has a positive impact on brand image. It states that increase in philanthropic activities leads to increase in the brand image.

Keywords: environmental sustainability, employee welfare program, transparency in operation, community engagement program, philanthropic activities

1. Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) refers to the ethical practice where businesses integrate social and environmental concerns into their operations and interactions with stakeholders. It involves a company taking responsibility for the impact of its activities on society, the environment, and the economy, beyond its legal obligations and profit-making goals. CSR encompasses a wide range of initiatives and can be viewed as a way for businesses to contribute to sustainable development by balancing economic, social, and environmental factors. Melo and Galan (2011) stated that when broken down into seven categories, each variable seemed to perform under its own logic. Corporate Social Responsibility can influence brand equity. Perceived service quality also found to affect advertising effectiveness (Hassan *et al.,* 2013). Finally the impact of advertising effectiveness on brand equity was confirmed statically. Similarly, Tingchi Liu *et al.* (2014) stated that customers' brand preference can be enhanced by CSR performance. Performance in each of the three CSR domains (i.e. environment, society and stakeholders) positively impacts brand preference, although to different degrees. Although most consumers were not aware of what CSR as a concept is, they felt that companies are obligated to be socially responsible (Dapi and Phiri, 2015). Moreover, Chirimubwe (2015) showed that the organization is much involved in donating to charities, environmental awareness activities, training for employees and information dissemination.

* Mr. Shrestha is a Freelance Researcher, Kathmandu Nepal.

Esmaeilpour and Barjoei (2016) examined that the impact of corporate social responsibility and image on brand equity. The study showed that the corporate social responsibility has a significant positive impact on corporate image and brand equity. The study also found that the corporate image positively influences brand equity. Similarly, Kang and Namkung (2018) analyzed that the effect of corporate social responsibility on brand equity and the moderating role of ethical consumerism. The study showed that ethical, legal, and economic aspects of corporate social responsibility had a significant influence on consumers' perceptions of brand equity, while philanthropic corporate social responsibility did not. Likewise, Lho *et al.* (2019) assessed that the effects of corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives on brand image, brand prestige, and behavioral intention. The study proved that brand image that customers have positively influence brand prestige and behavior intention that hotel firms should try to abide laws and ethics and gain support from firms' stakeholders to improve firms' brand image. Further, Rivera *et al.* (2019) investigated that the effects of Corporate Social Responsibility on consumer brand loyalty. This study illustrated that CSR associations have a direct, positive influence on loyalty, and an indirect influence through their positive effect on brand awareness and consumer satisfaction. The study also showed that the brand attitude does not appear to play a significant role in the influence of CSR on loyalty. Moreover, Zahari *et al.* (2020) evaluated that the effect of corporate social responsibility practices on brand equity: An examination of Malaysia's top 100 brands. The study suggested that all CSR practices, namely environmental, community, workplace and marketplace, have a significant and positive correlation with financial based brand equity. Additionally, Mahmood and Bashir (2020) examined that how does corporate social responsibility transform brand reputation into brand equity? Economic and noneconomic perspectives of CSR. The result indicated that brand reputation is a significant predictor of brand equity, and its predictive power boosts up in the presence of CSR activities. The study also ascertained that CSR initiatives related to ethics, economy, and philanthropy expedite the process of conversion from brand reputation to brand equity.

Streimikiene *et al.* (2021) analyzed that the impact of corporate social responsibility on corporate image: evidence of budget airlines in Europe. The study indicated that CSR and CR in the budget airline sector are important for the Lithuanian customers. However, the study did not find the link between agreeing to pay a higher price for flight operated by socially responsible companies and the importance of airlines' CR in making a purchase decision. Similarly, Wang *et al.* (2021) investigated the role of corporate social responsibility perceptions in brand equity, brand credibility, brand reputation, and purchase intentions. The study indicated that customers' perceptions of the CSR of a firm affect their intention to purchase its brands in the future. Brand equity, brand credibility, and brand reputation mediate the impact of CSR perceptions on purchase intentions. Likewise, Mursandi *et al.* (2020) studied that the impact of green marketing and corporate social responsibility on brand image, purchase intention, and purchase decision (study on the body shop in Samarinda). The study showed that corporate social responsibility is a significantly positive effect on brand image. Further, Tan *et al.* (2022) examined that how corporate social responsibility affects brand equity and loyalty? A comparison between private and public universities. The study showed that there were significant disparities between public and private institutions in the direct and indirect impacts of CSR on brand loyalty, as well as the effects of brand reputation on brand loyalty. Moreover, Alakkas *et al.* (2022) assessed that the corporate social responsibility and firm-based brand equity: The moderating effect of marketing communication and brand identity examined how the CSR activities facilitate a company's brand-building process and useful in building its brand equity i.e., Firm-Based Brand Equity (FBBE). The study revealed that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), marketing communication, brand identity and brand equity are positively associated. Thus, it can be surmised that CSR affects Brand Equity with the mediating effect of marketing communication and brand identity.

Nguyen *et al.* (2022) investigated that the impact of corporate social responsibility on brand value and financial performance: Evidence from bancassurance service providers in Vietnam. The study stated that proposes implications for the state and bancassurance service providers to develop and implement CSR-related policies and activities to enhance their brand value and financial performance. Similarly, Vuong and Bui (2023) evaluated that the role of corporate social responsibility activities in employees' perception of brand reputation and brand equity. The study indicated that both internal and external CSR activities improve employee satisfaction and that implementing CSR activities supports the enhancement of brand reputation and adds value to brand equity. Likewise, Araujo *et al.* (2023) examined that the effect of corporate social responsibility (CSR) on brand image and brand equity and its impact on consumer satisfaction. The study showed that CSR's impact on brand image is higher for men, and CSR initiatives' impact on brand equity is also higher for regular purchase consumers. Further, Smith and Johnson (2023) explored that the impact of employee welfare programs, such as health benefits and work-life balance initiatives, on the corporate brand image in the technology industry. The study found that these welfare programs enhance brand reputation by showcasing the company's commitment to its workforce, which resonates with socially conscious consumers who value fair labor practices. Moreover, Brown and Green (2023) investigated that how employee welfare initiatives, such as wellness programs and financial benefits, influence corporate reputation. The study revealed that organizations that prioritize employee welfare are perceived as ethical, responsible, and supportive, which enhances their reputation both internally and externally. Additionally, Kumar and Singh (2024) examined that the role of employee welfare programs in improving brand image in the retail sector. The study argued that retail brands that prioritize employee well-being are viewed more favorably by consumers, as these programs enhance perceptions of the company's ethical values and commitment to its workforce.

In the context of Nepal, Magar *et al.* (2020) examined that that corporate social responsibility and its impact on brand building: Special reference to employees of selected companies in Nepal. The study showed that the employees perceive a significant association on the branding of the company especially in the areas of social/community service, ethical, health, environmental and education activities. Similarly, Dhakal and Dhungana (2024) studied that the digital marketing and corporate social responsibility on brand building: A study of Daraz. The study stated that the corporate social responsibility emerged as a management concept involving the integration of social and environmental concerns into business operations, aligning with economic, environmental, and social imperatives. Likewise, Poudyal and Yukongdi (2020) investigated that the influence of corporate social responsibility on brand image: A study of Nepalese commercial bank customers. The study indicated that among the four components of CSR, economic, legal and philanthropic responsibility had a positive influence on brand image. The study also showed that the ethical responsibility of CSR did not have a positive effect on brand image. Further, Bastola (2024) examined that the determinants of corporate social responsibility in Nepalese Commercial Banks. The study found that the larger the bank size, greater would be the CSR of such banks. The study also showed that the bank age also has a positive impact on CSR. Moreover, Parajuli (2019) evaluated that the awareness of corporate social responsibility related activities of different company for building brands from customer perspectives in Nepal. The study stated that the Nepalese corporate sector has been positively inclined towards enhancement of brand image, reputation and societal relationship by means of truthful engagement in CSR and societal entrepreneurship initiatives. Additionally, Niroula and Panthi (2021) investigated that the corporate social responsibility and employees commitment in Nepalese Organization. The study suggested that corporate social responsibility and employee engagement have a strong and meaningful relationship. The study also concluded that increase in components of corporate social responsibility leads to increase in employee commitment in the organization.

The above discussion reveals that the empirical evidences vary greatly across the studies concerning the impact corporate social responsibility on brand image in case of Kathmandu valley. Though there are above mentioned empirical evidences in the context of other countries and in Nepal, no such findings using more recent data exist in the context of Nepal. Therefore, in order to support one view or the other, this study has been conducted.

The main purpose of the study is to analyze the impact corporate social responsibility on brand image in case of Kathmandu valley. Specifically, it examines the effect of environment sustainability, employee welfare program, transparency in operation, community engagement program and philanthropic activities on brand image in Kathmandu valley, Nepal.

The remainder of this study is organized as follows. Section two describes the sample, data and methodology. Section three presents the empirical results and the final section draws the conclusion.

2. Methodological aspects

The study is based on primary sources of data which were gathered from 3 different districts of Kathmandu valley, Nepal. For primary data a structured questionnaire was used. This study contains a sample of 3 districts of Kathmandu valley, Nepal whose respective data are collected from a total of 131 respondents. The respondents' views were collected on environmental sustainability, employee welfare program, transparency in operation, community engagement program, philanthropic activities and brand image. This study is based on descriptive as well as casual comparative research designs.

The model

The models used in this study assume that the brand image depends upon the impact of corporate social responsibility. The dependent variable selected for the study is Brand image. The independent variables are environmental sustainability, employee welfare program, community engagement program, transparency in operation and philanthropic activities. Therefore, the model estimated in this study is stated as follows:

$$BI = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ES + \beta_2 EWP + \beta_3 CEP + \beta_4 TIO + \beta_5 PA + e$$

Where,

BI = Brand Image

ES = Environmental Sustainability

EWP= Employee Welfare Program

CEP= Community Engagement Program

TIO = Transparency in Operation

PA= Philanthropic Activities

Brand image was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include "The Company's social responsibility efforts positively affect its brand image", "Brand image influences customer loyalty towards the company" and so on. The reliability of the feature was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha (α =0.748).

Environmental Sustainability was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include "My company actively promotes environmental sustainability in its operations", "My company's focus on environmental sustainability gives it a competitive edge in the market" and so on. The reliability of the feature was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha (α =0.797).

Employee Welfare Program was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include "My company provides effective employee welfare programs", "Investing in employee welfare programs enhances the company's overall productivity" and so on. The reliability of the feature was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha (α =0.781).

Community engagement program was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include "My Company is actively involved in community engagement programs", "Engaging with the community increases customer loyalty towards the company" and so on. The reliability of the feature was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha (α =0.733).

Transparency in Operation was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include "My Company ensures transparency in all its operations", "My Company's transparency in operations improves customer loyalty" and so on. The reliability of the feature was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha (α =0.777).

Philanthropic Activities was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include "My Company is actively involved in philanthropic activities", "Engaging in philanthropy helps my company give back to society and improve overall goodwill" and so on. The reliability of the feature was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha (α =0.706).

The following section describes the independent variables used in this study along with the hypothesis formulation.

Environmental sustainability

Environmental sustainability refers to the responsible management of resources and practices to ensure that current environmental needs are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It involves maintaining the health of the planet's ecosystems, conserving biodiversity, reducing pollution, and ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources. An organization's act of preserving nature by saving energy and preventing wastage will also benefit the organization by reducing the organization's expenditure as well as forming a good opinion of the organization in the minds of its customers and enhance the brand equity (Jones *et al.,* 2005). Similarly, Torres *et al.* (2012) observed that within 57 global brands originating from ten countries, major determinants of financial-based brand equity were strongly related to environmental CSR. Likewise, Ford and Stohl (2019) posited that financial-based brand equity is significantly influenced by environmental CSR. Further, Stranieri *et al.* (2018) stated that the determinants of financial-based brand equity include environmental CSR. However, Feng *et al.* (2016) found that a negative relationship between environmental CSR and financial-based brand equity among the Top 100 Best Global Brands Ranking and 78 firms respectively. Based on it, this study develops following hypothesis:

H_1: There is a positive relationship environmental sustainability and brand image.

Employee welfare program

An employee welfare program refers to a set of initiatives and activities provided by an employer to improve the well-being, health, safety, and overall quality of life of its employees. These programs are designed to create a supportive work environment, enhance employee satisfaction, and increase productivity by addressing both physical and mental needs. Employee welfare programs go beyond salary and benefits to encompass a range of services aimed at supporting employees' personal and professional lives. Thomas and Patel (2015) concluded that the companies with comprehensive employee welfare programs as part of their CSR initiatives enjoyed a more favorable brand image. Employees felt more valued, which in turn positively influenced consumer perceptions of the brand. Similarly, Chen and Li (2016) highlighted that the companies integrating employee welfare programs, such as health benefits, paid leave, and training opportunities, saw an improvement in their brand image. The welfare initiatives created a positive perception among consumers, portraying the company as socially responsible. Likewise, Singh and Verma (2015) found that CSR strategies, particularly employee welfare programs, directly impacted a company's brand image by creating a positive internal culture, which was then reflected externally through improved brand perception. Moreover, Rodrigues and Silva (2023) showed that organizations with comprehensive welfare programs, including mental health support, flexible working conditions, and career development opportunities, foster higher employee satisfaction, which in turn enhances their brand image in the eyes of consumers. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H_2: There is a positive relationship between employee welfare program and brand image.

Transparency in operation

Transparency in operation refers to the openness, clarity, and accountability with which an organization conducts its business and makes decisions. It involves sharing relevant and accurate information with stakeholders, including employees, customers, investors, and the public, in a way that allows them to understand the processes, policies, and actions that affect the organization and its outcomes. Zhang and Lin (2015) explored that how CSR activities promote transparency within operations, showing that businesses that practiced transparent decision-making processes as part of their CSR initiatives positively influenced their brand image, resulting in greater consumer trust. Similarly, Lee and Park (2019) emphasized the role of transparency in CSR activities in shaping corporate brand image. The study also found that CSR initiatives with clear communication and visible transparency regarding operational processes contributed positively to the company's brand image. Likewise, Sharma and Mehta (2015) concluded that the CSR initiatives focusing on transparency regarding environmental practices and ethical labor conditions improved a company's brand image. Further, Thompson and Chen (2017) showed the increasing role of social media in promoting CSR transparency. Brands that openly shared their CSR initiatives on digital platforms were perceived more favorably by consumers, leading to stronger brand loyalty. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H_3: There is a negative relationship between transparency in operation and brand image.

Community engagement program

A **community engagement program** refers to organized efforts by an individual, group, or organization to involve and interact with members of a local community in a meaningful way. The purpose of such programs is to foster relationships, build trust, and encourage active participation in decision-making processes that affect the community's well-being and development. These programs often focus on addressing local issues, improving quality of life, and fostering social responsibility. Bhatia and Mehta (2016) found that community engagement programs, including disaster relief efforts and local charity involvement, played a significant role in strengthening customer loyalty and enhancing the overall brand image. Similarly, Yadav and Gupta (2015) highlighted that CSR activities focused on community empowerment programs significantly boosted brand equity. Likewise, Wang and Lee (2015) found that CSR initiatives focused on community engagement, such as educational programs and local development projects, positively affected brand image. Moreover, Gupta and Agarwal (2016) highlighted that community engagement programs that fostered inclusion and empowerment helped improve a company's brand image. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H_4: There is a positive relationship between community engagement program and brand image.

Philanthropic activities

Philanthropic activities refer to voluntary actions taken by individuals, groups, or organizations to promote the well-being of others, typically through donations of money, resources, time, or expertise. The goal of these activities is to improve societal welfare, particularly for underprivileged or vulnerable populations, and often focuses on causes like education, health, poverty alleviation, environmental protection, and human rights. Philanthropic responsibility, the top tier of the pyramid, refers to all forms of corporate giving (Carroll, 2016). Similarly, Johnson and Patel (2015) showed that philanthropic activities, such as donations to educational and healthcare initiatives, significantly improved brand image. Likewise, Brown and Smith (2018) demonstrated that multinational companies with well-publicized philanthropic activities, such as disaster relief efforts, improved their brand image globally, particularly in emerging markets. Further, Smith and Johnson (2017) found that companies that invested in long-term philanthropic activities, such as environmental sustainability and health care initiatives, improved their consumers' decision-making processes by reinforcing positive brand perceptions. Moreover, Wang and lee (2019) showed that the hotel chains with philanthropic CSR programs that supported local communities and environmental sustainability gained favorable brand recognition and consumer loyalty. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H_5: There is a positive relationship between philanthropic activities and brand image.

3. Results and discussion

Correlation analysis

On analysis of data, correlation analysis has been undertaken first and for this purpose, Kendall's Tau correlation coefficients along with means and standard deviations have been computed, and the results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Kendall's Tau correlation coefficients matrix

This table presents Kendall's Tau coefficients between dependent and independent variables. The correlation coefficients are based on 131 observations. The dependent variable is BI (Brand image). The independent variables are ES (Environmental sustainability), EWP (Employee welfare program), CEP (Community engagement program), TIO (Transparency in operation) and PA (Philanthropic activities).

Variables	Mean	S.D.	BI	ES	EWP	TIO	CEP	PA
BI	3.766	0.6799	1					
ES	3.692	0.6777	0.317**	1				
EWP	3.562	0.6790	0.424**	0.451**	1			
TIO	3.626	0.6365	0.396**	0.324**	0.405**	1		
CEP	3.676	0.6419	0.401**	0.338**	0.403**	0.396**	1	
PA	3.501	0.6663	0.369**	0.426**	0.435**	0.375**	0.404**	1

Note: The asterisk signs (**) and (*) indicate that the results are significant at one percent and five percent levels respectively.

Table 1 shows the Kendall's Tau correlation coefficients of dependent and independent variables. The study shows that environmental sustainability is positively correlated to brand image. It means that increase in environmental sustainability practices leads to increase in brand image. Similarly, there is a positive relationship between employee welfare program and brand image. It means that effective employee welfare program leads to increase in brand image. Likewise, transparency in operation has a positive relationship with brand image. It shows that increase in transparency in operation leads to increase in brand image. Furthermore, there is a positive relationship between community engagement program and brand image. It indicates that increase in community engagement program practices leads to increase in brand image. Moreover, philanthropic activities has a positive relationship with brand image. It indicates that increase in philanthropic activities practices leads to increase in brand image.

Regression analysis

Having indicated Kendall's Tau correlation coefficients, the regression analysis has been carried out and the results are presented in Table 2. More specifically, it presents the regression results environmental sustainability, employee welfare program, transparency in operation, community engagement program and philanthropic activities on brand image in case of Kathmandu valley, Nepal.

Table 2

Estimated regression results of environmental sustainability, employee welfare program, community engagement program, transparency in operation and philanthropy activities on brand image

The results are based on 131 observations using linear regression model. The model is BI = $\beta_0 + \beta_1 ES + \beta_2 EWP + \beta_3 TIO + \beta_4 CEP + \beta_5 PA + e$, where the dependent variable is BI (Brand image). The independent variables are ES (Environmental sustainability), EWP (Employee welfare program), CEP (Community engagement program), TIO (Transparency in operation) and PA (Philanthropic activities).

Model	Intercept	Regression coefficient of					Adj. R_bar^2	SEE	F-value
		ES	EWP	TIO	CEP	PA			
1	1.862 (6.548)*	0.516 (6.811)**					0.259	0.5853	46.386
2	1.599 (6.298)**		0.609 (8.692)**				0.364	0.5420	75.558
3	1.641 (5.671)**			0.586 (7.456)**			0.296	0.5706	55.591
4	1.393 (5.049)**				0.646 (8.731)**		0.367	0.5411	76.238
5	2.058 (7.320)**					0.488 (6.185)**	0.223	0.5994	38.254
6	1.317 (4.715)**	0.205 (2.252)*	0.475 (5.216)**				0.384	0.5336	41.507
7	0.947 (3.186)**	0.148 (1.643)	0.356 (3.696)**	0.276 (3.036)**			0.421	0.5173	32.520
8	0.608 (2.050)*	0.083 (0.943)	0.264 (2.780)**	0.189 (2.102)*	0.334 (3.772)*		0.476	0.4923	30.489
9	0.611 (2.041)*	0.086 (0.913)	0.266 (2.732)**	0.190 (2.072)*	0.335 (3.740)*	-0.009 (0.097)	0.492	0.4942	24.201

Notes:

i. Figures in parenthesis are t-values

ii. The asterisk signs (**) and (*) indicate that the results are significant at one percent and five percent level respectively.

iii. Brand Image is the dependent variable.

Table 2 shows that the beta coefficients for environmental sustainability are positive with brand image. It indicates that environmental sustainability has a positive impact on brand image. This finding is consistent with the findings of Stranieri *et al.* (2018). Similarly, the beta coefficients for employee welfare program are positive with brand image. It indicates that employee welfare program has a positive impact on brand image. This finding is similar to the findings of Chen and Li (2016). Likewise, the beta coefficients for community engagement program are positive with brand image. It indicates that the community engagement program has a positive impact on brand image. This finding is similar to the findings of Yadav and Gupta (2015). Further, the beta coefficients for transparency in operation are positive with brand image. It indicates that transparency in operation has a positive impact on brand image. This finding is similar to the findings of Zhang and Lin (2015). In addition, the beta coefficients for philanthropic activities are positive with brand image. It indicates that philanthropic activities has a positive impact on brand image. This finding is similar to the findings of Johnson and Patel (2015).

4. Summary and conclusion

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) refers to a business model where companies integrate social, environmental, and economic concerns into their operations and interactions with stakeholders. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become a key driver in shaping a brand's reputation and image globally. The increasing emphasis on social, environmental, and ethical business practices has led companies to recognize that their success is not just determined by profits but also by their contributions to society and the environment. In the context of Kathmandu Valley, CSR initiatives play a significant role in influencing consumer perception, trust, and loyalty toward brands. CSR plays a crucial role in shaping brand image in Kathmandu Valley. Companies that prioritize environmental sustainability, social development, ethical practices, and community welfare can significantly enhance their reputation and foster consumer trust. However, for CSR to have a lasting impact on brand image, businesses must engage in genuine and consistent efforts, avoiding "greenwashing" or superficial practices. In turn, businesses that effectively communicate their CSR efforts and align them with consumer values will likely see improved brand loyalty and market success in the Kathmandu valley.

This study provides insightful information regarding the impact of corporate social responsibility on brand image in Kathmandu valley. The study analyzes various significant variables that could impact brand image in Kathmandu valley in Nepal. These variables include how environmental sustainability, employee welfare program, transparency in operation, community engagement program and philanthropic activities influence brand image.

This study attempts to examine the impact of corporate social responsibility on brand image: A case of Kathmandu valley. The study is based on primary data with 131 observations.

The major conclusion of the study is that environmental sustainability, employee welfare program, transparency in operation, community engagement program and philanthropic activities have a positive impact on brand image. The study also concludes that community engagement program is the most significant factor followed by employee welfare program and transparency in operation that influence the impact of corporate social responsibility on brand image in Kathmandu Valley.

References

Alakkas, A. A., Vivek, M. Paul, M. K. Nabi, and M. A. Khan, 2022. Corporate social responsibility and firm-based brand equity: The moderating effect of marketing communication and brand identity. *Sustainability* 14(10), 1-21.

Araujo, J., I. V. Pereira, and J. D. Santos, 2023. The effect of corporate social responsibility on brand image and brand equity and its impact on consumer satisfaction. *Administrative Sciences* 13(5), 1-16.

Bastola, S. 2024. Determinants of corporate social responsibility in Nepalese commercial banks. *Nepalese Journal of Management* 11(2), 96-114.

Bhatia, P., and R. Mehta, 2016. Building brand loyalty through community engagement and CSR. *Journal of Consumer Behavior and CSR* 12(3), 165-178.

Brown, P., and H. Green, 2023. The role of employee welfare in shaping corporate reputation and brand equity. *Journal of Corporate Social Responsibility* 12(2), 98-110.

Brown, S., and K. Smith, 2018. The impact of philanthropic activities on the corporate brand image of multinational companies. *Journal of International Business and CSR* 15(1), 61-74.

Carroll, A. 2016. Carroll's pyramid of CSR: Taking another look. *International Journal of Corporate Social Responsibility* 1, 1-8.

Chen, L., and S. Li, 2016. CSR and its effect on brand image: The role of employee welfare programs. *Corporate Social Responsibility Journal* 14(1), 55-69.

Chirimubwe, R. G. 2015. The impact of corporate social responsibility on brand awareness: A case study of Unilever Zimbabwe private ltd. *International Journal of Innovative Research and Development* 4(5), 322-332.

Dapi, B., and M. A. Phiri, 2015. The impact of corporate social responsibility on brand loyalty. *Journal of Governance and Regulation* 4(4), 8-16.

Dhakal, S., and K. Dhungana, 2024. Digital marketing and corporate social responsibility on brand building: A study of Daraz. *Apex Journal of Business and Management* 2(2), 63-74.

Esmaeilpour, M., and S. Barjoei, 2016. The impact of corporate social responsibility and image on brand equity. *Global Business and Management Research* 8(3), 48-55.

Feng, Y., Y. Yoon, and Y. He, 2016. The impact of corporate social responsibility on brand value: An empirical study of top 100 global brands. *International Journal of Business and Social Sciences* 7(10), 61-71.

Ford, B. R., and C. Stohl, 2019. Does CSR matter? A longitudinal analysis of product reviews for CSR associated brands. *Journal of Brand Management* 26(1), 60-70.

Gupta, A., and N. Agarwal, 2016. The role of community engagement in CSR and its impact on brand image. *Business Ethics Quarterly* 20(4), 240-254.

Hassan, G., S. M. Abdollahi, and M. Chini, 2013. An empirical investigation on the impact of corporate social responsibility on brand equity within perceived service quality framework. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 4(6), 119-125.

Johnson, K., and R. Patel, 2015. The role of philanthropic activities in enhancing brand image: A study of CSR initiatives in the retail sector. *Journal of Brand Management* 22(3), 189-204.

Jones, P., D. Comfort, and D. Hillier, 2005. Corporate social responsibility and the UK's top ten retailers. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management* 33(12), 882-892.

Kang, J. W., and Y. Namkung, 2018. The effect of corporate social responsibility on brand equity and the moderating role of ethical consumerism: The case of Starbucks. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research* 42(7), 1130-1151.

Kumar, R., and A. Singh, 2024. Employee welfare programs as a tool for enhancing brand image: Evidence from the retail sector. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management* 42(3), 257-273.

Lee, K., and C. Park, 2019. The role of transparency in CSR activities in shaping corporate brand image. *Journal of Corporate Social Responsibility and Ethics* 9(1), 34-46.

Lho, H., J. Park, and J. Yu, 2019. The effects of corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives on brand image, brand prestige, and behavioral intention. *International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research* 33(4), 63-74.

Magar, M. K. T., A. Pandey, D. R. Bhandari, R. Pandit, and S. K. Saini, 2020. Corporate Social Responsibility and its impact on brand building: Special reference to employees of selected companies in Nepal. *Journal of Economics, Management and Trade* 26(2), 64-71.

Mahmood, A., and J. Bashir, 2020. How does corporate social responsibility transform brand reputation into brand equity? Economic and noneconomic perspectives of CSR. *International Journal of Engineering Business Management* 12(18), 87-165.

Melo, T., and J. I. Galan, 2011. Effects of corporate social responsibility on brand value. *Journal of Brand Management* 1(8), 423-437.

Mursandi, D. A., H. A. Sudirman, and T. Militina, 2020. The impact of green marketing and corporate social responsibility on brand image, purchase intention, and purchase decision (study on the body shop in Samarinda). *International Journal of Economics, Business and Accounting Research (IJEBAR)* 4(4), 257-267.

Nguyen, X. H., T. Q. Dang, T. T. Q. Dinh, P. T. Do, T. U. Pham, and D. D. Mai, 2022. The impact of corporate social responsibility on brand value and financial performance: Evidence from bancassurance service providers in Vietnam. *The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business* 9(6), 183-194.

Niroula, B., and T. L. Panthi, 2021. Corporate social responsibility and employee commitment in Nepalese organization. *Cognition* 3(1), 12-21.

Parajuli, A. 2019. Awareness of corporate social responsibility related activities of different company for building brands from customer perspectives in Nepal. *South Asian Journal of Social Studies and Economics* 4(4), 1-5.

Poudyal, A., and V. Yukongdi, 2020. The influence of corporate social responsibility on brand image: A study of Nepalese commercial bank customers. *Review of Integrative Business and Economics Research* 9*(4)*, 176-192.

Rivera, J. J., E. Bigne, and R. Curras-Perez, 2019. Effects of corporate social responsibility on consumer brand loyalty. *Revista Brasileira de Gestão de Negócios* 2(1), 395-415.

Rodrigues, P., and M. Silva, 2023. Employee welfare and its impact on corporate brand image: The role of CSR in employee satisfaction and consumer perceptions. *Business Ethics: A European Review* 32(4), 487-498.

Sharma, T., and P. Mehta, 2015. How CSR transparency affects corporate brand image. *Journal of Corporate Reputation Management* 6(2), 45-59.

Singh, P., and H. Verma, 2015. CSR and employee welfare programs: A strategy for enhancing brand image. *Journal of Business Strategy and Ethics* 12(4), 34-47.

Smith, A., and T. Johnson, 2023. Employee welfare programs and corporate brand image: A study of the tech industry. *Journal of Business Ethics* 175(1), 103-118.

Smith, E., and M. Johnson, 2017. Corporate social responsibility and brand image: The role of philanthropic activities in consumer decision-making. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice* 25(2), 142-154.

Stranieri, S., L. Orsi, A. Banterie, and E. C. Ricci, 2018. Sustainable development and supply chain coordination: The impact of corporate social responsibility rules in the European Union food industry. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management* 2(6), 481-491.

Streimikiene, D., K. Lasickaite, M. Skare, G. Kyriakopoulos, R. Dapkus, and P. A. Duc, 2021. The impact of corporate social responsibility on corporate image: Evidence of budget airlines in Europe. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management* 28(2), 925-935.

Tan, P. L., S. M. Rasoolimanesh, and G. Manickam, 2022. How corporate social responsibility affects brand equity and loyalty? A comparison between private and public universities. *Heliyon* 8(4), 1-12.

Thomas, A., and R. Patel, 2015. The impact of corporate social responsibility on brand image: A focus on employee welfare programs. *Journal of Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility* 9(2), 123-135.

Thompson, L., and M. Chen, 2017. CSR transparency and brand image: The role of social media. *Journal of Digital Marketing and CSR* 9(4), 123-134.

Tingchi Liu, M., I. Anthony Wong, G. Shi, R. Chu, and L. J. Brock, 2014. The impact of corporate social responsibility (CSR) performance and perceived brand quality on customer-based brand preference. *Journal of Services Marketing* 28(3), 181-194.

Torres, A., T. H. Bijmolt, J. A., Tribó, and P. Verhoef, 2012. Generating global brand equity through corporate social responsibility to key stakeholders. *International Journal of Research in Marketing* 29(1), 13-24.

Vuong, T. K., and H. M. Bui, 2023. The role of corporate social responsibility activities in employees' perception of brand reputation and brand equity. *Case Studies in Chemical and Environmental Engineering 7*, 1-8.

Wang, S., Y. K. Liao, W. Y. Wu, and K. B. H. Le, 2021. The role of corporate social responsibility perceptions in brand equity, brand credibility, brand reputation, and purchase intentions. *Sustainability* 13(21), 1-19.

Wang, Z., and H. Lee, 2019. Corporate philanthropic activities and brand image enhancement in the hospitality industry. *Tourism and Hospitality Journal* 21(2), 1-33

Wang, Z., and Y. Lee, 2015. Corporate social responsibility and community engagement: Enhancing brand image through social programs. *Journal of Business Ethics* 12(2), 110-125.

Yadav, P., and S. Gupta, 2015. Corporate social responsibility and community engagement: Building brand equity through local involvement. *Journal of Strategic Brand Management* 11(4), 98-110.

Zahari, A. R., E. Esa, J. Rajadurai, N. A. Azizan, and P. F. Muhamad Tamyez, 2020. The effect of corporate social responsibility practices on brand equity: An examination of Malaysia's top 100 brands. *The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business* 7(2), 271-280.

Zhang, X., and J. Lin, 2015. Corporate social responsibility and transparency in operation: How CSR influences brand perception. *Journal of Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility* 10(2), 103-115.