

The Influence of CSR on Consumer Purchase Intentions in Livestreaming Platforms

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ABSTRACT

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Recent studies have mainly focused on the impact of corporate social responsibility (CSR). However, only a few have examined how CSR influences consumer behavior in the context of live streaming. This study aims to identify the factors affecting consumer's buying intentions during live stream sessions that incorporate CSR elements. It also seeks to assess the influences of people's perceptions of social responsibility to consumer behavior. A quantitative research method was applied, using a survey questionnaire completed by a sample of 750 consumers in Hanoi, Vietnam. The findings indicate that 11 factors significantly influence purchase intention, including: (1) Perception of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), (2) Empathy Effect, (3) Promotion, (4) Brand Equity, (5) Technical Features, (6) Corporate Image, (7) Altruistic Attribution, (8) Swift Guanxi (Reciprocal Favors), (9) Customer Engagement, (10) Perceived Effectiveness, and (11) CSR-CA Belief. This research contributes to guiding businesses in applying these insights to develop their brand image and enhance their CSR practices effectively within the live stream commerce environment.

Keywords: Purchase intention, live stream, corporate social responsibility, perceived CSR, empathy effect.

INTRODUCTION

Factors such as product quality and price remain essential considerations in Vietnamese online shopping behavior, therefore growing consumer awareness of corporate social responsibility (CSR) is becoming a key factor influencing purchase intentions -particularly in live stream shopping. According to NielsenIQ (2024), 95% of online shoppers in Vietnam have made purchases through live streams, highlighting this format as a promising channel for businesses to combine commercial goals with social impact. Initiatives such as the OCOP 4.0 program, which used live streaming to support agricultural rescue efforts (Báo Tin tức, 2023), and live stream-based fundraising during natural disasters, illustrate the increasing integration of CSR in digital commerce. The authors apply an empirical analysis to examine the factors that affect consumer purchase intentions in CSR-oriented live streams, with a particular focus on the role of CSR awareness.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND & RESEARCH MODEL

Perception of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Perception of corporate social responsibility (CSR) has become a crucial factor in building consumer trust and brand loyalty. It not only reflects a company's commitment to social benefits but also plays an essential role in shaping corporate image and reputation (Aguinis & Glavas, 2019; Fatma et al., 2020). Studies have shown that a high perception of CSR can positively influence consumer attitudes, enhance purchase intention, and improve brand recognition (Pham et al., 2020; Sang & Han, 2023). This demonstrates the link between CSR, trust, and consumer affinity towards socially responsible products (Grimmer & Bingham, 2013; Wang et al., 2021). Therefore, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Perception of corporate social responsibility (CSR) positively influences altruistic attribution.

H12: Perception of corporate social responsibility (CSR) positively influences corporate image.

Empathy Effect

The empathy effect can be understood as the influence of empathy on perception and behavior, particularly in e-commerce. According to Decety & Svetlova (2012), empathy is the ability to feel and understand others' emotions, playing a critical role in both social and business interactions. Chen & Guo (2021) and Wang (2021) indicate that empathy contributes to socially-oriented consumer behavior through emotional interaction and goodwill, especially in live stream commerce campaigns. However, research on the relationship between empathy and altruistic attribution in the live stream context remains limited. Thus, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H2: Empathy effect has a positive impact on altruistic attribution.

Promotion

Promotion, a core component of the marketing mix (McCarthy & Perreault, 1964), plays a vital role in stimulating consumer demand and increasing sales. According to Borden (1965), promotion includes advertising, sales promotion, events, and public relations to enhance product visibility and market presence. Theoretical foundations suggest that promotion not only provides tangible benefits but also creates emotional value, which fosters trust and purchase motivation (Aydinli et al., 2014; Bhatti, 2018; Peng et al., 2019). In e-commerce, especially live streaming, promotion boosts interaction and conversion rates, while integrating CSR to build trust and perceived value (Peng et al., 2019). However, research on promotion within CSR-integrated live streams is still limited. Hence, this study proposes:

H3: Promotion has a positive impact on swift guanxi

Technical features

Technical features play an increasingly important role in shaping consumer experience and promoting online shopping behavior, especially in rapidly growing e-commerce (Zhang et al., 2022). Based on consumer technology theory, elements like image quality, transmission speed, instant ordering features, and live interaction tools enhance satisfaction and reduce perceived risk (Chen & Lin, 2018). Although many studies address these factors, research on their influence in emerging live stream markets remains limited. Therefore, this study hypothesizes:

H4: Technical features have a positive impact on customer participation.

Product quality

Product quality is a critical factor that directly influences customer satisfaction and loyalty, forming a key part of a firm's competitiveness (Garvin & Quality, 1984). According to total quality theory, products must ensure durability, functionality, and meet safety and consumer expectations. While many studies have addressed product quality in traditional commerce, research in live stream e-commerce settings remains limited. Therefore, this study proposes:

H5: Product quality has a positive impact on corporate image.

Altruistic Attribution

Attribution theory suggests that consumers assess the motives behind company actions, which shapes their perceptions and purchase behaviors (Weiner, 1979). According to Carberry & King (2012), altruistic attribution reflects the belief that CSR activities stem from social motives, as opposed to egoistic ones serving corporate self-interest. Though altruistic attribution has been explored in various contexts, its role in live stream e-commerce remains under-researched. Therefore, the hypothesis is:

H6: Altruistic attribution has a positive impact on purchase intention.

Swift Guanxi

Swift guanxi, a concept rooted in Chinese business culture, emphasizes short-term reciprocal relationships between buyers and sellers (Ou et al., 2014). Based on resource dependency theory, it highlights the value of cooperative relationships for enhancing efficiency and competitive advantage. In live stream e-commerce, swift guanxi is crucial for shaping consumer purchase intentions (Men & Zheng, 2019). However, research on its role in emerging live stream markets like Vietnam is limited. Thus, the hypothesis is:

H7: Swift guanxi has a positive impact on purchase intention.

Customer engagement

Customer engagement has emerged as a key factor in consumer behavior research, especially in e-commerce and digital platforms. According to Van Doorn et al. (2010), customer engagement includes not only purchasing but also spontaneous actions like word-of-mouth, sharing, and liking, which generate value for firms. Recent studies (Addo et al., 2021; Caroux et al., 2015) suggest that customer engagement strengthens long-term brand relationships through immersion, presence, and realism. However, insights into engagement on live stream platforms remain limited. Hence:

H8: Customer engagement has a positive impact on purchase intention.

Corporate image

Corporate image is a key component in marketing and brand management, influencing consumer perception and sentiment (Aaker, 1996; Kotler, 2003). According to Walters (1978), corporate image includes organizational, functional, and product-related aspects. A strong corporate image not only attracts customers but also enhances loyalty and long-term value (Bataineh, 2015; Cretu & Brodie, 2007). However, research on corporate image in online commerce is still developing. Thus:

H9: Corporate image has a positive impact on purchase intention.

Perceived Effectiveness

Perceived effectiveness refers to consumers' beliefs about the social impact of their purchases, which directly affects trust in corporate social responsibility (Ellen et al., 1991). Based on personal efficacy theory, it involves consumers' evaluation of how their actions influence broader social outcomes (Gong et al., 2020). Liu et al. (2021) found that perceived effectiveness can shape consumer attitudes and trust towards CSR initiatives, driving stronger intentions to buy. Therefore:*H10: Perceived effectiveness moderates the relationship between altruistic attribution and purchase intention.*

CSR-CA belief

CSR-CA belief refers to the perceived link between CSR and a firm's competitive ability, which has been shown to influence consumer behavior (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). This belief connects social commitment with business performance and affects consumer support and purchasing decisions (Luo & Bhattacharya, 2006). However, this has not been widely explored in live stream commerce. Hence:

H11: CSR-CA belief moderates the relationship between corporate image and purchase intention.

Purchase intention

Purchase intention is a key concept in consumer behavior research, especially within the context of e-commerce and live stream shopping (Chang & Wildt, 1994; Pavlou, 2003). Factors such as trust, risk perception, attitudes toward online shopping, and vendor credibility all significantly influence purchase intention (Gefen et al., 2003; Jia, 2021). However, studies specifically focusing on purchase intention in live stream e-commerce are still limited. Therefore, this study proposes that elements such as host professionalism, perceived trustworthiness, and customer engagement positively affect purchase intentions during live stream sessions:

H6: Altruistic attribution positively influences purchase intention.

H7: Swift guanxi positively influences purchase intention.

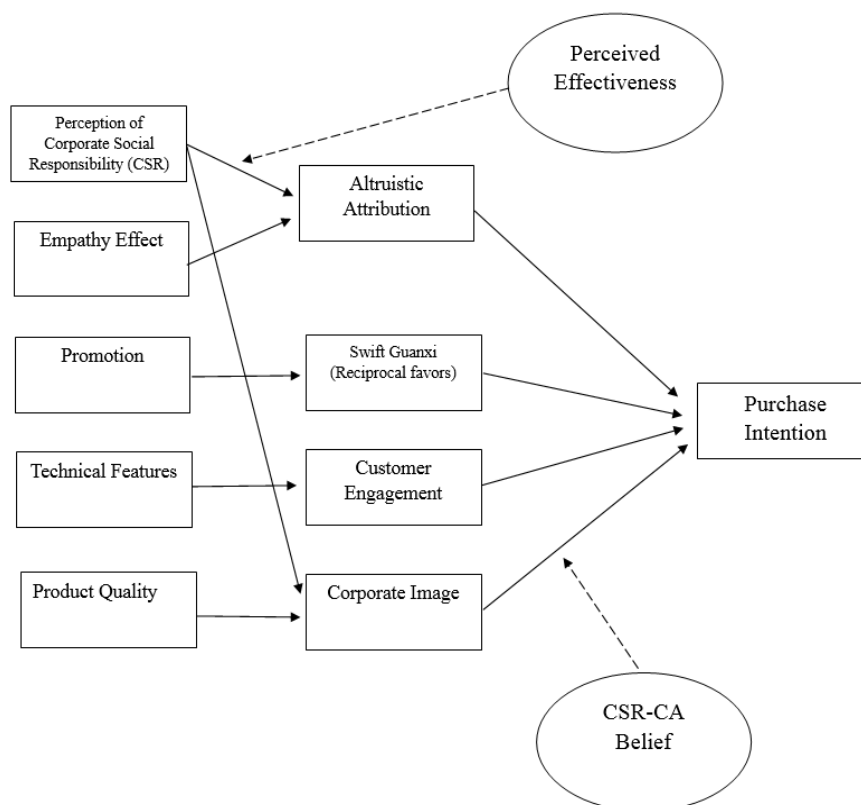
H8: Customer engagement positively influences purchase intention.

H9: Corporate image positively influences purchase intention.

H10: Perceived effectiveness of CSR live stream campaigns moderates the relationship between altruistic attribution and purchase intention.

H11: Belief in the link between CSR and corporate ability moderates the relationship between corporate image and purchase intention.

Research Model



Source: Developed by the authors

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in two phases: qualitative and quantitative. In the qualitative phase, the researchers employed in-depth interviews to explore the research problem. The quantitative phase aimed to test the influence of various factors on consumers' purchase intentions during CSR-oriented live stream sessions. A survey questionnaire was designed on Google Forms, adapted from previous studies, and distributed to consumers aged 15–50 in Hanoi. The collected data were analyzed using SmartPLS 3.0 software through the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) technique. Tools such as reliability assessment, factor analysis, and structural model testing were employed to ensure the accuracy and validity of the results.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Measurement Scale Validation

Internal consistency reflects the degree of agreement among observed variables measuring the same latent construct. In this study, the authors used Composite Reliability (CR) instead of Cronbach's Alpha, as CR is considered more appropriate for PLS-SEM and better captures the varying contributions of each indicator (Hair Jr et al., 2021). According to Hair et al. (2019), CR values of 0.70 or higher are considered acceptable, while values exceeding 0.95 may indicate redundancy, potentially affecting the validity of the measurement scale (Diamantopoulos et al., 2012).

The study results show that all measurement scales in the model achieved CR values ranging from 0.869 to 0.920, all above the 0.70 threshold. This indicates high internal consistency and confirms that the scales are reliable and suitable for further structural analysis.

| | Cronbach's Alpha | Composite Reliability |
|---------|------------------|-----------------------|
| CSR_A W | 0.885 | 0.920 |
| FE | 0.868 | 0.910 |
| TF | 0.863 | 0.907 |
| BE | 0.814 | 0.890 |
| AA | 0.871 | 0.912 |
| SG | 0.864 | 0.908 |
| P | 0.793 | 0.879 |
| C | 0.859 | 0.904 |
| CI | 0.796 | 0.880 |
| PCE | 0.800 | 0.869 |
| CE | 0.797 | 0.881 |
| PI | 0.814 | 0.890 |

Table 1: Results of Scale Reliability Testing

Source: Authors' compilation based on SmartPLS output

Hypothesis Testing

Measurement Model Evaluation

The research findings indicate that all constructs satisfy the reliability and validity requirements of the measurement model. Specifically, the outer loadings and composite reliability (CR) values all exceed 0.70, ranging from 0.869 to 0.920. The average variance extracted (AVE) values also surpass the 0.50 threshold, falling within the range of 0.624 to 0.743. Additionally, all Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT) values are below 0.85, confirming that the scales meet the criteria for reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity, ensuring the robustness of the model for further analysis.

Structural Model Evaluation

Multicollinearity Assessment

In the first step of structural model evaluation, the authors assessed multicollinearity using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). The results show that the VIF values range from 1.000 to 2.575, all below the threshold of 3, indicating that multicollinearity does not exist among the variables in the model.

Analysis of the Impact Relationships in the Model

During the structural model testing, two key indicators were used to assess the strength of relationships between variables: the standardized path coefficient (Original Sample - O) and the statistical significance level (P-value). The results indicate that all relationships in the model are statistically significant ($P < 0.05$), with most achieving a high level of significance ($P < 0.001$), confirming that all proposed hypotheses are supported. Specifically, the empathy effect positively influences altruistic attribution ($O = 0.325$); promotion influences swift guanxi ($O = 0.555$); technical features impact customer engagement ($O = 0.554$); and product quality affects corporate image ($O = 0.401$). Altruistic attribution ($O = 0.191$), swift guanxi ($O = 0.178$), customer engagement ($O = 0.234$), and corporate image ($O = 0.258$) all have positive effects on purchase intention. Additionally, customer engagement enhances altruistic attribution ($O = 0.139$), and CSR perception positively impacts corporate image ($O = 0.194$). All relationships have P-values below 0.05, ensuring statistical significance and confirming the reliability of the model; thus, all hypotheses proposed by the authors are accepted.

The results of the moderation analysis show that belief in the link between CSR and corporate ability strengthens the effect of corporate image on purchase intention ($P = 0.000$, regression coefficient = 0.106), confirming that when consumers have confidence in this connection, the impact of corporate image on purchase intention becomes more significant. In addition, the perceived effectiveness of the CSR campaign also plays a statistically significant moderating role in the relationship between CSR perception, empathy effect, and altruistic attribution ($P = 0.006$,

regression coefficient = 0.113). These findings suggest that when a CSR campaign is perceived as effective, it enhances the positive influence of CSR on emotional empathy and altruistic attribution behavior, thereby improving communication effectiveness and strengthening the company's positive public image.

| | | Original Sample (O) | P Values |
|-----|---------------|---------------------|----------|
| H1 | CSR_A W -> AA | 0.481 | 0.000 |
| H2 | FE -> AA | 0.325 | 0.000 |
| H3 | P -> SG | 0.555 | 0.000 |
| H4 | TF -> CE | 0.554 | 0.000 |
| H5 | BE-> CI | 0.401 | 0.000 |
| H6 | AA-> PI | 0.191 | 0.000 |
| H7 | SG -> PI | 0.178 | 0.000 |
| H8 | CE -> PI | 0.234 | 0.000 |
| H9 | CI -> PI | 0.258 | 0.000 |
| H10 | CE -> AA | 0.139 | 0.001 |
| H11 | C -> PI | -0.218 | 0.000 |
| H12 | CSR_ AW -> CI | 0.194 | 0.000 |

Table 2: Evaluation of the Results of Impact Relationships

Source: Authors' compilation based on SmartPLS output

| | Original Sample (O) | P Values |
|---------------------------|---------------------|----------|
| Moderating Effect 1 -> AA | 0.113 | 0.006 |
| Moderating Effect 2 -> PI | 0.106 | 0.000 |

Table 3: Evaluation of the Role of Quantitative Moderator Variables

Source: Authors' compilation based on SmartPLS output

Assessment of the model's explanatory power

The R² values range from 25.2% to 77.1%, indicating that the model has a relatively high capacity to explain the variance in the dependent variables.

Assessment of effect size (f²)

The research results show that all f² values are greater than 0.02, suggesting that the exogenous variables have small to medium effect sizes, ranging from 0.021 to 0.444.

CONCLUSION AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Conclusion

The results show that eleven factors, including Perception of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Empathy Effect, Promotion, Brand Equity, Technical Features, Corporate Image, Altruistic Attribution, Swift Guanxi with reciprocal favors, Customer Engagement, Perceived Effectiveness, and CSR CA Belief, all have a positive impact on purchase intention in live stream sessions that integrate CSR. Among these factors, Technical Features exert the strongest influence.

IMPLICATIONS

In the digital economy, consumers increasingly value corporate social responsibility (CSR), with brand loyalty growing when they perceive value alignment with a company (Fatma & Khan, 2022). However, consumers must

critically assess CSR claims, verifying them through trusted sources such as social media or third-party audits (Huang & Liu, 2023). While live streams can evoke emotional trust, lack of transparency may distort consumer behavior. Product quality remains essential, as CSR cannot replace performance (Pivato et al., 2021). Consumers need digital literacy and impartial tools to make informed decisions in e-commerce (Xu et al., 2022), and they tend to trust companies with consistent and transparent CSR efforts (Gao & Mattila, 2022).

For businesses, CSR is a core strategy that influences purchase decisions (Dai & Guo, 2024; Kim & Lee, 2021). Live stream storytelling can create emotional connections with consumers (Huang & Liu, 2023; Zhang et al., 2022). Companies must combine quality and CSR to ensure effectiveness (Han & Yu, 2021). Models like “Buy One, Give One” with transparent tracking tools are notably effective (Lee & Kim, 2022). Real-time social impact maps increase visibility and trust (Gao & Mattila, 2022). Immersive technologies, such as AR/VR, should be used to enhance engagement and communicate CSR impact (Wang et al., 2024). Measuring campaign effectiveness requires tools like live interaction, emotional feedback, and CSR tracking platforms (Zhou & Gu, 2023; Nguyen et al., 2022). CSR efforts must align with the company’s core strengths for sustainability (Tang et al., 2021).

For live stream platforms, CSR-friendly features such as “responsible brand” labels help businesses communicate their efforts (Nguyen et al., 2023). Storytelling through emotional effects, animation, or video increases empathy (Huang & Liu, 2023; Jin & Ryu, 2023). Validating quality through reviews or transparent product information builds trust (Jin & Ryu, 2023). Platforms should include interactive tools like discounts, gift boxes, and mini-games to boost engagement (Wang et al., 2024). A CSR verification system with reputation scoring and real-time impact tracking is essential for effective communication (Kim & Kim, 2022; Nguyen et al., 2022; Tang et al., 2021).

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