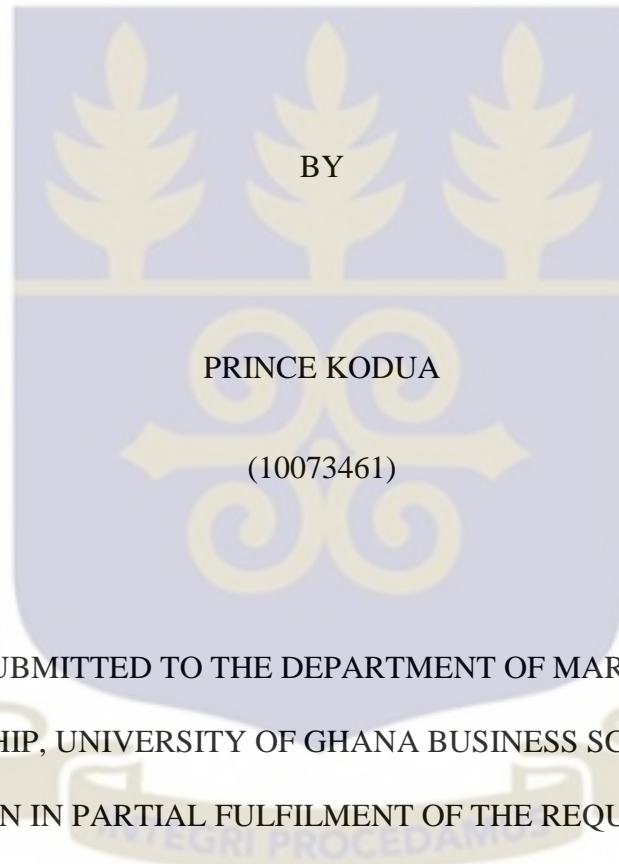


UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

**CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND CUSTOMER-BASED BRAND
EQUITY: TOWARDS THE OPERATIONALIZATION OF A FRAMEWORK IN THE
MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES SECTOR**



BY

PRINCE KODUA

(10073461)

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP, UNIVERSITY OF GHANA BUSINESS SCHOOL, UNIVERSITY
OF GHANA, LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE
AWARD OF A DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN MARKETING

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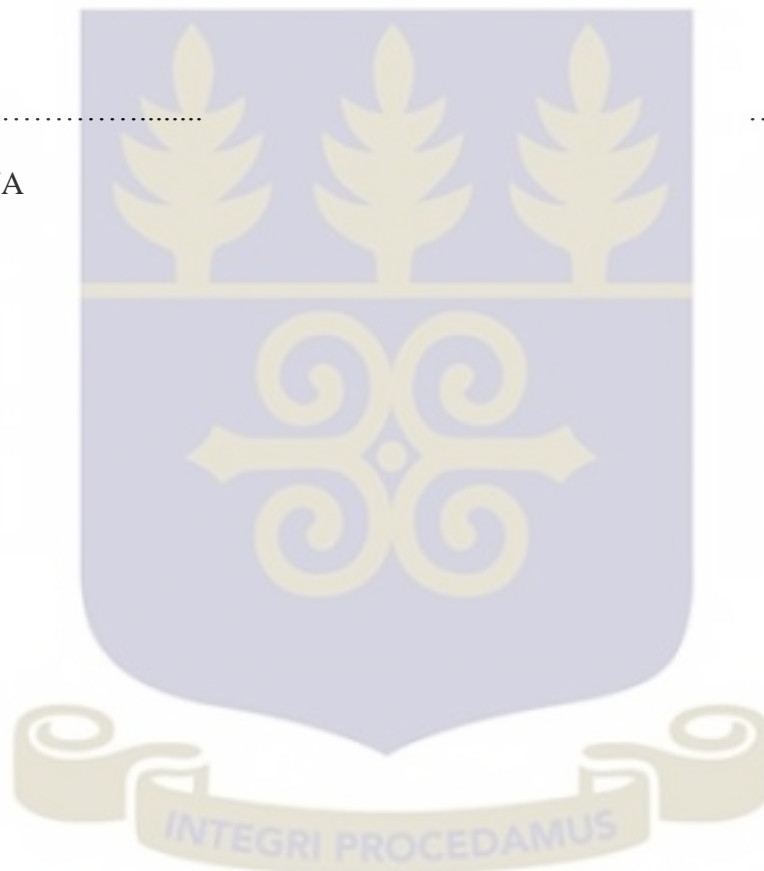
DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that this work is the result of my own research and has not been presented by anyone for any academic award in this or any other university. All references used in the work have been fully acknowledged.

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.....
PRINCE KODUA
(10073461)

.....
DATE



CERTIFICATION

We do certify that this thesis was supervised in accordance with procedures laid down by the University

.....

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR BEDMAN NARTEH

(SUPERVISOR)

.....

DATE

.....

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR CHARLES BLANKSON

(SUPERVISOR)

.....

DATE

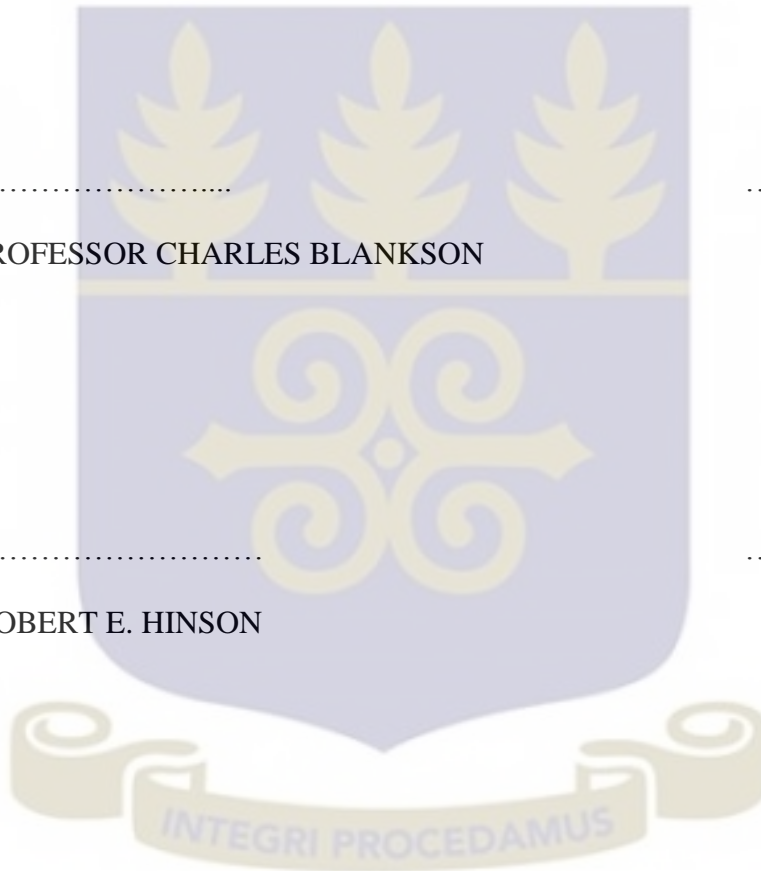
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PROFESSOR ROBERT E. HINSON

(SUPERVISOR)

.....

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DEDICATION

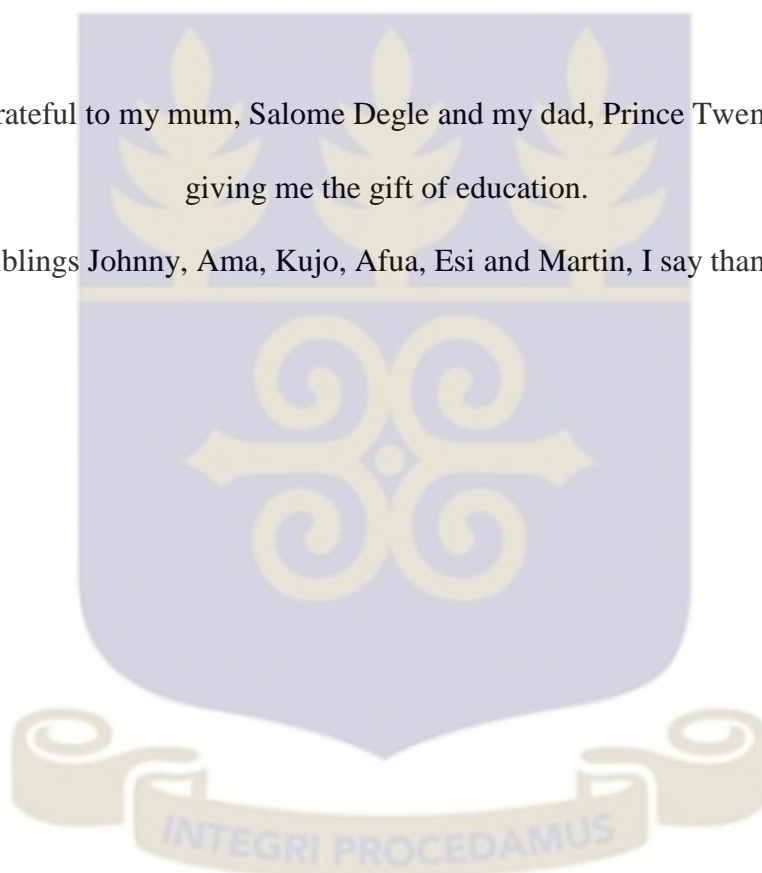
This work is dedicated to my family:

My sweet and supporting wife, Comfort Boateng, Principal Nursing Officer of the Children Emergency Ward of the Paediatrics Unit, Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital.

To my lovely children Seginam (Princess), Elikem (Prince), Eyiram (Precious), and my baby last, Elorm (Philip-Victor). My prayer is for God to let you do better than I have done.

I am eternally grateful to my mum, Salome Degle and my dad, Prince Tweneboah Kodua for giving me the gift of education.

To my siblings Johnny, Ama, Kujo, Afua, Esi and Martin, I say thank you all.



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ABSTRACT

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is becoming a tool for competitive positioning. It is the basis for brand choice among other advantages and therefore described as a strategic tool in marketing. In spite of these observations, there appears to be a paucity of studies, linking CSR to brand equity or Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE). This study therefore ascertains the role of various types of CSR initiatives in building CBBE dimensions. A conceptual framework was developed based on a review of extant literature to depict the relationships among the study variables. Using a mixed methodology, the quantitative part purposively surveyed 500 mobile telecommunications subscribers, which was analysed using Descriptive Statistics, Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modelling. The results suggest that in general, Corporate Philanthropy is the most important type of CSR initiative pursued by the mobile telecommunications companies in Ghana and is also the most important tool for creating brand awareness and loyalty. For enhanced brand image and quality perceptions among customers, the results suggest that Cause-Related Marketing is the types of CSR that holds the greatest potential among the six types of CSR initiatives that firms pursue. Insights from the second part of the study, which is based on qualitative in-depth interviews of six managers each from the six mobile telecommunications companies in Ghana, is to a greater extent consistent with the quantitative findings. The qualitative study further suggests that for CSR to enhance CBBE dimensions among customers, firms ought to pursue CSR initiatives that are valuable to customers and communicated in a strategic manner. Thus, in taking strategic view of CSR, firms need to pursue effectively the core mandate of delivering customer satisfaction while leveraging on CSR for enhanced marketplace competitiveness. In terms of contribution, this study is the first to bring CSR and Customer-Based Brand Equity dimensions together using a mixed method and situating it within the context of Ghana which is one of the developing Sub-Saharan African countries.

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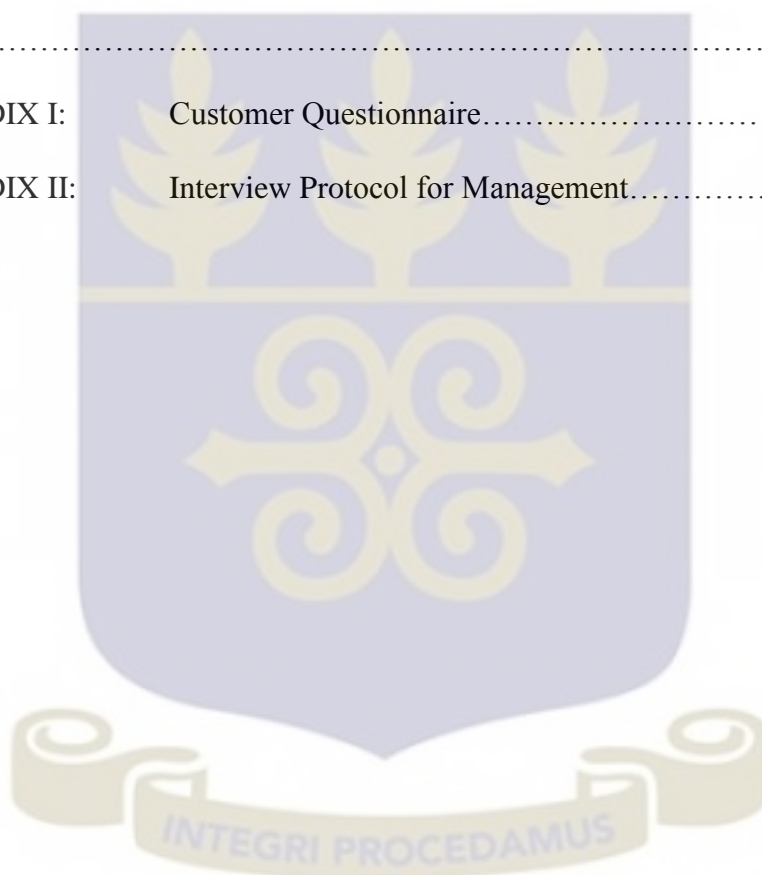
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a background to the study by first discussing the subject of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and how it relates to the achievement of customer-based brand equity (CBBE). The problem that the study seeks to address is stated and the key objectives enumerated to guide the entire study. The chapter provides some insight into the various management philosophies and concepts on which the study is anchored. The chapter provides an outlook of how the study is organized.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Over the past decade, marketing scholarship has witnessed a proliferation of studies into corporate social responsibility (CSR) and branding (Maignan et al., 2005; Keller, 2003; Aaker, 1996). CSR, is premised on the general expectation of businesses to contribute to the general welfare of the communities in which they operate and the world as a whole. This position is important for marketing literature because businesses do not exist in a vacuum; they are part of a social system. The very purpose of business requires prudent organizations to be interested in evaluating how marketing decisions impact on society and the environment (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2009; Falck and Heblich, 2007). The concept of CSR thus refers to all activities undertaken by organizations that are not required by law but done with the view to protecting the welfare of various stakeholders in society and the environment in general (Dahlsrud 2008; Falck and Heblich, 2007; Buhmann, 2006; Carrol 2004; Moir 2001; WBCSD, 1999). CSR can thus be said to be a broad concept as it can logically include all actions of the firm that holds some benefits to society in general. In the marketing literature

for instance, CSR has been described and positioned as a strategic tool for marketing; a competitive tool which is increasingly becoming a major determinant of brand choice especially in the advanced economies. Again, it has been argued that the lack of CSR can threaten the long-term profit making goal and hence the very survival of the company (Kotler and Lee, 2005). Bhattacharya et al., (2008, 2009), asserts that CSR actions offer firms inimitable upper hand in enhancing their brand equity in a competitive business environment. Another argument put forward by Trudel and Cotte (2009) is that consumers are more likely to pay higher prices for products and services from companies perceived as socially responsible. This is to say a firm's CSR engagements have the potential of creating customer-based brand equity for the firm. According to Keller (1993; 2003) customer-based brand equity include the dimensions of brand awareness, perceived quality, brand image or association and brand loyalty.

The realization of the strategic importance of CSR as a brand building tool (McDonald and Lai, 2011; Bhattacharya et al., 2008) is increasingly becoming a common knowledge among marketing practitioners and scholars (Maon et al., 2009). It is thus expected that prudent marketers will understand and harness the intricate relationship between CSR and customer-based brand equity. This is because marketing management and CSR activities are arguably about building brand equity to satisfy the interest of customers and other key stakeholders (Kotler and Lee, 2005; Maignam et al., 2005). Building brand equity (BE) presents firms with a host of benefits including sales growth, profitability and market share. This may explain why scholarly contributions have increased on the subject of BE in terms of empirical and theoretical models (see: Keller, 1993; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; Farquhar, 1989). Most of these scholarships on BE generally consider "branding effects" in relation to consumer knowledge (CK) about a given brand and how this acquired knowledge affects consumer behaviour (Shocker et al., 1994; Aaker 1991). Keller (1993), writes that CBBE is

“the differential effect that brand knowledge has on customer response to marketing of that brand”. The knowledge that the consumer holds about the brand is thus considered pivotal in the discussion of CBBE.

CBBE is primarily achieved through the creative deployment of the elements of the marketing mix (Kotler, 2003). Notwithstanding, scholars have also highlighted the potential of CSR in eliciting favourable responses from target customers (Hoeffler and Keller, 2002; Keller, 1993). The pursuance of CBBE is thus considered a critical marketing decision as it borders on firm competitiveness, survival and profitability (Fry and Polonsky, 2004; Vargo and Lusch, 2004; Kotler and Lee, 2005).

Despite the documented marketing importance of the concepts of CSR and CBBE in the marketing literature, there appears to be a paucity of scholarly works addressing the impact of CSR on CBBE. This brings to the fore the need to ascertain the role of CSR in the four key dimensions of CBBE comprising brand awareness, brand image/associations, perceived quality, and brand loyalty as conceptualized by Keller (1993), and re-echoed in the works of Fayrene and Lee (2011). It is worth mentioning that the need to measure the relationship of CSR in CBBE is due to the fact that the pursuit of CSR requires the deployment of firm’s financial and non-financial resources. There is need to measure the interrelationship between CSR and CBBE because CSR is increasingly becoming a major component of marketing management activity among today’s businesses (Hinson and Kodua, 2012; McDonald, and Lai, 2011; Ofori and Hinson, 2007). It is against this mounting expectation on firms to exhibit tenets of social responsibility (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2008; Ofori and Hinson, 2007; Carroll, 2004,), and the need to ascertain how CSR impacts on the dimensions of CBBE that has given the impetus for this study.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The phenomenon of firms delivering on economic, socio-cultural and environmental concerns of society beyond the basic requirements of law (Buhmann, 2006) is what has come to be known as corporate social responsibility (CSR). Evidence of the importance of the subject can arguably be traced to the growing body of literature in recent times (see Hinson and Kodua, 2012; Kotler and Lee, 2005; Luo and Bhattacharya, 2009; Ofori and Hinson, 2007; Dahlsrud, 2008; Falck and Heblich, 2007; Buhmann, 2006; WBCSD, 1999; Carroll, 2004; Fry and Polonsky, 2004). A consolidation of reasons given by scholars on the importance of the concept of CSR is traceable to the observation that CSR presents six key advantages to the firm (Kotler and Lee, 2005). CSR has the potential to contribute to increase sales and market share, strengthening of brand positioning, enhancing corporate image and clout, increasing the ability to attract, motivate, and retain employees, decreasing operating costs, and increasing appeal to investors (Kotler and Lee, 2005; Luo and Bhattacharya 2006, 2009; Fry and Polonsky, 2004).

The growing importance of CSR is due to the fact that there is a social contract between the firm and the society for the collective good and survival. As long as this interdependence between the firm and society exist, the interest in CSR will remain important among marketing scholars and practitioners. Prudent firms aspire to imbibe fully the tenets of CSR as such firms are of the conviction that the adoption of societal marketing concept in business invariably enhances customer-based brand equity (Keller, 1993). Scholars have accordingly discussed customer-based brand equity especially in relation to how to build, measure, and manage brand equity (see: Fayrene and Lee, 2011; Keller, 2003; Washburn and Plank, 2002; Vazquez et al., 2002).

In spite of the link between CSR and CBBE, extant literature has mostly overlooked the interrelationship between the two concepts. Also, literature on the subject of CSR and CBBE has mostly originated from Anglo-Saxon countries-mainly the U.S. and the U.K (Maignan and Ferrell, 2004; Matten & Moon, 2008; Keller, 1993; Aaker, 1991; Kotler and Lee, 2005; Hoeffler and Keller, 2002; Fayrene and Lee, 2011). Again, the international scope of corporate activities today, and the growing importance of CSR makes it imperative to ascertain the relationship between CSR and CBBE especially in developing country contexts like Ghana. Moreover, the few available literature from Ghana and developing country contexts did not link the concept of CSR to CBBE (see: Hinson and Kodua, 2012, Ofori and Hinson, 2007). These scholarships were mostly concerned about CSR practices of local and foreign firm in various societies.

The CSR – CBBE gap in the literature has been rightly observed by Sen and Bhattacharya (2001) when they noted that there is little known about the effects of CSR on consumer activities despite increasing emphasis on CSR in the marketplace. Similarly, other scholars have investigated issues pertaining to firm CSR practices but with marginal emphasis on customers, who are critical sources of firms' profitability and growth and for that matter brand equity (Maon et al., 2009; Kotler and Lee, 2005; Kim and Kim, 2003; Kapferer, 1997; Keller, 1993). Notwithstanding the increasing knowledge among academics and practitioners of the growing influence of CSR in marketing there is still scarcity of scholarship on the link between CSR and CBBE (Wagner et al., 2009). For instance, Maignan and Ferrell (2004) reveal that customers tend to favour or reward CSR oriented firms. As a stakeholder group, customers in particular, are susceptible to a firm's CSR engagements (Bharttacharya and Sen, 2004). However, extant literature does not fully explain, let alone predict the marketing outcome of CSR initiatives among customers. The question then is how do customers, as a

stakeholder group interpret and react to firms' CSR initiatives? This question brings to mind the need to find out the role of firms' CSR in building CBBE for the firm (Keller, 1993; Rajasekar and Nalina, 2008; Pappu et al., 2005; Lassar et al., 1995; Netemeyer et al., 2004; Kamakura and Russell, 1993; and Vazquez et al., 2002).

It is important to mention that the need to bridge the scholarly gap between CSR and CBBE is in keeping with the knowledge that, marketing management is essentially about building brands to satisfy customer needs and eventually create value for the firm (Kotler, 2003; Keller, 1993). It follows logically then, that firms' CSR engagements, impact brand strength, favourability and uniqueness (Keller, 1993) and brand value. Thus, everything the firm does or does not do, can serve to enhance or detract respectively, from brand equity. In the context of marketing, the 7Ps framework of product, price, place, promotion, people, process, physical evidence serves as the main tool for gaining CBBE (i.e., brand awareness, brand association/image, perceived quality, and brand loyalty).

Notwithstanding this traditional framework, review of extant literature suggest the potential in CSR (Luo and Bhattacharya, 2006, 2009; Dahlsrud, 2008; Falck and Heblich, 2007; Buhmann, 2006), as a tool for achieving CBBE hence the need for further investigation into the subject (Kotler and Lee, 2005; Keller, 2003; Keller, 1993, 1998, Kapferer, 1997). To this end, the study is aimed at the development of a framework that is the composite of CSR and CBBE.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study is guided by three interrelated objectives:

1. To ascertain the role of corporate social responsibility initiatives in building customer-based brand equity dimensions in the mobile telecommunications services sector.
2. To understand the relationship between corporate social responsibility and customer-based brand equity in the mobile telecommunications services sector.
3. To develop a conceptual framework encapsulating the strategic role of corporate social responsibility in building customer-based brand equity in the mobile telecommunications services sector.

To achieve the objectives above, the services sector serves as the study context. In addition, the study will be guided by questions on the relationship between CSR and CBBE dimensions as put forward by Keller (1993). To that end, the study is interested in the role of CSR in customer brand awareness, customer perception of brand quality, brand image/association; and brand loyalty.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Essentially, the research question is aimed at ascertaining the nature of the relationship between CSR and CBBE dimensions and also to gauge the importance of CSR in building various dimensions of CBBE. This will require the study to ascertain how CSR influence the building of CBBE from the perspective of both the firm and the customer. In this regard, the study will also explore the congruence between the firm and customer on the relationship

between CSR and CBBE. Six research questions are stated to guide the study towards the achievement of the study objectives:

1. What is the importance of CSR initiatives in building Customer-based brand equity?
2. What is the relationship between CSR and the dimensions of CBBE which includes brand awareness, brand image or association, perceived brand quality and brand loyalty?
3. How can the relationship between CSR and customer-based brand equity be described?

1.5 THEORETICAL FIELDS

The study is anchored on three key concepts. These are Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) reviewed in Chapter Two, Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) in Chapter Three, and Customer Perceived Value (CPV) in Chapter Four. These literature review chapters provide the literature foundation for the development of a conceptual framework later in Chapter Five. The literature foundations are discussed next.

1.5.1 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Meaning of the Concept of CSR

CSR has become a global business discourse and has a wide stream of interest evidenced in the multiplicity of conceptualization it has received from various scholars. According to World Business Council for Sustainable Development, “CSR is the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as the local community and society at large”. To Carroll (2004), CSR encompasses the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary

(philanthropic) expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time. CSR has benefited from numerous definitions in an attempt to explain the phenomenon and to delineate its boundaries. For example Frederick (1997) describes CSR by saying that “corporations should have an obligation to constituent groups in society other than shareholders and beyond what the law or union contract prescribes”. Conceptualizing along the same line is Wood (1991), who communicated the CSR idea in terms of interrelationship when he said “business and society are interwoven”. In essence society and business are not mutually exclusive from each other but depend on each other for survival. Steiner and Steiner (2000) recognize this relationship between a firm and the society in which it operates. Steiner’s argument is that firms are free to pursue wealth, which is their primary occupation but must be done in such a way that society does not suffer any harm, and must also be able to improve upon the assets of society both within the short and the long term.

According to McWilliam and Siegel (2001), a firm should not only abide by the law but must act in furtherance of the good of society. This idea is taken up by Buhmann (2006), who claims that CSR is generally conceptualised as “doing more than what is required by law”. Thus, businesses are expected to be liable to people, communities, institutions, and the environment. This rationale seems to explain why Ofori and Hinson (2007) citing Bowen (1953) reiterated the notion that “businesses exist at the pleasure of society and that their behaviour and methods must fall within the guidelines set by society”. In taking decisions therefore, organizations are expected not only to be interested in the economic profit, but should also pursue other issues of importance to society in general. In the opinion of McWilliams and Siegel (2001) therefore, businesses need to pursue other social objects in addition to profit maximization.

Rationale for Pursuing CSR

Extant literature suggests that firms experience various bottom-line benefits for pursuing social responsibility objectives. In this regard, Murray and Vogel (1997) concluded that multiple programmes of socially responsible business practices led to improved attitudes towards the firm. It has also been shown by Sen and Bhattacharya (2001) that CSR activities by firms enhance how consumers evaluate such firms. Generally, scholars and advocates of CSR have argued that customers who are exposed to a firm's CSR activities develop stronger attitudes and purchase intentions than those who were not exposed (Sen et al., 2006; Wigley, 2008). In other words customer exposure or knowledge of firm CSR initiatives is likely to create customer-based brand equity in terms of brand awareness, brand associations/image, perceived quality and brand loyalty (Keller, 1993). Kotler and Lee (2005) grouped the value or equity of CSR in terms of six key bottom-line benefits which are increased sales and market share, strengthened brand positioning, enhanced corporate image and clout, increased ability to attract, motivate, and retain employees, decreased operating costs, and increased appeal to investors.

CSR Initiatives

Kotler and Lee (2005) identified six major initiative options that a company may pursue as its corporate social responsibility. One of such initiatives is Cause promotion where a company supports social causes through promotional sponsorship(s). This kind of promotion may come in the form of the company providing resources in support of a given social cause or concern (Matten and Moon, 2008; Kotler and Lee, 2005; Moir, 2001). There is also another CSR initiative known as Cause-related marketing which refers to the case whereby a company makes contribution(s) or donation of a percentage of revenues to a specific cause based on the product sales or usage (Business for Social Responsibility, 2004; Maignan and Ferrell,

2004). Corporate Social Marketing is also another type of CSR initiative which is usually aimed at supporting behaviour change campaigns. Corporate social marketing efforts may lead to the development and or implementation of social marketing strategies or campaign in areas such as the environment, community well-being, public health and safety among others (Brown and Dacin, 1997). A fourth type of CSR initiative is Corporate Philanthropy which involves a company making direct contributions to a charity or cause. It may include providing cash donations, offering grants, awarding scholarships, donating products, donating services, providing technical expertise, allowing the use of facilities and distribution channels, offering the use of equipment among others. It is important to mention that concerning CSR initiatives, corporate philanthropy is considered the most traditional and common of all corporate social initiatives. In this regard, it is thus expected that this type of initiative will dominate all the CSR initiatives of the companies being studied (Bhattacharya et al. 2009; Porter and Kramer, 2002).

The fifth type of CSR initiative is called Community volunteering. Under this initiative the company provides volunteer services in the community. Typically, community volunteering is manifest in a company supporting and encouraging its employees, retailers, or agents to provide certain services such as volunteering their time and effort in support of a cause and or an organization in a given local community. Community volunteering may include activities such as cleaning gutters, or planting trees to prevent erosion (Kotler and Lee, 2005; Moir, 2001). The sixth type of CSR initiative is socially responsible business practice. This involves a company adopting and conducting discretionary business practices and investments that supports social causes such as a company's employees providing on-the-job training for high school interns (Du et al. 2010; Simmons, C.J. and Becker-Olsen, K.L. 2006; Kotler and Lee, 2005).

Theories of CSR

Based on the objectives of the study, three main theories are considered useful in explaining why firms engage in CSR. Brief descriptions of these theories are presented below:

Stakeholder Theory

According to Maon et al. (2009), the concept of stakeholders is central to CSR practice. Empirical investigations of the subject of CSR have yielded interesting perspectives of which stakeholder theory appears to be the most popular (see Reverte, 2009; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2009; Brickson, 2005; Carrol, 2004). Stakeholder theory has contributed to the understanding of CSR and provides a management tool to facilitate CSR. Stakeholders refer to those “groups and individuals who can affect, or are affected by the achievement of an organization’s mission.” The whole thesis of stakeholder theory is that organizations should endeavour to take into consideration the needs, interests and influences of peoples and groups who either impact on or may be impacted by the policies and deeds (Frederick et al., 1992) of the organization. Stakeholders thus, are any group or individual who is affected by the achievements of the organization’s objectives (Freeman, 1984). The crust of stakeholder theory is mainly about building long lasting beneficial relationship (Wilson, 2001). Other usefulness according to Luoma-aho (2007) is that stakeholders’ assessment and expectations has a role to play in shaping an organization’s reputation and giving it legitimacy. Fassin (2008) identified three types of firm’s stakeholders whose needs must engage the attention of the firm. The real stakeholder group include shareholders, customers, employees, business partners, and communities. The stakewatchers- include employees and workers union, consumer associations, investor associations protecting the interest of shareholders; and activists watching the stake of the community and the environment. The stakekeepers- is another group who are removed from the active real stakeholders: the independent regulators,

who have no stake in the firm but have influence and control. They impose regulations and constraints, while the firm has little reciprocal direct impact on them. Although a company may have several stakeholders, this study focuses on the customer stakeholder group in line with the study's objective which is to ascertain the relationship between CSR and customer-based brand equity.

Legitimacy Theory of CSR

CSR and legitimacy theory are two sides of the same coin. Scholarly contributions such as Moir, (2001) and Suchman (1995) explain that firms CSR initiatives are meant to do three interrelated things. The assertion from these scholars is that first, organizations embark on CSR to gain legitimacy. The second reason is to maintain legitimacy, and finally to achieve legitimacy, in a given market or society. Legitimacy theory states that organizations can only secure their existence if they are perceived as operating within the values and norms of the society. According to Farache and Parks (2010), legitimacy for the organization is based on the idea that there is a social contract between business and society in which society allows the company to operate as long as it behaves in accordance with society's norms and values. In other words, legitimacy is threatened when a company's behaviour is perceived as not in accordance with society's norms. Ferrel et al. (2002) stated that the objectives of companies' actions are to maximize the positive impact on stakeholders and minimize the negative impact.

It is important to note that legitimacy theory on its own may not adequately explain CSR. It is thus critical to identify the seeming interdependence or the interrelationship between legitimacy and the stakeholder theory which are both necessary constructs for understanding CSR. In order to gain legitimacy therefore, a company may disclose its CSR activities to its

stakeholders (Hinson et al., 2010). Thus, the pursuit of legitimacy would require a company to first engage in CSR. Secondly, the firm discloses the CSR information in order to portray a socially responsible image and thirdly receive a stamp of legitimacy from the targeted stakeholders. This is why Patten (1991) advised companies dealing directly with consumers to take issues of community involvement seriously. In support of this position Clarke and Gibson (1999) emphasised that CSR can be better understood as a means of reinforcing both reputation and legitimacy. They argued that CSR provides an opportunity to communicate to stakeholders the congruence of the organization with societal concerns. From the foregoing, it is reasonable to argue that CSR can lead to legitimacy for the firm; and that the achievement of legitimacy creates the basis for achieving customer-based brand equity (CBBE).

Organizational Identity Theory of CSR

Like the stakeholder and the legitimacy theories described above, organizational identity theory is considered useful in this study as it provides useful explanations on why firms practice CSR. Organizational identity describes firm culture, history, structure, characteristics, status, and reputation with competitors, customers, and society at large which is formulated and cemented over time (Brown et al. 2006; Scott and Lane 2000). It comprises both internal and self-reflective components as well as the external activities (Gioia et al. 2000), which provides a rich perspective about identity as the organizational response function. Identity also involves all that is central, distinctive, and enduring about a firm (Albert and Whetten 1985), conveyed through mission, vision, actions, and association of the firm's values and goals (Brickson 2005). Put simply, identity involves both how internal constituents and stakeholders see the firm and how external constituents and stakeholders see it (Gioia et al. 2010; Sen et al. 2006; Voss et al. 2006). According to organizational theory, firms also morph to reflect institutional preferences and socially desirable characteristics of

competitors and other constituencies that they observe in the market place (Handelman and Arnold 1999). Driven by the external aspirational components of their identity, firms use isomorphic behaviour to attain legitimacy in the face of normative pressures (Grewal and Dharwadkar, 2002). Thus, consumers value companies and brands that exceed legal and social expectations (CSRwire 2009; Trudel and Cotte 2009).

CSR Communication

CSR communication is increasingly becoming an important element in strategic business communication. This position is informed by the realization that effective CSR communication holds enormous potential for building and maintaining favourable reputations and relationships with key stakeholders (Nielson and Thomsen, 2009; Morsing and Schultz, 2006; Cornelissen, 2004). Thus, messages about corporate and socially responsible initiatives are likely to evoke strong and often positive reactions among stakeholders. It follows therefore that the more companies expose their ethical and social ambitions, the more likely they are to attract critical stakeholder attention (Ashforth and Gibbs, 1990; Vallentin, 2001). Interestingly, scholarly works mentioning the potential business benefits of internal and external communication of CSR efforts are not in scarcity (Morsing and Schultz, 2006; Maignan et al. 1999). According to Brown and Dacin (1997), CSR initiatives are generally associated with positive corporate virtues that reflect companies' status and activities with respect to its perceived societal obligations among stakeholders. It is also useful to mention that although corporations are being encouraged to engage in CSR to build strong reputations, stakeholders are often reluctant to receive too much information about CSR engagements (Morsing, 2003). CSR messages have also attracted critical attention from stakeholders (Morsing and Schultz, 2006). The question then is how much focus should companies give to CSR communication?

It has been suggested in the works of Nielson and Thomsen (2009); and also Brown and Dacin (1997) that focusing too intently on CSR communication has the likelihood of creating the impression among consumers that the company is trying to hide something. Again, CSR is generally associated with positive and good virtues. Thus, companies are inclined to communicate about their good deeds with the view to influencing public opinion and enhance their corporate reputation. The basic assumption is that stakeholders and in particular consumers expect substantial information about companies' actions on CSR (Morsing, et. al., 2003). It is reasonable therefore to expect companies to communicate CSR information in a conspicuous manner.

As can be expected, there are contrary views on the need to communicate CSR initiatives. One is the suggestion that companies should downplay CSR in their communication strategy. Companies must therefore avoid the use of CSR as a highly visible element of marketing and public relation. To the contrary, some managers pursue CSR as a means of building brand reputation among target stakeholder groups. It has also been observed that stakeholders are not receptive to too much CSR information from companies (Morsing and Schultz, 2006; Maignan et al., 1999; Brown and Dacin 1997). This question then is "how much CSR information to communicate and the appropriate channels for such communications?" In the context of the study objectives, CSR communication is considered useful in achieving customer-based brand equity. CSR communication is given more detailed consideration under the literature review chapter.

1.5.2 THE CONCEPT OF CUSTOMER-BASED BRAND EQUITY

Meaning of Customer-Based Brand Equity

Brands are arguably the most valuable assets in business. Hence, the enormous interest in brand equity studies (Fayrene and Lee, 2011; Keller, 2003; Hoeffler et al., 2002, Kapferer, 1997; Cobb-Walgren et al., 1995). In this study, brand equity is synonymous with CBBE and referred to as customer-based brand equity in line with Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993). Although literature abounds on the concept of brand equity (BE), there are still challenges regarding a common meaning, content and measurement of BE. This position is articulated in the works of Vazquez et al. (2002), Keller (2003) and Washburn (2002). The concept of brand equity which Keller (1993) conceptualized as customer-based brand equity (CBBE) is yet to achieve universality in terms of meaning, content, and measurement. However, available conceptual works, according to Fayrene and Lee (2011) based on the argument put forward by Winters (1991), and Chaudhuri (1995) seem to agree that the term CBBE refers to the value that is added to a product by consumers' associations and perceptions of a given brand name. In other words, CBBE is an evaluation of how a firm's consumers respond to, or will respond to the marketing of a given brand (Keller, 1993 and Shocker et al., 1994).

Although the meaning of BE is not widely divergent among scholars, one can group scholarly works on the subject into: (1) those who are influenced more from a marketing or customer-oriented perspective (Fayrene and Lee, 2011; Farquhar, 1989; Keller, 1993; Cobb-Walgren et al. 1995, van Osselaer & Alba 2000; Rao et al. 1999), and (2) those reflecting financial perspective (Farquhar et al. 1991; Simon & Sullivan 1990; Swait et al. 1993; Kapferer 1997). The financial perspective is concerned with evaluating the financial assets of the business. On the other hand, the marketing or customer-oriented perspective of brand equity is not an entirely new idea, but gained its popularity through the writings of Keller (1993), Shocker et

al. (1994) among others. These scholars appear to have been largely influenced by the growing appreciation of the marketing concept or the customer-orientation philosophy in marketing.

The latter is evidenced in Keller's (1993) definition which states "that CBBE is the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand". Brand knowledge "is the full set of brand associations linked to the brand in long-term consumer memory". CBBE thus refers to the peculiar responses of consumers that are geared towards a brand because of prior knowledge and associations to the brand. For the purpose of this study, Keller's (1993) definition of CBBE is adopted in that several definitions in the extant literature explicitly or implicitly profess the same philosophy captured in Keller's (1993) conceptualization of CBBE. Following from Keller's (1993)'s definition of CBBE, the study takes the view that CBBE refers to the "totality" of what consumers know about a given brand at a given point in time.

The Dimensions of CBBE

In the conceptualization of CBBE, brand awareness, brand association or image, perceived quality, and brand loyalty have been consolidated as the four key dimensions or measure of brand equity (Keller, 1993 and Aaker, 1991). These key dimensions which are the key conceptual foundation on the subject of CBBE are explained in detail in the literature review in Chapter Three. Below are brief descriptions of CBBE dimensions:

Brand awareness: - The importance of brand awareness as a key element in the composition of CBBE or BE cannot be overemphasized (Mackay 2001, Keller, 2003; Agarwal and Rao, 1996; Krishnan, 1996; Aaker 1991; Keller, 1992; Kapferer 1991). According to Aaker (1991)

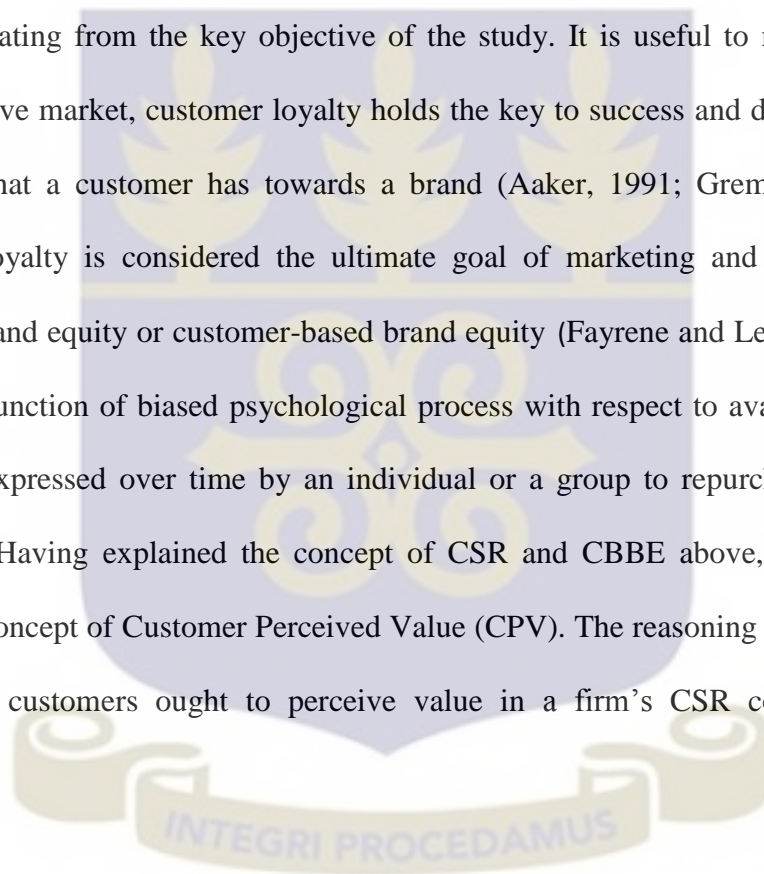
brand awareness describes “the ability of a potential buyer to recognize or recall that a brand is a member of a certain product category”. Awareness is conceptualized and measured in terms of recall and recognition (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993), top-of mind, brand dominance, brand knowledge and brand opinion (Aaker,1996) of a given brand as having certain associations that are in consumers’ memory. According to Kotler and Lee (2005), these associations may be activated by such brand elements like brand name, symbol, logo, package, the company’s CSR among many other marketing stimuli. To this end, brand awareness is considered a useful dimension in explaining the role of CSR in building CBBE.

Brand associations/brand image: - Marketers see brand associations in terms of anything that is linked in memory to a given brand. Arguably, the importance of brand association as a concept lies in its linkage with consumer purchase decision and brand loyalty. Kotler and Keller (2006) describe brand association “as the totality of brand-related thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images, experiences, beliefs, and attitudes”. Brand associations thus represent what a brand means to customers (Aaker, 1991) that are stored in their memories. This is why it has been pointed out that any contact and or experiences or interaction between the consumer and a brand has the potential to “create, change, or reinforce certain favourable or unfavourable associations”. Keller (2003) has also pointed out that to achieve brand equity, managers need to ensure that consumers perceive the brand as unique, strong, and favourable. These brand related perceptions could emanate from a company’s CSR. Thus, brand associations is considered important dimension in addressing the study objectives.

Perceived quality: - In line with customer orientation philosophy to marketing, customer perceived quality has severally been identified as one of the key dimensions of CBBE (see Aaker 1991; Kapferer 1991; Kamakura and Russell 1991; Martin and Brown 1991; Feldwick

1996). Extant literature suggests that quality is a multi-dimensional construct that depends on several factors which are subjected to consumer's judgement. This line of thinking is consistent with the marketing concept which requires firms to base their marketing decisions on consumer research. To that end the study seeks to ascertain the role and the extent to which perceived quality is attributable to perceived CSR.

Brand loyalty: - Ascertaining the role of CSR in building brand loyalty is one of the sub objectives emanating from the key objective of the study. It is useful to mention that in a highly competitive market, customer loyalty holds the key to success and describes the level of attachment that a customer has towards a brand (Aaker, 1991; Grembler and Brown, 1996). Brand loyalty is considered the ultimate goal of marketing and therefore a core dimension of brand equity or customer-based brand equity (Fayrene and Lee, 2011). Loyalty is said to be a function of biased psychological process with respect to available alternative brands that is expressed over time by an individual or a group to repurchase such brands (Uddin, 2012). Having explained the concept of CSR and CBBE above, the next section focuses on the concept of Customer Perceived Value (CPV). The reasoning is that for CSR to lead to CBBE, customers ought to perceive value in a firm's CSR communication or message.



1.5.3 THE CONCEPT OF CUSTOMER PERCEIVED VALUE

The concept of customer value (CV) is considered useful in this study. This is because one can assume that CBBE can only be achieved where the customer perceives value in a given CSR initiative of the firm. Based on the study objectives, firm's CSR initiatives (e.g. philanthropic donations and cause sponsorship) can only create customer-based brand equity or value where the customer considers such initiatives as useful or valuable in relation to his/her biological and or physiological needs. The concept of CV is also considered critical to the understanding of the phenomenon of study because, today's marketplace is characterised by very demanding customers, global competition, and generally slow growth in many industries across many parts of the world. As has been observed by Woodruff (1997), past attempts by firms have largely looked internally within the organization for improvement, such as reflected by quality management, reengineering, downsizing, and restructuring.

Over the years however, it is becoming increasingly obvious among marketing theorists and practitioners that the major source of competitive advantage emanates largely from an outward orientation towards customers. This thinking has necessitated the call on firms to focus their competitive strategies on delivering superior customer value (Woodruff, (1997). The concept of customer value has been defined as "the customer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given" (Zeithaml, 1988, p. 14). It is worthy to mention that scholarly works on the concept of customer value have mainly been concerned with the perceived role of customer value in consumption contexts. For example, Zeithaml (1988) provided evidence highlighting the influential role of value, consumer purchase decision making process and consumer behaviour in general. According to the means-end model put forward by Zeithaml (1988), consumer perceived value is a direct antecedent of a purchase decision and a direct consequence of perceived

service quality. Dodds et al. (1991) also conceptualized perceived value as a trade-off between perceived quality and perceived psychological as well as monetary sacrifice (also see Dodds and Monroe, 1985; Monroe and Chapman, 1987; Teas and Agarwal, 1997). Their model shows that perceived value is a direct antecedent of consumer purchase intention. More recently, Woodruff (1997) laid out a customer value hierarchy model in which customer value was viewed as a hierarchically structured construct at levels of consumption goals, consequences, and attributes. According to Woodruff, customer value resides in every stage of customers' expectancy-disconfirmation process. Slater (1997) and Parasuraman (1997) among other scholars have also recognised the importance of customer value in understanding consumer behaviour.

From the foregoing, customer value describes the overall perception of the subjective merit of some activity or object regarding product utility considering all benefits and costs of consumption (Chen and Tsai, 2008; Lai, Griffin and Babin, 2009). From Kotler and Lee (2005) customer perceived value is measured as the difference between the total customer value and total customer costs. Typically total customer value may include bundle of product, service, personnel and image value. On the other hand total customer costs refer to bundle of monetary, time, energy, and psychic costs. According to Uddin (2012) customers usually estimate the expected perceived value and whether or not company's offer meets the expectations affect the customer satisfaction and behavioural intentions for repurchase. The factors affecting customer value include competencies, communication, promotional investments, and relational investments. Scholars have also observed the predictive role of perceived value in service quality and customer satisfaction (Hutchinson, Lai and Wang, 2009). Customer expectations and perceived performance of an offering are important

predictors of perceived value and customer satisfaction (Chen, 2008; Chen and Tsai, 2008; Wu and Liang, 2009).

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is significant in a number of ways. This section discusses the significance of the study from the theoretical and practical perspectives.

First, merging the stream of research with theoretical developments in CSR and CBBE has been explored to a great extent in the context of the services sector. Literature reveals that scholarly work on the subject of CSR and CBBE abound. However, there is paucity of literature discussing the subject from a developing economy perspective (that is Ghana). Available literature mostly originates from Europe and the Americas. The study bridges an important theoretical gap as the relationship between CSR and CBBE is not only unclear but also under researched. To this end the study contributes to the literature by developing a framework that links the two concepts. Also, there appears to be difficulty finding works that directly seek to ascertain the importance of CSR in building CBBE as developed by Keller (1993) and Aaker (1991).

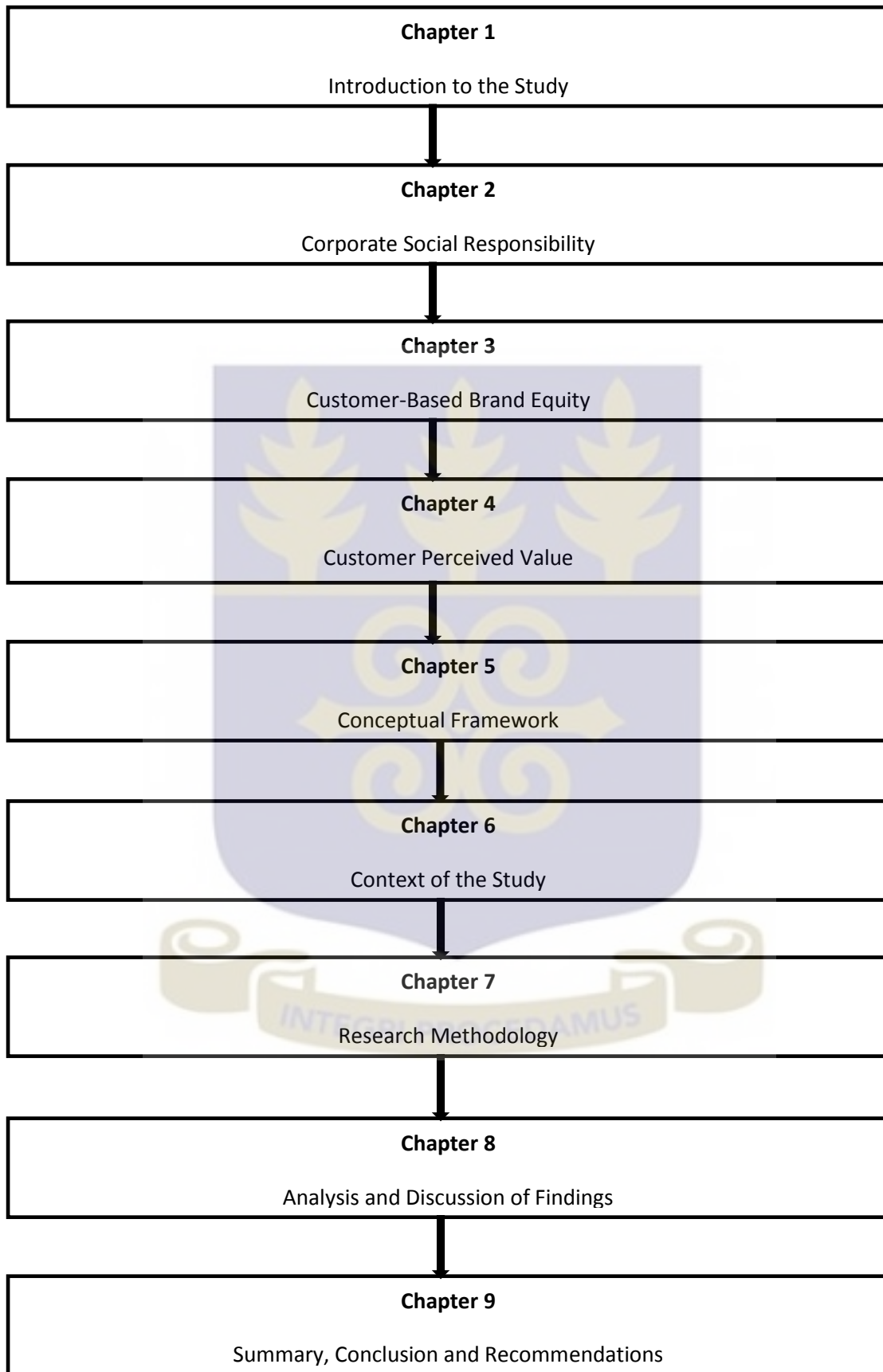
Building on different research streams about CSR and CBBE, this study proposes a conceptual model for understanding the role of CSR in creating CBBE in the services sector. The study is also important as it sought to understand firms' perspective of CSR as a tool for achieving CBBE on one hand while at the same time gauging customer perspective on the subject.

1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

Fundamentally, the presentation of this thesis follows the structure of the doctoral thesis suggested by Perry (1998). The study proceeds by outlining the broad view of CSR and how it could impact on customer-based brand equity (CBBE) thereby highlighting, the focal issues of the study. The overall outline as well as organizational structure of this study is depicted in ten interrelated chapters captured in figure 1.1 below:

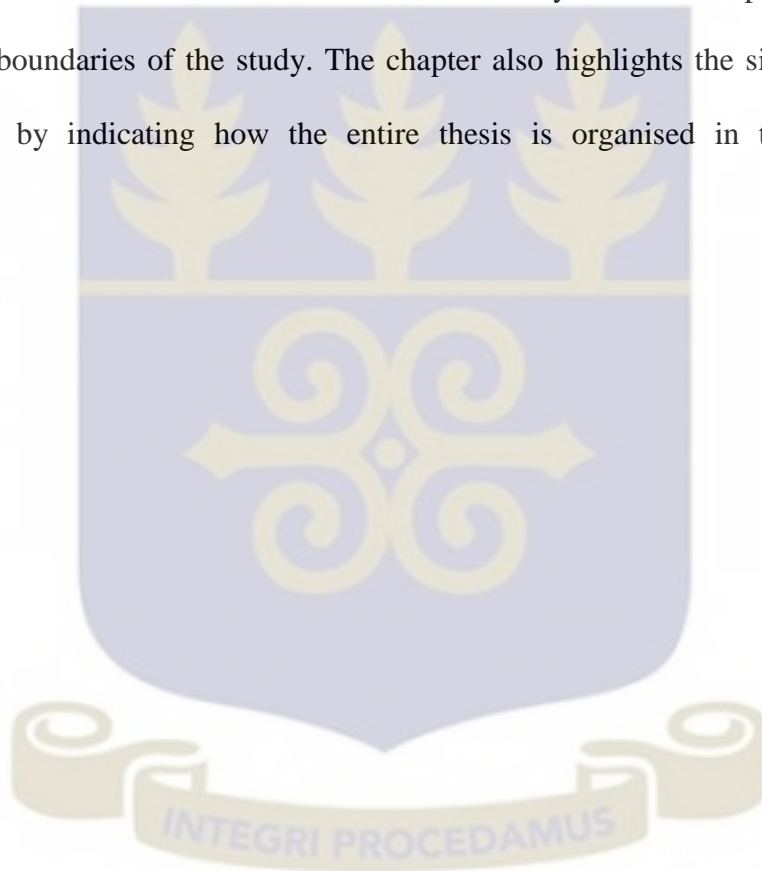


Figure 1.1: Thesis Outline



1.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter one provides a general background to the entire study. A statement of the research objectives in the early part of the chapter provides the basis for enumerating the key research questions driving the entire thesis. This is followed by a description of the research problem motivating the study. On the basis of the foregoing the chapter then focus on providing initial insights on the theoretical gap on the impact of CSR in building customer-based brand equity. These theoretical fields and other related theories are briefly discussed to provide a snapshot and delimit the boundaries of the study. The chapter also highlights the significance of the study and ends by indicating how the entire thesis is organised in terms of chapter disposition.



CHAPTER TWO

THE CONCEPT OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews extant literature on the broad concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) as it relates to the objectives of the study. The meaning of CSR is explored through a review of various definitions and conceptualizations put forward by scholars, practitioners and institutions interested in the subject area. As a major debate in the extant literature, the chapter also reviews the major theoretical and the philosophical underpinnings of the concept as espoused by scholars. Various types of CSR initiatives and the argument for and against the adoption of CSR are also reviewed together with CSR communication and other relevant subtopics.

2.1 BUSINESS ETHICS AND CSR

The subject of business ethics is sometimes referred to as if it is the same in meaning and scope as corporate social responsibility. It is important to mention that business ethics as indicated in Kotler and Lee (2005) is just one of the six broad aspects of corporate social responsibility or initiatives which include cause promotion, cause-related marketing, corporate social marketing, corporate philanthropy, community volunteering, and socially responsible business practices. It is important to recognise that business ethics can be subsumed under socially responsible business practices.

2.2 THE MEANING OF BUSINESS ETHICS

Business ethics according to Phatak, Bhagat and Kashlak (2005) can be defined as “the moral thinking and analysis by corporate decision-makers and other members regarding the motives and consequences of their decisions and actions”. In the opinion of Svensson and Wood (2003), business ethics depends on culture and time. Thus, the culture of the business environment defines what is acceptable and unacceptable. Ethics is influenced by traditions, values, and religion as well as individuals. Different cultures have different opinions in this regard and if there is no adaptation it will affect the company’s success. The business time dimension will also affect what is accepted and unaccepted. What is considered ethical today might not turn out to be ethical tomorrow. Phatak et al. (2005) identified certain ethical dilemmas as bribery, child labour, and corruption that may confront businesses. International businesses in particular are usually confronted with different laws, norms, and regulations and their acceptance differ from country to country. It is becoming common for companies to have ethics programmes in the organization as part of their corporate social responsibility (Phatak et al., 2005).

There are three levels of business ethics where societal expectations have a great impact on companies. The first level is the macro level that describes the ethical stance of the organization and the extent to which the organization exceeds the legal requirements that relates to stakeholders. The second level refers to the corporate social responsibility within the macro level where the primary interest is on how organizations exceed certain minimum requirements to live up to the ethical stance of the organization. The third level relates to the individual manager’s level of authority and it is concerned primarily with the behaviour and actions of the individual such as how one behaves with integrity and whistle blowing. It is interesting to mention that the various levels of business ethics mentioned above can all be

placed under the corporate social responsibility umbrella. This position is buttressed in the definition of CSR put forward by World Business Council for Sustainable Development (1999) which states that “CSR is the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as the local community and society at large”. Carroll (2004), claims that CSR encompasses the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary (philanthropic) expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time. From the foregoing CSR definitions, it is evidently clear that the issue of ethics has been largely positioned as an element of CSR, which is more comprehensive and encompassing in dimension. In this study therefore, business ethics is considered an essential component of corporate social responsibility (Johnson et al. 2005).

2.3 THE MEANING OF CSR

CSR is now well accepted in global business discourse. This position is based on the library of work available and the growing prominence of the subject of CSR and its ability to lend itself to different applications in different contexts; at different levels of intensity (Welford, 2005; Baughn et al., 2007; Matten and Moon, 2008). The subject of CSR seems to have evoked a wide stream of interest as evidenced in the multiplicity of conceptualization it has received from various scholars. Search for one universally acceptable definition of CSR can be a difficult pursuit and perhaps may not be too necessary given that most of the definitions seem to be saying the same thing in principle (see Table 2.1). For example, Frederick (1997, pp.48) noted that, “corporations should have an obligation to constituent groups in society other than shareholders and beyond what the law or union contract prescribes”. Conceptualizing along the same line is Wood (1991) who communicated the CSR idea in terms of interrelationship when he said “business and society are interwoven”. In essence,

society and business are not mutually exclusive but depend on each other for survival. Steiner (2000) recognizes this relationship between a firm and the society in which it operates. The argument put forward is that firms are free to pursue wealth, which is the primary occupation of business but must be done in such a way that society does not suffer any harm, and must also be able to improve upon the assets of society both within the short and the long term. To McWilliams and Siegel (2001), firms should not only abide by the law but must act in furtherance of the good of society. The same idea is raised in the works of Buhmann (2006), where CSR is conceptualised as “doing more than what is required by law”. The World Business Council of Sustainable Development holds the view that, “CSR is the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as the local community and society at large.” The definitions discussed shows that the stakeholder view of the firm appears to be more popular and generally acceptable to academics and practitioners across the globe in recent times (Holliday et al., 2002). A closer look at all the definitions in Table 2.1 focuses the stakeholder view of the firm. These definitions, are now so entrenched and popular at least in theory that Sloan’s (1964) conceptualization of the firm as “a profit maximising entity has become oblivious.

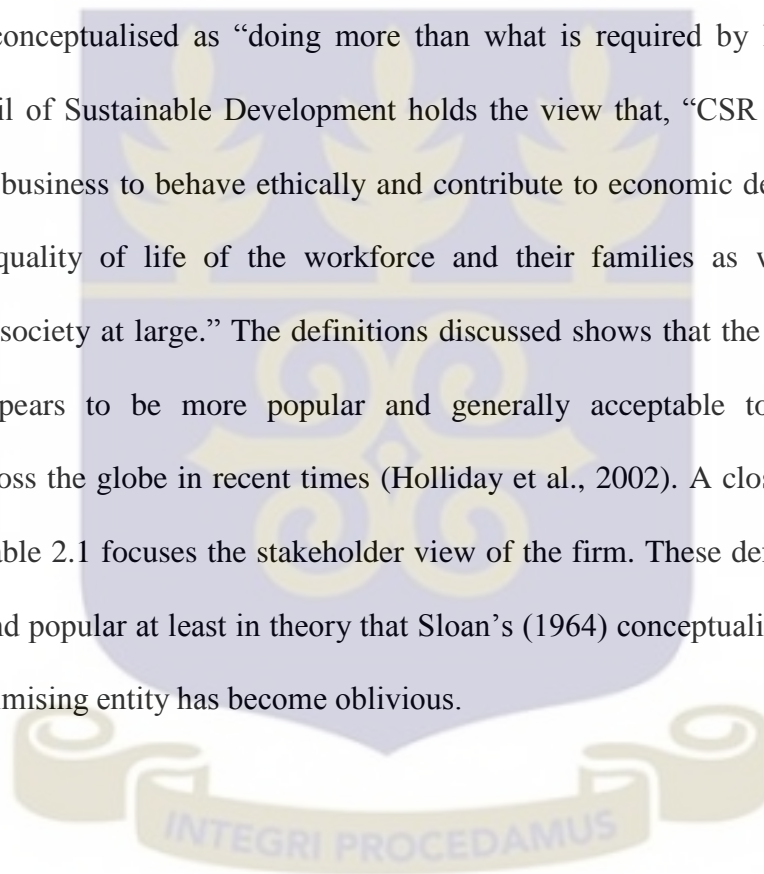


Table 2.1: Various Definitions of CSR

Definition Source	Definition of CSR
World Business Council for Sustainable Development, 2000	Corporate social responsibility is the continuous commitment by business to contribute to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as the local community and society at large
Khoury et al., 1999	Corporate social responsibility is the overall relationship of the corporation with all its stakeholders. These include customers, employees, communities, owners/ investors, government, suppliers a competitors. Elements of social responsibility include investment in community outreach, employee relations, creation and maintenance of employment, environmental stewardship and financial performance
Business for Social Responsibility, 2003b	Corporate social responsibility is achieving commercial success in ways that honour ethical values and respect people, communities and the natural environment
Commission of the European Communities, 2003	CSR is the concept that an enterprise is accountable for its impact on all relevant stakeholders. It is the continuing commitment by business to behave fairly and responsibly and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the local community and society at large
CSRWire, 2003	CSR is defined as the integration of business operations and values, whereby the interests of all stakeholders including investors, customers, employees and the environment are reflected in the company's policies and actions.
Hopkins, 2003	CSR is concerned with treating the stakeholders of the firm ethically or in a responsible manner. 'Ethically or responsible' means treating stakeholders in a manner deemed acceptable in civilized societies. Social includes economic responsibility. Stakeholders exist both within a firm and outside. The wider aim of social responsibility is to create higher and higher standards of living, while preserving the profitability of the corporation, for peoples both within and outside the corporation
McWilliams and Siegel, 2001	Actions that appear to further some social good, beyond the interests of the firm and that which is required by law
Piacentini et al., 2001	CSR is the voluntary assumption by companies of responsibilities beyond purely economic and legal responsibilities
Andersen, 2003	We define corporate social responsibility broadly to be about extending the immediate interest from oneself to include one's fellow citizens and the society one is living in and is part of today, acting with respect for the future generation and nature
Strategis, 2003	CSR is generally seen as the business contribution to sustainable development, which has been defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, and is generally understood as focussing on how to achieve the integration of economic, environmental and social imperatives.

Source: Author's own compilation, 2013

2.4 THE DEBATE ON THE PURPOSE OF BUSINESS

There are two main lines of argument with regard to what the purpose of business is or should be in the marketing management literature.

2.4.1 The Profit Maximization Philosophy

One school of thought claims that “profit maximization” is and should be the overarching purpose or objective of business. This position was clearly articulated by two management scientist of the nineteen sixties (1960s). Freidman (1962, pp. 24) stated that “the business of business is business and the only social responsibility is to increase profit”. This argument was later supported by Sloan (1964, pp. 46) who argued that “the strategic aim of a business is to earn a return on capital, and if in any particular case the return in the long run is not satisfactory, then the deficiency should be corrected or the activity abandoned for more favourable one”. In other words firm activities should be aimed at profitability and the achievement of bottom line. Given the objectives of the study, the profit maximization philosophy of the purpose of business is considered appropriate and adopted accordingly. This position is adopted because firms operating under this philosophy are more likely to deliberately take actions to enhance their brand’s equity.

2.4.2 The Social Responsibility Philosophy

The second school of thought points out that the profit maximization argument is deficient as it cannot adequately explain the purpose of business in the real world. The actual market place is a network of interdependence where the actions or inactions of other stakeholders influence on organization in its pursuit of economic profit. A business organization is thus not an island unto itself because all organizations are part of a social system. The social responsibility philosophy of business which is generally referred to in the literature as the

societal marketing concept or corporate social responsibility seeks the welfare of the society in the pursuit of business (Kotler, 2003; Kotler and Lee, 2005; Luo and Bhattacharya, 2009; McWilliams and Siegel, 2001). The concept dictates that a firm's actions and decisions must not only be aimed at providing customer satisfaction and profit but must also be concerned with the general welfare of society. It is interesting to note however, that preceding the profit maximization arguments, scholars had long theorized on CSR, when they argued that a firm's responsibility includes the maintenance of equitable and working balance among the various stakeholders. In other words, the organization should be liable to people, communities, institutions, and the environment. The concept of CSR is therefore not a new concept in this new millennium. What appears to be new is the increased emphasis (see: Martin et al., 2011; Paine et al., 2005) for social accountability; which is becoming the basis for competitive advantage (Reverte, 2009; Patten, 1991; Smith, 2003; Wood, 1991; Trudel and Cotte, 2009; Parasuraman, 1997); and companies are deploying it in very innovative ways (McDonald and Lai, 2011; Maignan et al., 2005; Bhattacharya and Korschun, 2008; Hinson et al., 2010).

The debate on the two schools of thoughts on the purpose of business from the foregoing discussions may only be useful for theoretical purposes and not for practical application. It is thus, more useful to put companies on a continuum in order to gauge the extent to which a company is profit oriented or socially responsible. The section below discusses the link between profit maximization and the social responsibility philosophy.

2.4.3 Linking Profit Maximization and Social Responsibility Philosophies

Although, the conceptualization of the purpose of business and for that matter "corporate responsibility" or corporate social responsibility" has been done from divergent views. The economic view of CSR means that CSR should lead to the maximization of returns for

shareholders (Zenisek, 1979), while the socially responsibility philosophy advocates a comprehensive societal view where organizations must include the welfare of other stakeholders apart from the interest of shareholders (Brown and Dacin, 1997). Societal orientation in business arguably offers the most sustainable option for company survival in the long run.

Operationalizing the societal marketing concept or the social responsibility concept will require of firms to maintain equitable working balance among the claims of all stakeholder groups. This is why Ofori and Hinson (2007) citing Bowen (1953) reiterated the notion that “businesses exist at the pleasure of society and that their behaviour and methods must fall within the guidelines set by society”. In the same vain, Cyert and March (1963) advised that in taking decisions organizations must not only be interested in the economic but should factor in issues of importance to society. The argument for the need for organizations to factor in general societal needs has gained popularity among managers. This is evidenced in the growing body of literature on CSR (see Branco and Rodrigues, 2006; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2009; Falck and Heblich, 2007; Kotler and Lee, 2005; Wood, 1991).

The question: “what is the purpose of business?” can also be answered by relying on the social contract theory or philosophy as originally advanced in governance and sociology literatures. Based on the social contract theory we can say that “business” cannot be completely divorced from “society”, and that they are intertwined, intricately woven together and that these two entities must necessarily depend on one another to achieve their objectives in the long run (Wood, 1991; Frederick, 1997). In other words, we can conclude our discussion by saying that there are two opposing arguments or philosophies about the purpose of business.

These arguments are not new (McWilliams and Siegel, 2001). The arguments are that:

- (1) A business is set up to make profit and must therefore focus on its legitimate goal of making enough profit for its shareholders (Friedman, 1962; Sloan, 1964).
- (2) A business only holds society's property as a trustee and therefore should be managed in such a way as to accrue benefits to society (Buhmann, 2006; McWilliam and Siegel, 2001; Steiner, 2000). In other words, businesses should also pursue other socially oriented motives in addition to profit maximization.

It is important to note from the preceding argument that neither of the two schools of thought on the purpose of business is without criticisms. The prudent stance is to place these opposing arguments on a continuum in order to be able to operationalize it in practice. Depending on which end an organization is drifted towards, we can say one is more socially responsible than the other; or more profit driven (profit maximization) than the other and vice versa.

2.5 WHY FIRMS ENGAGE IN CSR

The relationship between consumer attitude and behaviour has been established in the marketing literature, but what is in short supply are studies demonstrating the extent of the relationship between attitude and behaviour on one side and CSR on the other (McDonald and Lai, 2011). Notwithstanding this observation, some studies have suggested that firms experience various bottom-line benefits for pursuing social responsibility objectives. Murray and Vogel (1997) for instance concluded that multiple programmes of socially responsible business practices led to improved attitudes towards the firm. It has also been revealed by Sen and Bhattacharya (2001) that CSR activities by firms enhance how consumers evaluate such firms. Generally, scholars and advocates of CSR have argued that customers who are exposed to a firm's CSR activities develop stronger attitudes and purchase intentions than those who

were not exposed (Sen et al., 2006; Wigley, 2008). In other words customers who are exposed or have knowledge of a firm's CSR initiatives are likely to develop positive attitude towards the firm and its brand. This is to say that CSR initiatives of firms can enhance brand awareness, brand image, perceived brand quality, and brand loyalty among customers (Keller, 1993). Although extant literature has mentioned several benefits of corporate social responsibility, these benefits can broadly be grouped into six key bottom-line benefits. These benefits include: increased sales and market share, strengthened brand positioning, enhanced corporate image and clout, increased ability to attract, motivate, and retain employees, decreased operating costs, and increased appeal to investors and financial analysts (Kotler and Lee, 2005). These benefits are discussed below:

CSR Increases Sales and Market Share

Kotler and Lee (2005) report on an executive study by the 2000 Cone/Roper Cause Initiative Study which sought to ascertain the impact of cause initiatives from the corporate perspective. The study concluded that firms stand to enjoy certain benefits from associating themselves to a given cause or corporate social responsibility initiative (Brown and Dacin, 1997; Barone et al., 2000; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2004). The study by Cone/Roper (2000) according to Kotler and Lee (2005) offered very interesting statistics and observations as follows:

- Eighty-four percent of those who were surveyed claim to have a more positive image of companies that engage in activities aimed at making the world a better place.
- Seventy-eight percent of adults are more likely to buy a product associated with a cause they cared about.
- Sixty-six percent of the respondents said they would switch brands to support a cause they cared about.

- Sixty-two percent of the respondents said they would switch retail stores to support a cause.
- Sixty-four percent are of the opinion that cause-related marketing should be a standard part of company's activities.
- It was also observed that cause-related marketing activities had the strongest impact on people in higher education and income categories.

From the above, it can be argued that there is some evidence to indicate that corporate involvement in social responsibility initiatives holds the potential of increasing brand preferences among consumers (Barone et al., 2000; Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001). This position is upheld by the 2002 Cone Corporate Citizenship Study. In the study 84 percent of Americans said “they would be likely to switch brands to one associated with a good cause, if price and quality are similar”. In other words involvement in corporate social initiatives increases the likelihood of brand preference among customers (Kotler and Lee, 2005). A classic example of company's corporate social responsibility initiatives potential to increase sales and market potential is captured in Kotler and Lee (2005, p.81) which reports on American Express campaign for the restoration of the Statue of Liberty as “Instead of just writing a cheque to help with the cause, American Express tried a new approach, and the marketing world was watching. The company pledged that every time cardholders used their cards, the company would make a contribution to a fund to restore the Statue of Liberty, as well as an additional contribution for every new card application. The campaign generated \$1.7 million in funds for “the lady,” a 27 percent increase in card usage, and a 10 percent jump in new card membership applications.”

CSR Strengthens Brand Positioning

Today's customers are not only concerned about the functional benefits of products but are also concerned with some emotional benefits or psychological needs (Kotler and Lee, 2005). These needs relate to “the emotional and psychological aspects of brand personality and image” (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007; Kotler and Lee, 2005). This is to say that consumers expect marketing initiatives that contains larger amounts of “social content”. Kotler and Lee (2005) explained these marketing initiatives as any activity by a marketer that is geared towards making “tangible improvements to social welfare.” This assertion will mean that consumers are likely to rate high a company that undertakes visible and verifiable CSR initiative such as making philanthropic contributions (Du and Bhattacharya, 2007) in the area of say sanitation, education, and health than one that offers freebies on purchases.

CSR Improves Corporate Image and Clout

A company's image has impact on its relationship with various stakeholders including customers, policy makers, the local community, government agencies and policy makers (Brickson, 2005; Clarke and Gibson-Sweet, 1999; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2004; Brown and Dacin, 1997). This will mean that prudent companies will focus on activities that border on improving corporate image and clout. In view of the inherent potential of corporate social responsibility initiatives in terms of image, world acclaimed reports of entities such as Fortunes, The Council on Economic Priorities, Business for Social Responsibility, Business Ethics, the Global Reporting Initiative, Social Accountability 8000, the Interfaith Centre on Corporate Responsibility, the Keidanren Charter for Good Corporate Behaviour, the Caux Round Table among many others have held strongly to the view that corporate social responsibility can indeed improve corporate image and clout (Brown and Dacin, 1997). This is mainly due to the free publicity that these entities give to the deserving companies.

Scholars have also pointed out that companies are likely to come under less scrutiny from government agencies where these companies have reputation of satisfying customer needs while also engaging in corporate social initiatives that are not required by law. According to Kotler and Lee (2005) and Bhattacharya and Sen (2004), a company's reputation in terms of social responsibility initiatives can influence community reaction in times of crisis. For instance, Melcom's strong reputation in the Ghanaian retail market might have contributed to some extent the sympathy the company received during a recent collapse of one of its shopping malls in Accra.

CSR Increases Ability to Attract, Motivate, and Retain Employees

Corporate social responsibility literature has drawn attention to the fact that, company's corporate social initiatives generally have positive impact on both current and prospective employees (see Bhattacharya et al., 2008; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2009; Kotler and Lee, 2005; McWilliams and Siegel, 2001; Fry and Polonsky, 2004; Falck and Heblich, 2007). The implication is that employees will prefer to work in companies with reputable records or image of social responsibility engagements and vice versa. Kotler and Lee (2005) reports that, in a survey by Net Impact, over fifty percent of the 2100 MBA students surveyed claimed that they would accept a lower salary in order to work for a socially responsible company.

CSR Decreases Operating Cost

Decreased operating cost is one objective that many companies pursue as competition intensifies and customers and stockholders demand value for their monies and investments respectively. Many companies, especially those in the advanced economies among other strategies have embraced the need to reduce waste, reuse materials, recycle, and conserve

water and electricity in the entire value delivery system (Kotler and Lee, 2005). Interestingly, as companies take steps to reduce operating costs through these measures, they also get some residual or incidental benefits in the form of rebates and free publicity from supplies, regulators and other pressure groups (World Business Council for Sustainable Development, 2003).

CSR Increases Firms' Appeal to Investors and Financial Analysts

To show how corporate social responsibility initiatives, is gaining currency in the investor and financial markets, Kotler and Lee (2005, p.17) quoted a Financial Times article of July 2003 written by Jane Fuller which reads:

“It pains me to say this, but I am becoming less cynical about Corporate Social Responsibility. This is not because of the weight of words expended on this subject by companies, lobbyists, and politicians. It is because companies that are less exposed to social, environmental, and ethical risks are more highly valued by the market... In other words, investors are already pricing in social, environmental, and ethical factors. This is not sentimental behaviour. It represents a cool appraisal of various costs.”

The point here is that corporate social initiatives of companies have the potential of increasing stock prices or values. Engagement in corporate social initiatives is thus considered useful because of some evidence of a company's ability to attract new investors and reduce exposure to risk in the event of corporate or management crisis (Kotler and Lee, 2005). According to a report by Business for Social Responsibility (2004), companies perceived as engaging in ethical, social and environmental initiatives may have certain advantages in acquiring capital from some mutual funds and large pension funds (Kotler and Lee, 2005). It has also been revealed that companies that are generally acclaimed as socially

responsible tend to achieve better financial results and vice versa. On the other hand, it has also been suggested that a company's stock prices falls at least in the short run, where the company and or its brand receives negative word of mouth advertising or damaging publicity due to unethical conducts.

2.6 TYPES OF CSR INITIATIVES AND THEIR POTENTIAL BENEFITS

Corporate social initiatives “refer to major activities undertaken by a corporation to support social causes and to fulfil commitments to corporate social responsibility.” Kotler and Lee (2005) identified six major initiative options that a company may pursue as its corporate social responsibility. These initiatives which are discussed below include: cause promotions, cause-related marketing, corporate social marketing, corporate philanthropy, community volunteering, and socially responsible business practices.

2.6.1 Cause Promotions as a Type of CSR Initiative

Under Cause Promotion, the company supports social causes through some promotional sponsorship (Kotler and Lee 2005). These kinds of promotion may come in the form of the company providing resources or contributing other resources of the company in support of a given social cause or concern. Cause promotions are considered useful among companies because of certain perceived benefits that may accrue to companies that engage in this kind of CSR initiative (Du et al. 2007; Fombrun et al. 2000; Lichtenstein et al. 2004; Sen and Bhattacharya 2001; Sen et al. 2006; Turban and Greening 1997). Cause Promotions has the inherent potential of building corporate reputation, it can be deplored strategically to support specific marketing objectives such as to increase brand awareness and to increase sales. For instance cause promotion can engender customer loyalty and convert customers into company or brand ambassadors and champions who engage in advocacy behaviours (Du et

al. 2010) such as engaging positive word of mouth advertising, commitment and increase willingness to pay premium prices, and resilience to negative publicity about the company and its brand (Du et al. 2007). Cause promotions can also be used to build perceptions of good corporate citizenship among members of the community. A company engaged in cause promotions may also have the benefit of being able to attract and retaining motivated human resource (Sen et al. 2006). Notwithstanding the above benefits, cause sponsorships can pose certain challenges or concerns to the company (Bhattacharya et al. 2008; Du et al. 2007; Sen et al. 2006; Yoon et al. 2006; Kotler and Lee, 2005; Forehand and Grier 2003). First, consumers may have different perceptions as to the real intentions of the company. These customer scepticisms if not well addressed, can affect the brand's equity. Engaging in cause promotions can be financially expensive and also time consuming. For instance, the company may receive several requests for contributions from companies connected to the cause (Kotler and Lee, 2005). It may be difficult for companies to track total investments and return on promotional investments. This is especially the case where the investments have non-monetary components such as employee time.

Unlike in the case of corporate social marketing, where the object is to achieve behaviour change, cause promotions are usually aimed at awareness creation “without a call to action” and, therefore difficult to gauge. Scholars have also argued that “visibility” for the corporation can get lost.” This may stem from the practice where the information and logos of the supporting or sponsoring companies all use one platform through the process of co-branding. Customers may suffer from confused branding as the co-branded platform may send confusing messages about the brand or company. Sometimes, the position of a company's name or logo on the platform can be a contributory factor to the loss of visibility. According to some scholars (Bhattacharya et al. 2008; Sen et al. 2006; Kotler and Lee, 2005)

companies may find it difficult to benefit from cause promotions in terms of competitive advantage. They attributed the difficulty to the ease with which other competing companies can emulate such cause promotion initiatives.

Although there are challenges to cause promotion, businesses can still benefit from such initiatives (Du et al. 2007) where certain conditions are met according to Kotler and Lee (2005). It is critical that companies focus on cause promotion issues that are in harmony with the company's brands, strategy, vision and values. The cause must be one that can engage the attention and commitment of management beyond the short term. Another critical factor is that, the cause should be one that can receive attention and publicity from the media and must also be considered valuable to both actual and potential customers. Kotler and Lee (2005) also advised on the need to develop a cause promotion plan that ensures strong partnerships and visibility for the sponsoring company's brands. Such a plan should also provide some criteria for assessing the objective(s) of the cause promotions.

2.6.2 Cause-Related Marketing as a Type of CSR Initiative

Cause-related marketing (CRM) is gaining momentum over the years as a viable marketing tool for improving the performance of companies while contributing to worthy causes (Irwin et al. 2003; Barone et al. 2000; Barnes and Fitzgibbons, 1992; Drumwright, 1996). CRM refers to CSR initiative where a company makes contribution(s) or donation of a percentage of revenues to a specific cause based on the product sales or usage. Like cause promotion, cause-related marketing is also an undertaking to establish strong relationship with a given community and also to achieve the marketing objective(s) of the company such as attracting new customer, reaching niche markets, increasing product sales, and building positive brand identity. CRM can also serve as a strategy for raising huge funds (Du et al. 2007; Sen et al.

2006; Kotler and Lee, 2005; Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001; Brown and Dacin, 1997; Ross et al. 1992).

CRM possess some potential concerns to marketers. Coordinating Cause-related activities with cause partners can be generally a time-demanding undertaking. It may also be considerably expensive in terms of the financial commitments and time commitments by employees. Consumers may also be sceptical about the company's actual motives and commitment to CRM (Barone et al. 2000; Brown and Dacin, 1997). Kotler and Lee (2005) observed some specific potential concerns associated with cause-related marketing. First, they observed the need to draw up contractual agreements which specifies contribution conditions between the company and the targeted charity. The company must also examine various legal restrictions and possible disclosures that needed to be adhered to. Again, the company together with other entities involved in a particular cause-related marketing programme need to set up a reliable tracking system in order to "ensure consumer commitments are fulfilled".

Another potential concern has to do with the observation that, items that are sometimes given as donations are of little value or significance to the recipients. This will require the company to commit financial resources to promotions in order to achieve the expected goal of the cause related marketing initiative (Kotler and Lee, 2005). This situation has the potential of making consumers raise doubt about the true intent of the philanthropic donations and its associated promotional campaign. Consumers may attribute profit motives to such campaigns thereby undermining the supposed philanthropic objectives of the campaign (Brown and Dacin, 1997). It has also been pointed out that some customers who may not like the brand or the company's association with a particular cause may stop patronizing the brand seemingly

because of such associations. Such customer dislike may stem from their personal values and idiosyncrasies. Cause-related marketing can also be challenging in terms of getting partners to agree on common promotional strategy. This challenge may stem from the fact the partners may be interested in reaching different target markets with the same cause-related marketing campaign.

Arguably, most companies can undertake cause-related marketing activities. Typically, cause-related marketing can succeed where the company's brand(s) to be used for the campaign has mass appeal with well-developed channels of distribution. The brand should be such that it has the potential of benefiting from product differentiation while at the same time giving consumers a platform to contribute to an important charitable cause. Cause-related marketing is also considered appropriate when increased product sales, brand visibility, co-branding with a popular cause supports corporate marketing objectives and goals for the product. According to Kotler and Lee (2005) companies' with large market shares, well established and wide distribution channels stand to benefit from CRM.

2.6.3 Corporate Social Marketing as a Type of CSR Initiative

This type of CSR initiative or option is usually aimed at supporting behaviour change campaigns. Corporate social marketing efforts may lead to the development and or implementation of social marketing strategies or campaign in areas such as the environment, community well-being, public health, safety among others. Whereas cause promotions is interested in supporting awareness, fundraising, and volunteer recruitment for a given cause, corporate social marketing aims at changing behaviour of a given social target group. Behaviour change campaign is undertaken by both the public and private sector organizations. However, Kotler and Lee (2005) observed that it is usually sponsored by

public sector agencies and or not for profit organizations. These scholars also cite examples of employees volunteering in a classroom. Kotler and Lee (2005) gives an example of a corporate social marketing practice where a company sponsors bank days at elementary schools where parents and team volunteers work with students to open savings accounts and make regular deposits.

Corporate social marketing initiatives like the other types of CSR initiatives discussed earlier holds certain potential benefits that may accrue to the sponsoring company. First, it can enhance or build a company's reputation, and generally enable the achievement of business goals. The company may also increase its chances of attracting, and retaining motivated employees. The pursuit of corporate social marketing can support marketing objectives and also build strong community relationship for the company (Wigley, 2008; Wood, 1991). From the literature, corporate social marketing possess some potential concerns to the company engaged in the initiative. Coordination with cause partners can be time consuming. The planning and the execution of social marketing programme can be demanding in terms of employee time and involvement. It has also been observed that social marketing programmes can be expensive in promotional expenditure and may also require that companies seek the services or expertise of professionals or bureaucrats or outside agencies for effective planning and or execution. For example, corporate social marketing campaign for safe abortion will require the expert opinion of surgeons and gynaecologists. According to Kotler and Lee (2005), marketers need to acknowledge and plan for the potential downsides to social marketing campaigns. First, the company needs to realize what issues is good match for the company and which ones are not. This is because consumers may be suspicious or sceptical of the motives of the company in undertaking particular social marketing issues (Brown and Dacin, 1997). Another challenge with corporate social marketing is that behaviour may not

often yield immediate result and therefore requires a lot of time and other resources to achieve the needed results or impact.

Corporate social marketing is aimed at behavioural change and is considered most appropriate under the following circumstances or situations (Kotler and Lee, 2005):

- (i) When the social issue under consideration can lead to individual behaviour change among members of the targeted community.
- (ii) When the primary objectives of an initiative are to support corporate marketing goals and objectives, versus corporate giving or community involvement agendas.
- (iii) When the amount of money that is to be used to support a chosen socially responsible issue is coming primarily from the marketing department and can therefore provide for easy management and integration into marketing communication.
- (iv) When the expected behaviour from the social marketing campaign can be tied to one or more corporate products and then integrated into their features, pricing, distribution channels, and promotions.

2.6.4 Corporate Philanthropy as a Type of CSR Initiative

Godfrey (2005) made a very profound contribution to the literature on corporate philanthropy with the observation that: (1) corporate philanthropy can generate positive moral capital among communities and stakeholders, (2) moral capital can provide shareholders with insurance-like protection for a firm's relationship-based intangible assets, and (3) this protection contributes to shareholder wealth. Generally, scholars (e.g. Kotler and Lee, 2005; Brown and Dacin, 1997) see corporate philanthropy as making direct contributions to a charity or cause. These contributions often come in the form of cash grants, donations, or in-

kind services. Thus, a company may provide cash donations, offering grants, awarding scholarships, donating products, donating services, providing technical expertise, allowing the use of facilities and distribution channels, offering the use of equipment among others.

According to Kotler and Lee (2005) “corporate philanthropy is perhaps the most traditional of all corporate social initiatives and for many decades was approached in a responsive, even ad hoc manner”. Many scholars (Bhattacharya et al. 2009; Brown and Dacin, 1997; Handelman and Arnold, 1999) have observed the increasing pressure on companies to tie their philanthropic activities to their corporate objectives. This call for strategic focus will mean that companies will have to focus their philanthropic activities to their business goals and objectives.

The challenge of corporate philanthropy is how to ensure effective management and utilization of donations. There may be the concern among shareholders of their companies donating to causes that should be the government’s mandate to fix. Unlike cause promotions, cause-related marketing, and socially marketing efforts where the sponsoring company receive high visibility and publicity, corporate philanthropy are often less visible. Scholars noted that social responsibility options such as cause promotions, cause-related marketing, corporate social marketing, have inherent potential in giving visibility to the company among the members of the community or the target market (Bhattacharya et al. 2009; Godfrey, 2005; Kotler and Lee, 2005). They argued that these initiatives are often accompanied with campaign activities in the media. It was also noted that socially responsible business practices and community volunteering also generate publicity. The later in particular is said to possess

unique elements which helps in building strong personal relationship and bonding between the sponsoring company's employees and members of the beneficiary community.

There are two main views on communicating philanthropic activities. One view is that publicizing such donations creates doubt and scepticism among customers as to the real intent of such donations and should therefore be discouraged. There is also the observation among some scholars (see: Kotler and Lee, 2005; Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001 etc.) that philanthropic donations by companies creates brand awareness and knowledge which intend influence customer purchase decisions. It has been pointed out that philanthropic corporate initiatives are the most common of all types of corporate social responsibilities (see; Kotler and Lee, 2005; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2004). Philanthropic activities are usually considered where the company has explicit or implicit philanthropic goals or agenda. It is also undertaken when the organizations and agencies in a given community stands to benefit from excess or idle corporate resources.

2.6.5 Community Volunteering as a Type of CSR Initiative

Community volunteering has to do with community providing volunteer services in the community. Typically, community volunteering is manifest in a company supporting and encouraging its employees, retailers, or agents to provide certain services such as volunteering their time and effort in support of a cause and or an organization in a given local community (Kotler and Lee, 2005). Not for profit organizations may partner with companies in this regard and may include activities such as cleaning and distilling of gutters, or planting trees to check erosion. Scholars have noted the benefits of such social responsibility initiatives as including, building corporate reputation, and contributing to the companies' business goals. It also helps in building strong community relationships. Community

volunteering is also seen as a powerful tool in terms of its potential to attract, and retain a motivated workforce. However, there challenges associated with community volunteering. Visibility for corporate efforts can easily be lost. It may expensive in terms of staff time and involvement. Tracking resource expenditures and outcomes for community volunteering can be expensive and difficult to track.

From the literature, companies typically undertake community or employee volunteering activities under the following circumstances:

- (i) When an employee volunteering services can enhance an ongoing social initiatives by the company or from other entities.
- (ii) When the company's employees show an interest in a particular social cause that has strong links with business and corporate citizenship goals.
- (iii) When the skills and resources of employees matches very well with an eminent community need.
- (iv) When an important entity in the community request for support which relates well with the company's corporate social responsibility and business objectives.
- (v) When employee volunteer effort holds a potential of opening new markets or provide opportunities for the company research and develop new products.

2.6.6 Socially Responsible Business Practices as a Type of CSR Initiative

Socially responsible business practice involves a company adopting and conducting discretionary business practices and investments that supports social causes. An example of such practices is a company providing on-the-job training for high school interns. Like the other social responsibility initiatives, it builds corporate reputation, and contributes to business goals. It also builds strong community relationships and reduces operating cost. A

company that is socially responsible can benefit from reduced regulatory oversight. The company can also attract and retain a motivated workforce (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2009). Extant literature has identified certain challenges or potential concerns with socially responsible business practice. The common perceptions include is that people may be sceptical of the corporation's motives; they may be on the look out to see if the company fulfil its promises or back its words with specific actions (Morsing and Schultz, 2006; Murray and Vogel, 1997; Nielsen and Thomsen, 2009; Petty et al., 1981). Some of the company's stakeholders may be interested in knowing whether a socially responsible business practice or initiative is for a short-term or will receive long-term commitment from the company. Stakeholders are also likely want to ascertain the chances of the new practices make important differences in the community. In other words stakeholders will want to be able to measure the impact of socially responsible business practices. It is also useful to note that starting or announcing a new socially responsible business practice may lead to stakeholders wanting to know the company's business practices in the past. Another concern relating to socially responsible business practices is that stakeholders become interested in the outcome of the company's initiatives. Socially responsible business practice can be challenging as it may require external knowledge and expertise. Consumers may misconstrue or be sceptical of corporate motivations and commitment (Kotler and Lee, 2005).

According to Maignan et al.(1999) and McClintock and Allison (1989), an introduction of a typical socially responsible business practices should at least improve the quality of life of the beneficiaries, and or generate some benefits to the company such as financial benefits, operational efficiency, improved relationship with stakeholders and other marketing related benefits. In this regard, certain situations or peculiar circumstances for initiating socially responsible business practices as follows:

- (i) When the company expects or have been offered financial incentives to change a particular business practice(s)
- (ii) When a business practice of a company have been criticize or somehow been linked to an important social problem
- (iii) When alteration or acceptance of a new business practice possess a potential to reduce cost of doing business and at the same time have social benefits.
- (iv) When the new socially responsible business practice(s) is likely to lead to improvement in the health, safety, and general welfare of employees.
- (v) When a particular business practice can serve as basis for differentiation within a given target market
- (vi) When adoption or adherence to a particular socially responsible business practice(s) can enhance the brand's positioning through the formation of alliances with other companies or entities.
- (vii) When the adoption and adherence to a given business practically lead to improvement in product quality or performance.
- (viii) When investment or the practice of a particular business practices improves or strengthens relationships with suppliers and or distributors.

2.7 THEORIES EXPLAINING WHY FIRMS ENGAGE IN CSR

Two main theories, namely, the stakeholder theory and the legitimacy theory have been used to explain why firms engage in CSR in the extant literature. There is also the organizational identity theory which also provides some explanations on why firms engage in CSR. For the purposes of the study, these three theories are considered useful and are reviewed as it enables us to address our research questions.

2.7.1 The Stakeholder Theory of CSR

Stakeholders refer to those “groups and individuals who can affect, or are affected by the achievement of an organization’s mission” (Maon et al. (2009; Reverte, 2009; Freeman, 1984). The origin of the stakeholder concept is said to come from the business science literature (Freeman, 1984) and may be traced way back to the writings of Adam Smith’s work titled “The theory of moral sentiments” (Wagner et al., 2009). The concept was later introduced to modern management literature by Stanford Research Institute in the early sixties (60s) to generalize and expand the notion of the stakeholders as the only group that management needed to be sensitive towards. It is thus, not surprising when Friedman and Miles (2006), observed that, the term “stakeholder” has been deployed indiscriminately in the last two decades. These differences in definition notwithstanding, there is the understanding that a good organization should endeavour to take into consideration the needs, interests and influences of peoples and groups who either impact on or may be impacted by the policies and deeds (Frederick et al., 1992) of the organization.

Stakeholders thus, are any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the activities of the organization (Freeman, 1984). In this regard the crust of stakeholder theory is mainly about building long lasting beneficial relationship (Wilson, 2001). Other usefulness according to Luoma-aho (2007) is that stakeholders’ assessment and expectations has a role to play in shaping an organization’s reputation and giving it legitimacy. Stakeholder theory is said to have contributed to understanding CSR and has received praise for proving a management tool to facilitate CSR (Morsing and Schultz, 2006). As a theory, stakeholder theory can also be criticised for lacking normative standards or clarity (Lalume et. al., 2008). Also, several attempts have been made to categorize the various approaches in stakeholder theory. In spite of these efforts, CSR can still not boast of a comprehensive, easy to understand, and

implementation model. Recognising the challenges to develop some form of consensus on the stakeholder concept, Laplume et al., (2008) asserts that there are certain definitions and critical debates in stakeholder theory. Literature addressing stakeholder theory mostly centres on: definition and salience company action and response, company performance, and theory debates.

In spite of the huge body of knowledge and the warm welcome that greets stakeholder theory in management literature, Luoma-ho and Paloviita (2010) believed that the theory has the inherent assumption that the environments of stakeholders in which businesses operate are static. The two scholars noted (and rightly so) that the environment of stakeholders and other developments in the society confronting businesses are never static. This is because the environment will continuously be characterized by new developments (Vos and Schoemaker, 2005; Luoma-ho and Paloviita, 2010). Thus, to Foley and Kendrick (2006), the stakeholder environment can best be described as a “fragile ecosystem”. It has been pointed out that the dynamic nature of this ecosystem has not been fully addressed (Wu, 2007).

The challenges therefore according to Hansen et al. (2004) are that the stakeholder concept can best be described as “vague in scope” due to its ambiguity when it comes to interpretation. Thus, depending on how a firm understands it or what it intends to achieve, stakeholders may be defined in a very narrow sense or in a very broad sense as the case may be. Fassin (2008) revealed that these differences mainly emanate from whether one is leaning more towards a legal interpretation or management interpretation of stakeholder. The legal interpretation will be guided by the rights, obligations and duties of the parties as may be stipulated in contracts or agreements. The managerial interpretation of stakeholder on the other hand emphasise the pragmatic relational aspects between various stakeholders and the

firm. Pesqueux et al. (2005) made this contribution by drawing on organizational theory and sociology.

It is interesting to state that the principle or philosophy of CSR does not seem to present any ambiguities except the challenges associated with two main questions:

- (1) Who or what constitute a firm's stakeholders?
- (2) What level of responsibility should the firm have towards its stakeholders?

In addressing these questions, Fassin (2008), identified three types of firm's stakeholders whose needs must engage the attention of the firm. These groups of stakeholders are described below:

- (i) **The real stakeholders**- this group of stakeholders have legitimate "claim and power". The influence possessed by this group is reciprocal in nature. The firm's responsibilities towards this group are not so much in doubt. The real stakeholder group include shareholders, customers, employees, business partners, and communities.
- (ii) **The stakewatchers**- The firm has little power on and no responsibility for these indirect stakeholders. The legitimacy of this group is derivative according to Philips (2003). The stakewatchers group include all stakeholders who look after a stake with care, attention and scrutiny just as watchdogs do. Stakewatchers include employees and workers union, consumer associations, investor associations protecting the interest of shareholders; and activists watching the stake of the community and the environment.

(iii) **The stakekeepers-** is another group who are even further removed from the active real stakeholders: the independent regulators, who have no stake in the firm but have influence and control. They impose regulations and constraints, while the firm has little reciprocal direct impact on them. The term gatekeeper or stakekeeper connotes some form of outside or independent monitor with some power to screen out or at least to grade or rate the persons or entities he scrutinises. For example, in Ghana the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the Registrar General, Environmental Protection Agency and Ghana Standards Board are agencies that ensure that companies are acting in accordance with laid down rules and regulations governing doing business in a given jurisdiction. In essence they give certification or approval, which the company needs in its relationship with important stakeholders (Coffee, 2006). The state acting through its agencies like laboratories, certification and evaluative authorities, law enforcement bodies like the police, and the adjudication authorities like the court is the major stakekeeper. The authority of the state or government as the major and perhaps the most influential stakekeeper is embedded in specific laws, rules, regulations, norms, and in other written materials or declarations.

The above categorization is no doubt useful in terms of informing the firm on the three interrelated stakeholder group and the nature and relevance of their power vis a vis the firm's profitability and survival in the marketplace. Recent study by Muthuri and Gilbert (2011) in Kenya brought to the fore what drives CSR in Kenya. They mentioned lack of government capacity to enforce regulation, the establishment of vibrant CSR institutions, and also a vibrant civil society. The study is particularly useful as it throws more light on how the action or inaction of external stakeholders can kick start CSR activities in some communities.

Although the stakeholder view of the firm has overwhelmingly captured the attention of the business world, the issue requiring fixing bothers on the seemingly conflicting interests of the various stakeholders, being it the real stakeholders, the stakewatchers, or the stakekeepers as conceptualized by Fassin (2008). The concerns of various stakeholders are captured by Maignan et al., (2005) as follows:

Employees: - are concerned with compensation and benefits, training and development, employee diversity, occupational health and safety and communication with management.

Customers: - are concerned with the safety and quality of the product or service, effective and efficient customer complaints management, non-discrimination policy for all including the physically challenged persons.

Shareholders/Investors: - are concerned with transparency of shareholder communication and rights on all aspects of the value chain.

The community: - are concerned with public health and safety, energy conservation, material donations to organizations and deserving individuals.

The environment groups: - are usually concerned with efficient energy usage, emissions, waste management and the general impact emanating from the production and marketing of goods and services on people and the environment.

The government and its agencies: - are concerned with compliance with the laws governing doing business which includes tax declaration, labour practices, competitive strategies, use of natural resources among others.

In other words, a socially responsible company can be involved in say, disclosure of information to shareholders, to the board of directors; giving equal treatment to vulnerable and underrepresented groups such as minorities and other forms of discrimination which are based on gender, age, religion, and race; various forms of environmental responsibility such

as reducing of hazardous emissions, recycling of waste matter; engaging in philanthropic gestures such as donating to orphanages, and other community initiatives. All of these can contribute to the wellbeing of the community. Taking it to its logical conclusions one can say that the meaning of stakeholder can be infinitely elastic. This argument notwithstanding, it is obvious no firm can survive if it has to reach out to all possible stakeholders. Categorizing stakeholders according to their strategic importance to the firm and society so as to know what is expected of the organization at any given time (Fassin, 2008) can therefore not be overemphasised. The concern for marketing management, from this preposition will thus be on how to cater for the varying needs of various stakeholder groups in a given time space (see Post et al., 2002).

The benefits that stakeholders derive, may not always be tangible, but sometimes intangible in nature, or both and for CSR initiatives to provide returns to the company, they must first provide a return to particular stakeholder group or group(s) (Bhattacharya et al., 2009). What is worth noting about the stakeholder theory in academic literature is the proposition that a socially responsible organization “negotiates” various social contracts with different stakeholder groups, rather than one generic contract with society in general (Reverte, 2009, cited in McDonald and Lai, 2011). Among the various stakeholder groups, customers are particularly susceptible to a firm’s CSR engagements (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2004) and it is becoming increasingly important in their purchase and consumption related decisions according to Wagner et al., (2009). This assertion was given credence by a poll by Cone/Roper, a strategic marketing firm in the United States which concluded that organization’s support of causes did encouraged consumer purchase intention(Cone Corporation Citizenship Study, 2004). Consumers thus tend to favour or reward CSR oriented firms as pointed out by Maignan and Ferrell (2004). Despite the foregoing debate and

discussion, academics are still in the dark as they are unable to explain, let alone predict the outcome of CSR initiatives with precision (Bhattacharya et al., 2009).

2.7.2 The Legitimacy Theory of CSR

Another theory that offers some explanations as to why firms engage in CSR is known as the legitimacy theory. CSR and legitimacy theory are said to be two sides of the same coin. Scholarly contributions such as Moir, (2001), Suchman (1995) explained that firms' CSR initiatives are meant to do three interrelated things. The assertion from these scholars is that, first organizations embark on CSR to gain legitimacy, secondly to maintain legitimacy and finally and most importantly to achieve legitimacy in a given market or society. Legitimacy theory states that organizations can only secure their existence if they are perceived as operating within the values and norms of the society (Gray et al., 1996).

According to Farache and Parks (2010), legitimacy for the organization is based on the idea that there is a social contract between business and society in which society allows the company to operate as long as it behaves in accordance with society's norms and values. In other words, legitimacy is threatened when a company's behaviour is perceived as not in accordance with society's norms. In explaining how companies achieve legitimacy, Branco and Rodrigues (2006) posited that companies within industries that may have greater environmental and social impacts are expected to disclose environmental information in order to secure their legitimacy. The question one should ask is who confers legitimacy status on socially responsible companies. Ferrel et al. (2002) seem to have answered this question when they stated that the objectives of companies' actions are to maximize the positive impact on stakeholders and minimize the negative impact. It is important to note that legitimacy theory on its own may not adequately explain CSR. It is thus critical to identify

the seeming interdependence or the interrelationship between legitimacy and the stakeholder theory which are both necessary constructs for understanding CSR, as there is in reality no meaningful dichotomy between the two perspectives.

In order to gain legitimacy therefore, a company may disclose its CSR activities to its stakeholders (Hinson et al. 2010). Legitimacy theory therefore requires a company to first engage in CSR; secondly, disclose the CSR information in order to portray a socially responsible image; and thirdly, receive a stamp of legitimacy from the targeted stakeholders. Patten (1991) pointed out that companies that deal directly with consumers, especially those with greater flexibility will tend to take issues of community involvement into consideration. Furthermore, larger companies are predisposed to receiving more attention from the public than smaller companies. Consequently, legitimacy theory has been widely used to explain social and environmental disclosures by corporations focusing mainly on corporate social and environmental reports (Hooghiemstra, 2000; Branco and Rodrigues, 2006). According to Lindblom (1994) an organization can make use of four different communicational legitimization strategies in response to public pressure. These are:

1. Inform stakeholders regarding the intention of the organization to improve its performance.
2. Attempt to change the perceptions stakeholders have regarding events without changing corporate behaviour.
3. Divert attention from the problem by focusing on a positive activity not linked with the problem.
4. Try to change stakeholders' expectation regarding the company performance.

Clarke and Gibson (1999) however suggested that CSR can be better understood as a means of reinforcing both reputation and legitimacy, as it provides an opportunity to communicate to stakeholders the congruence of the organization with societal concerns. From the foregoing, it is reasonable to argue that CSR can lead to legitimacy for the firm; and that the achievement of legitimacy creates the basis for achieving customer-based brand equity. In other words, for the firm to achieve CBBE it must first achieve legitimacy among stakeholders.

2.7.3 The Organizational Identity Theory of CSR

Another theoretical explanations of why firms practice CSR, is discussed below by looking at the relationship between firm identity and institutional response. Identity is the organizational mechanism by which firms formulate normative responses (Gioia et al. 2010; Brown et al. 2006). Organizational identity is the combinative construal of firm culture, history, structure, characteristics, status and reputation with competitors, customers, and society at large, and it is formulated and cemented over time (Brown et al. 2006; Scott and Lane 2000). It comprises both internal and self-reflective components as well as the external activities (Gioia et al. 2000, 2010), which provides a rich perspective about identity as the organizational response function.

Identity involves all that is central, distinctive, and enduring about a firm (Albert and Whetten 1985), conveyed through mission, vision, actions, and association of the firm's values and goals (Brickson 2005). Indeed, organizational identity theory does provide some understanding on the factors that inform and drive organizational goals and strategic objectives (e.g., Brickson 2007). Put simply, identity involves both how internal constituents and stakeholders see the firm and how external constituents and stakeholders see it (Gioia et

al. 2010; Sen et al. 2006; Voss et al. 2000). Organizational identity is both relational and comparative in that it involves a balance of individuality and distinctiveness with relational similarities but also comparisons to desirable and aspirational firms (Tajfel and Turner 1985).

When faced with societal expectations and pressures from external institutions, firms draw from components of their identities such as structures, practices, and routines, to fashion out responses that will be viewed favourably by these important institutions (Handelman 2006). Further, according to organizational theory, firms morph to reflect institutional preferences and socially desirable characteristics of competitors and other constituencies that they observe in the market place (Handelman and Arnold 1999). Driven by the external aspirational components of their identity, firms use isomorphic behaviour to attain legitimacy in the face of normative pressures (Grewal and Dharwadkar, 2002). Through processes of habitualizing, responses to norms in the light of institutional expectations become further cemented in the identity, which continue to preserve core processes and structures (Grewal and Dharwadkar 2002; Singhapakdi and Vitell 2007). Given that identity is a key driver of firm choices, decisions, and ultimately normative responses (Voss et al. 2006), it follows that social responsibility and ethical augmentation as a response to the institutional environment derives from the organizational identity (Handelman 2006; Smith 2003). The resource scarcity characterizing most firms means that CSR engagements, like other strategic moves, are carefully planned and accommodated accordingly (Luo and Bhattacharya 2006, 2009).

A firm that has developed CSR identity incorporates CSR and ethics in all its practices, processes, and structures, as well as its interactions with customers, competitors, and the community (Balmer et al. 2009; Sen et al. 2006). The drive for strategic advantage, market dominance, and performance may predominate in a firm's identity such that CSR and ethical

augmentation in marketing practices can entail a calculated socially responsible image or otherwise (e.g. Hamel and Prahalad 1994,). Put simply, firms may exceed the requirements of the law and or ethical norms because it can serve as a direct source of competitive advantage, thereby increase the value of a firm's brands in the marketplace (Luo and Bhattacharya 2006). It has thus been suggested that consumers value companies and brands that exceed legal and social expectations (CSRwire 2009; Trudel and Cotte 2009).

It is useful to add that being socially responsible beyond the dictates of the law needs to permeate the entire management process and all aspects of a firm's marketing mix. However, such investments elicit favourable responses from the target market and eventually lead to competitive advantages and profitability. It is useful to mention that in today's marketplace information about firm CSR is increasingly becoming public (Brewer et al. 2006; Paine et al. 2005). This trend is perhaps due to the fact that consumers attend to signals of firm CSR and also actively seek CSR information ((Barone et al. 2000; Ellen et al. 2006; Brown and Dacin 1997; Wagner et al. 2009). This knowledge of consumers motivates prudent firms to strive to make CSR information known, as it is considered a source of competitive advantage (Sen and Bhattacharya 2001). Extant literature has noted consumer preference for brands of firms perceived as socially responsible given that the price and quality offered by these brands meet certain minimum standards (e.g., Trudel and Cote 2009). Also where product differentiation is not a major consideration, consumers tend to prefer products and services of firms that are socially responsible (Martin et al., 2011). Firms also initiate CSR activities in order to forestall government regulations and pressure from other important stakeholders. It is thus sometimes difficult to gauge the true intentions of firms engaging in CSR as the motives may be multifaceted (Ellen et al., 2006).

2.8 CSR COMMUNICATION

Communication is important in many endeavours including marketing management. This is so because without communication there cannot be meaningful exchange of value between buyers and sellers (Kotler and Armstrong, 2008). In this section therefore, we will discuss CSR communication in order to achieve the objectives of the study which is to ascertain the importance of CSR in achieving customer-based brand equity (CBBE). Thus the need to understand or review CSR communication is considered useful in understanding the importance of CSR in building CBBE. It has rightly been observed by Wigley (2008), that consumers want to know more about companies' corporate social responsibility activities. The need to review CSR communication can therefore not be overemphasised.

2.8.1 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Attribution of CSR Communication

Scholars have noted that CSR communication is increasingly becoming an important element in strategic business communication. This position is informed by the realization that effective CSR communication holds enormous potential for building and maintaining favourable reputations and relationships with key stakeholders (Nielsen and Thomsen, 2009; Morsing and Schultz, 2006; Cornelissen, 2004). Thus, messages about corporate socially responsible initiatives are likely to evoke strong and often positive reactions among stakeholders. It follows therefore that the more companies expose their ethical and social ambitions, the more likely they are to attract critical stakeholder attention (Ashforth and Gibbs, 1990; Vallentin, 2001). Scholarly contributions on the subject have also not been in short supply as evidenced in the extant literature (Morsing and Schultz, 2006; Maignan et al. 1999). According to Brown and Dacin (1997), CSR initiatives are generally associated with positive corporate virtues that reflect companies' status and activities with respect to its

perceived societal obligations among stakeholders (Morsing, 2003). CSR messages have also been known to attract critical attention from stakeholders (Morsing and Schultz, 2006). Interestingly, these stakeholders are said to be often reluctant to receive too much information about CSR engagements at a time when corporations are being encouraged to engage in CSR to build strong reputations (Morsing, 2003). The expectation is for firms to desist from focusing too intently on CSR communication as such actions has the potential of creating the impression among consumers that the company is trying to hide something (Nielson and Thomsen, 2009; Brown and Dacin, 1997).

Interestingly, there is the opposing basic assumption vocalised in Morsing et al. (2003) that stakeholders and in particular consumers expect substantial information about firm CSR initiatives given that CSR is generally associated with positive and good virtues. Prudent companies wanting to influence public opinion and enhance their corporate reputation are thus, inclined to communicate about their good deeds. Against this backdrop, it is reasonable to expect companies to communicate CSR information in a conspicuous manner (Morsing et al. 2003).

From the foregoing debate, it is clear that there are two main schools of thought on the importance of CSR communication. There are those who advocate aggressive communication of firm CSR and secondly, those who are not against CSR communication per se but advice against firms trying to gain marketing leverage through deliberate and aggressive CSR communication to consumers. The second school of thought go with the position that companies should downplay CSR in their communication strategy. In other words marketing executives should frown upon the use of CSR as a highly visible element of marketing and

public relations. This is because stakeholders may not favour a situation where they are bombarded with too much CSR information from the company (Morsing and Schultz, 2006; Maignan et al. 1999; Brown and Dacin 1997). Du et al. (2010) relying on arguments advanced in Fein and Hilton (1994) is of the view that “stakeholders are likely to refrain from making positive inferences about the corporate identity when they suspect ulterior, self-serving motives”. Taking similar stance is Du et al. (2010, p.8) with the view that:

“Any discrepancies between stakeholders’ perceived CSR motives and a company’s publicly stated motives will trigger stakeholders’ scepticism and feelings of being deceived, which in turn will drive negative reactions to its CSR activities”.

This challenge requires firms to reduce stakeholder scepticism, enhance the credibility of firms’ CSR message and generate goodwill (Du et al. 2010) through the acknowledgement of both intrinsic and extrinsic motives in the communication of CSR. It has been suggested that firms stand to benefit more when they attribute their CSR initiatives to both intrinsic (initiatives enhancing the company’s bottom line or profit) and extrinsic motives (initiatives serving the needs of society or community) rather than solely on any one of these two motives (Du et al. 2010; Sen et al. 2006; Ellen et al. 2006). The thinking is that it is possible for the firm to enhance its bottom line with CSR while providing for the welfare of members of a given society. Thus, minimizing stakeholder scepticism and communicating favourable corporate motives present a major challenge for firms deploying CSR as a strategic marketing tool.

2.8.2 Message Content of CSR Communication

Du et al. (2010) have pointed out that generally, firm CSR message can deal with a given social cause or to a company's specific involvement in a social cause. For instance Nestle can focus on the importance of breastfeeding and try to convince stakeholders to support education of mothers on the health benefits of breastfeeding. As a sponsor of such an advocacy programme, the name of the company or some of its visible or vocal brand elements may be acknowledged briefly. The company may also advertise a particular brand from its product portfolio with the promise to dedicate a percentage towards supporting say Ministry of Health in its educational campaign on breast feeding.

Based on Friestad and Wright (1994), Du et al. (2010, p.10) write: "When the CSR message is predominantly about a social issue (rather than about the company or its products), consumers are more likely to be suspicious of ulterior motives, because such advertising does not fit their 'schemer schema'". To overcome this challenge and build credibility among consumers, Menon and Kahn (2003), advised that companies stress the relevance of the social issue and demonstrate "the lack of vested self-interest" by largely avoiding issues that have logical fit with the company's core business. It must be mentioned however that in practice, CSR communication deals more with specific cause(s) that the company is involved in and not the social cause itself (Du et al. 2010; Forehand and Grier, 2003; Ellen et al., 2006;). In this regard, four key elements in effective CSR communication are given below:

- (1) The company's commitment to a given cause: - here the company may donate funds in kind contributions or providing other resource of the company such as the companies unique expertise in research and development, employee man hour in voluntary services among others. The quantum of the donation, the period/duration of

the donation, and the consistency of the donation are all interesting points that can be emphasized in a company's CSR communication (Du et al. 2010).

- (2) The impact of the company's CSR: - the point here is that the company can communicate the actual or expected societal benefits or impact of the company's CSR to the target audience or stakeholders. Extant literature (see: Du et al. 2010, p.11) provides a classic example of CSR impact communication as follows:

".... in partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund (i.e. UNICEF), Pampers has launched a social initiative, '1 Pack =1 Vaccine' to give tetanus vaccines to expectant women in developing countries, and this saves their newborns from a disease called newborn tetanus. The title of this program clearly communicates the social impact of the program and the impact of consumer's purchase of the Pampers' products designated for the social program."

Although communicating CSR impact is considered an effective strategy, Sen et al. (2009) propose that such communications should be factual devoid of 'bragging.' It has also been suggested that longer term involvement in a social cause are perceived more as genuine concern for the wellbeing of society and vice versa (Webb and Mohr, 1998). In the same vein, Du et al. (2010) observed that perceived societal impact of CSR initiative and consumer intrinsic attribution of the initiative leads to advocacy behaviours towards the company by the consumer.

- (3) The motive of the CSR initiative: - According to Maignan and Ralston (2002), various companies may have different motives that they communicate to target audience. The company may communicate intrinsic motive of 'doing good as the right thing to do' or part of giving back to society. The company may also decide to communicate

emphasizing economic/business consideration of its CSR. In its contribution to the literature on consumer CSR attribution, Ellen et al. (2006) made an interesting observation ‘that consumers often perceive multiple motives, and they understand that companies often seek to achieve certain business goals through their CSR initiatives’. On the basis of the above knowledge of consumer CSR attribution scholars (see: Porter and Kramer, 2006; Forehand and Grier, 2003; Ellen et al. 2006) have advised that companies should be opened by acknowledging extrinsic, firm- serving motives in its CSR message. It is said that such disclosures has the potential of forestalling possible stakeholder skepticism. In other words a company’s CSR communication should not shy away from vocalizing the “convergence of social and business interests.

- (4) Communicating CSR fit: - According to scholars such as Cone (2007) and Haley (1996), companies stand to accrue some benefits where there is a logical fit or association between CSR initiative or cause and the company’s line of business. CSR fit in communication terms has to do with the perceived congruence between a social cause that a company supports or intend to support and the company’s business object (Du et al. 2010; Cone, 2007; Haley, 1996). Normally, it is expected that, CSR fit would be achieved where the cause being supported or sponsored have some common association or logical association with the company and its business interests (Du et al. 2010). Achieving CSR fit may also emanate from some historical antecedents that the company may have with a given market segment or stakeholder group; it could also be due to the brand or the company’s known strong affinity with an entity or segment of the community or group. It is useful to mention however that, other scholars (e.g. Menon and Kahn, 2003; Bloom et al., 2006) have differing views on the subject of CSR fit as they believe that in some situations low CSR fit can actually

create positive perception of the company among target audience or stakeholders. In such circumstances, the company may be seen as genuinely selfless in its pursuit of social responsibility thereby making CSR communication effective.

2.8.3 Channels for CSR Communication

There are a number of channels that can be used by companies to disseminate or communicate CSR messages or information. According to Du et al. (2010) CSR reporting or communication has become a mainstream marketing activity for many companies in recent years. CSR information may be disseminated through annual reports, press releases, and the use of company website. CSR information to target audience may also be done through the medium of television commercials, magazines, bill board advertisements, and product packaging. It is important to add that there are other external media that are to some extent independent of the control of the company in disseminating CSR information. Du et al. (2010) identified the various media houses, customers, monitoring groups, consumer forums, and blogs as some examples of media or channels that may elude the control of the company. The importance of source of communication which is well articulated in the marketing literature (see: Belch and Belch, 2007) is also useful in the discussion of CSR communication. For instance, CSR communication coming directly from the company risk being received with scepticism thereby, making it difficult to pass the credibility test. Such communications are often labelled as propaganda tool of the company (Szykman et al., 2004; Wiener et al., 1990; Yoon et al. 2006; Becker-Olsen et al., 2006). Given the problems of credibility that is associated with corporate sources of CSR communication, Du et al. (2010) recommends that companies should endeavour to “get positive media coverage from independent, unbiased sources, such as editorial coverage on television or in the press. It would greatly enhance a company’s CSR associations if it were reported positively by

specialty publications such as *Business Ethics*, or if it received a good CSR rating by independent organizations such as *Fortune* magazine.” Scholars have also realised the potency of cultivating credible informal sources like word-of-mouth or advocacy by employees and customers as communicators of CSR (Dawkins, 2004; CSRWire, 2008; Du et al. 2010). The reasoning in this assertion is that employees and customers are highly regarded as reliable sources of credible information that in recent times have resorted to the use internet communication services including blogging, chat rooms and social media such as Twitter, WhatsApp, and Facebook.

2.8.4 Company-Specific Factors Moderating Effective CSR Communication

The source or sender of CSR information is one key determinant of effective CSR communication as noted by scholars (see: Du et al., 2010; Strahilevitz, 2003; Yoon et al., 2007). According to Du et al. (2010), corporate reputation and CSR positioning are two company-specific factors likely to influence the effectiveness of CSR communication (Gardberg and Fombrun, 2002; Fombrun and Shanley, 1990; Du et al., 2007; Yoon et al., 2006; Strahilevitz, 2003). These two factors are expected to have greater impact on effective CSR communication where company-controlled message channels are used than where non-company sources are used (Du et al. 2010).

This position is informed by the thinking that “company-controlled message channels are more likely to trigger these company-specific knowledge structures.

Corporate reputation

Reputation is considered an important element in CSR communication. It moderates the effectiveness of CSR communication as it provides background knowledge for the interpretation of company CSR initiatives and subsequent communications (Fombrun and Shanley, 1990). Corporate reputation is described as ‘a collective representation of a firm’s past actions and results that describes the firm’s ability to deliver valued outcomes to multiple stakeholders’ (Du et al. (2010; Gardberg and Fombrun, 2002). The dimensions that make up corporate reputation according to scholars (Du et. al. 2010; Fombrun and Shanley, 1990; Yoon et al. 2006) include product quality, investment value, innovation, people management and CSR.

Logically, as pointed out in the works of Yoon et al. (2006) companies with both source credibility and positive reputation among stakeholders tend to have effective CSR communication and vice versa. In addition to this knowledge, Strahilevitz (2003) has pointed out that due to the phenomenon of positive disconfirmation, where a company is perceived as neutral in terms of ethical reputation, effort at CSR communication is likely to result in greater business benefits than where the company is already known to have positive ethical reputation. It must be mentioned however, stakeholders can be sceptical when it comes to how they evaluate CSR communication. This is the case where the company has particularly earned a rather negative reputation over time. An attempt at CSR communication in such a situation risk been labelled a publicity stunt (see: Guardian, 2006). Apart from company reputation, *the industry in which a company finds itself* can also moderate the effectiveness of CSR communication. Typically, some industries such as in the tobacco and oil industries (see: Bhattacharya and Sen 2004; Yoon et al. 2006) have been known to face herculean task

of achieving effective CSR communication among stakeholders because of the very nature of the business and its perceived effect on people and the planet.

CSR Positioning

The extent to which a company is positioned on its CSR credentials has been mentioned as one of the company-specific factors that can account for the effectiveness of CSR communication (Simon and Becker-Olsen, 2006; Szykman et al., 2004; Wiener, 1990). CSR positioning is yet to be considered a mainstream positioning strategy let alone positioning solely on CSR as competitive strategy. It is said however that CSR positioning of companies can enhance the effectiveness of CSR communication as stakeholders are likely to be more attentive and also believe in the authenticity of the company's CSR message (Du et al., 2007; Yoon et al., 2006; Strahilevitz, 2003)

2.8.5 Stakeholder-Specific Factors Moderating Effective CSR Communication

According to Du et al. (2010), certain characteristics of the stakeholders and the recipients of CSR communication, can also moderate the effectiveness of CSR communication. From the extant literature, the stakeholder type, issue support and social value orientation of the targeted stakeholders have been mentioned as stakeholder-specific factors that moderate the effectiveness of CSR communication.

(i) Stakeholder type and CSR communication

Typical companies have multiple stakeholder groups as audiences that can make or unmake the fortunes of the organization in any given business environment (Dawkins, 2004). This is

to recognise the fact that CSR has many potential audiences. As is usually the case, various stakeholder groups have different needs, preferences, characteristics and therefore different expectations of business. This would for instance mean that, not all communication channels can effectively be used to reach the peculiar needs of a particular stakeholder audience hence the need to devise unique CSR communication mix for the various stakeholder audiences. Although there are different types of stakeholder groups, Dawkins' (2004) two-group classification is considered useful for the discussion of CSR communication. There is the opinion leader audience (e.g. the business press, NGOs and the investor community) and the general public (e.g. consumers and the local communities).

Du et al. (2010) have observed that opinion leader audiences, in particular are more likely to purposefully seek out company CSR information in order to have better profile of the company in the area of CSR on the social impact of a company's CSR initiatives. Typically, this group also avail itself with CSR performance indicators and other CSR information for the purposes of benchmarking and commentary (Dawkins, 2004; Du et al. 2010). For instance mainstream investors are usually concerned with the business impact of companies' CSR initiatives in the area of customer equity, employee retention, corporate governance and risk management.

Unlike the opinion leader audiences, the general public (i.e. local communities and consumers) awareness of CSR often come from multiple "independent channels" such as editorial coverage on TV, press, and stakeholder word-of-mouth or corporate communication channels, such as high-profile cause marketing campaigns, advertising, or point of purchase communication.

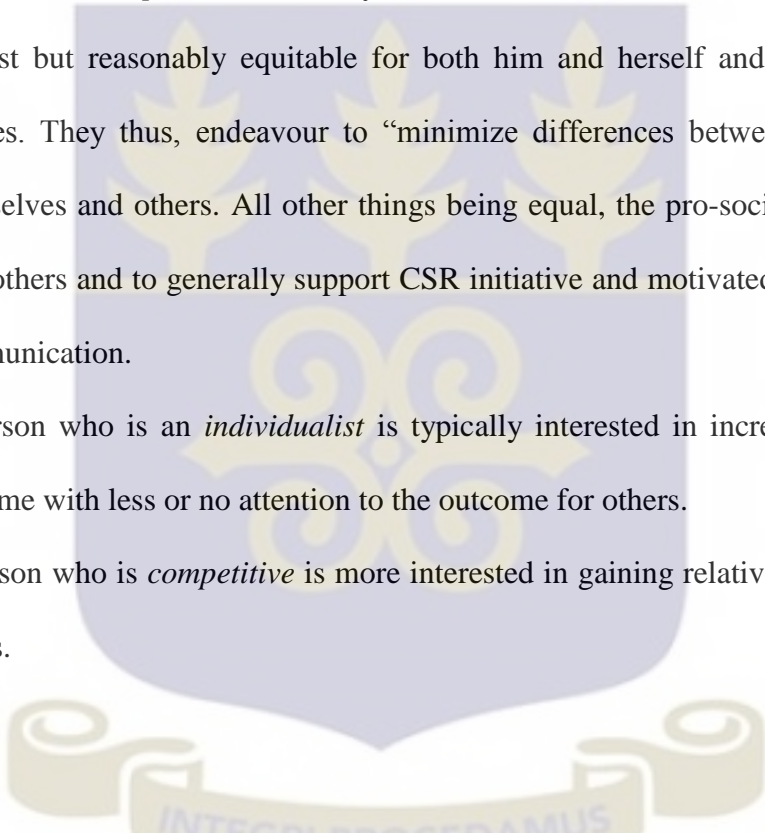
(ii) Stakeholder Support of the Focal Issue

According to MacInnis et al. (1991), stakeholder motivation to process CSR information affects the overall CSR communication effectiveness. What is also important in this regard is whether the CSR issue been sponsored is supported by the stakeholders. Where CSR initiative is supported by the targeted stakeholder, communication effectiveness tends to be high and vice versa. In the opinion of Petty et al. (1981) and Bhattacharya and Sen (2004), where CSR initiative is personally relevant, and thus meet the values and aspirations of the stakeholder groups communication is likely to be well perceived or received by the targeted stakeholder audiences. From the foregoing argument, prudent managers would be expected to increase stakeholder appreciation of CSR initiative by paying particular attention on increasing stakeholder knowledge on the rationale for specific CSR initiatives (Du et al. 2010). This expectation would logically require also that managers involve stakeholders in the conceptualization and selection, and implementation of particular socially responsive initiatives. In order to effectively gauge the dynamic needs, aspirations, and concern of stakeholders, CSR programmes of companies need to be informed by regular marketing research of the stakeholder environment (see: Du et al. 2010; Cone 2008,). Cone (2007), Simmons and Becker-Olsen (2006) have also pointed out the need for companies to ensure fit between the CSR issues they support and the company's core business. The thinking here is that such a fit will create the "most impact". Interestingly not all scholars share this view (see: Bloom et al. 2006; Menon and Kahn, 2003).

(iii) Social value orientation and CSR communication

According to Du et al. (2010) social value orientation is an important consideration in the pursuance of effective CSR communication. This is because, like factors mentioned earlier, social value orientation influences stakeholder motivation to process CSR information and

therefore communication effectiveness. Van Lange et al. (1997) describe social value orientation as “a person’s stable preferences for certain patterns of outcomes for oneself and others”. From the works of Du et al (2010), three key social value orientation are discussed namely, the pro-social, individualistic and the competitive. Based on the writings of McClintock and Allison (1989), Van Vugt et al. (1995), Dawkins (2004) and Cone (2008) four key observations can be deduced from Du et al. (2010) that:

- 
- (i) A person who is *prosocial* is likely to maximize outcome not for his or her selfish interest but reasonably equitable for both him and herself and for other social entities. They thus, endeavour to “minimize differences between outcomes for themselves and others. All other things being equal, the pro-social is expected to help others and to generally support CSR initiative and motivated to process CSR communication.
 - (ii) A person who is an *individualist* is typically interested in increasing his or her outcome with less or no attention to the outcome for others.
 - (iii) A person who is *competitive* is more interested in gaining relative advantage over others.

It is useful to add that scholars have also observed consumer group who are described as “*CSR activists* or *CSR advocates*”. This group of consumers tend to emphasise the importance of CSR in their purchase and consumption related decision making. Thus, to Dawkins (2004), they are “more likely to investigate companies CSR activities and behaviour.

2.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provides a detailed review of extant literature on the concept of CSR. The chapter commenced with a discussion of business ethics and how it relates to CSR. To give a philosophical direction to the concept, the debate on the purpose of business was highlighted enabling a review of why firms engage in CSR and the types of CSR initiatives that firms may pursue. Relevant theories on CSR and other related issue on the subject were also reviewed in the chapter.



CHAPTER THREE

THE CONCEPT OF CUSTOMER-BASED BRAND EQUITY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the concept of brand equity is reviewed with emphasis on customer-based brand equity. This is the marketing perspective to brand equity as popularized by the writings of Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) among other scholars. The key dimensions for measuring customer-based brand equity namely brand awareness; brand associations (brand image); perceived quality and; brand loyalty are all described to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the concept of customer-based brand equity. Being an offshoot of the broad topic of branding, the chapter starts by tracing the origin of branding and the role of branding from a marketing standpoint.

3.1 THE ORIGIN OF BRANDING

Branding as a marketing tool in recent years is aimed at creating a pool of loyal customers to the brand and for building an enduring relationship with customers (Keller and Lehmann, 2003). In spite of the importance of branding in the achievement of a firm's business objectives, it was not until recent years that managers gained the appreciation that branding is the responsibility of all the functional areas of the business operation and not the preoccupation of the marketing department (Davis, 2002; Keller and Lehmann, 2003).

The origin of the concept of branding and brands cannot be traced to a specific date in history. Several contributors have given an idea of how and why the practice of branding started in the field of commerce or business. For instance, brick-makers in ancient Egypt practiced branding mainly as a tool for identifying their bricks from that of the bricks of other

competing brick makers. These brick makers who were also traders in effect understood and applied the idea of a trademark which is a common business practice nowadays. Farquhar (1989) contributed to the understanding of the origins of branding when he observed that ancient Merchants who traded in whisky as far back as the beginning of the sixteen century differentiated their barrels of whiskies with various marks, signs, and drawings before shipment to the consignee. During the turn of the nineteenth century, businessmen used branding in ways that enhanced a product perceived value through the principle of association. This principle of association is premised on the assumption that, when a given brand is directly associated with another element such as a brand, person, event, ideas or place, or music that is liked or favourably perceived by the consumer or target audience, the consumer is likely to transfer that likeness positive perception unto the brand in question thereby acting favourably towards the brand.

It has also been pointed out that branding evolved even further in the twentieth century with new purposes and strategies (Baalbaki, 2012). Several scholarly contributions in the twenty-first century indicate the growing awareness among marketers on consumers' preference for branded products as against non-branded ones (Bodet and Chanavat, 2010; Keller, 2003; Kotler, 2000; Kapferer, 1997; Barwise et al., 1990; Bedbury and Fenichell, 2002). The common wisdom among these marketers was the knowledge that consumers tend to prefer branded product; which made it possible for charge premium prices on branded products (Keller, 2003). This phenomenon may be explained by the fact that branded products can evoke positive feelings, emotions, and positive purchasing reaction from target customers in the form of brand loyalty which emanates from perceived added value attributable to the brand. The perceived added value is what scholars referred to as brand equity (Kotler, 2000; Aaker, 2003) or customer-based brand equity by scholars such as Keller, 2003), Aaker (1996,

2003) and Netemeyer et al (2004). The customer is thus positioned as a strategic entity in achieving marketing objectives. This explains why the literature has mostly emphasised the strategic importance of customers (Kotler, 2000; Kohli and Jaworski, 1990) in terms of business survival and profitability. Although the strategic importance of the customer raises no debate in the business circles, one should not lose sight of the equal importance of brands in achieving the objectives of the firm and that of other stakeholder groups.

Arguably brands are the most valuable assets of the business organization (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; Davis, 2002) hence the need to learn and understand how to build, measure, and manage brand equity is of utmost importance (Kapferer, 2005). Brand equity (BE) is essentially an intangible asset that may be difficult to gauge with absolute precision due to the fact that customers are complex entities that are affected and are influenced by multiplicity of factors, some of which may not allow for easy explanation by customers themselves (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007). It is useful to mention that BE or CBBE as conceptualized by Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) have received wide acceptance in the scholarly community. According to David Ogilvy, “brand is the consumer’s idea” and therefore the consumer is an active participant or partner in the creation of equity for the brand (Blackston, 2000). Given that the aim of this dissertation is to ascertain the relative importance of CSR in terms of creating CBBE, the study will take into account the consumer’s perspective of the importance of CSR activities in terms of the dimensions of CBBE. The study is thus expected to enable scholars and practitioners gauge and place the right emphasis on CSR initiatives in terms of CBBE.

3.2 THE ROLE OF BRANDING

Branding is increasingly becoming a strategic marketing priority for many companies in recent years (Aaker and Joachimsthaler 2000; Kapferer, 2005). Companies are interested in branding because brands provide important intangible value to companies. In spite of the fact that marketers approach the concept differently, they seem to agree that the conceptualization of brand equity need to be described in terms of the “marketing effects uniquely attributable to a brand”. According to Keller (2003) different outcomes can be gained in the marketing of a given product or service due to the unique contribution of its brand or brand identity. The added value of brands emanates from companies’ investment in marketing activities for particular brands over time. Brand equity as discussed above makes it possible to gauge the effectiveness of a company’s marketing investments. Scholars such as Hoeffler and Keller (2003), Aaker (1991, 1996) and Kapferer (2005) have identified several bottom-line benefits that can accrue from developing strong brands. Keller (2003) summarised these benefits into eight points; and these are:

- i. It can lead to improvement in the perceptions of product performance among customers.
- ii. It can lead to enhance customer loyalty.
- iii. It can reduce the vulnerability of the firm and its products to challenges and threats in the environments.
- iv. It can lead to increase margins for the brand
- v. It leads to more elastic customer responses to price decreases and inelastic customer response to price increases
- vi. It can also engender cooperation and support from the trade or intermediaries.
- vii. It can increase the effectiveness of a firm’s marketing communication efforts.
- viii. It can enable the company grow its product portfolio through licensing and brand

extension opportunities.

It is thus expected that in the pursuit of branding, different outcomes can be achieved in the marketing of a product due to a products unique brand identity as compared to if that same product or service was not uniquely identified by that brand (Keller (2003).

3.3 THE DEFINITION OF BRAND EQUITY

The concept of brand equity (BE) remains a subject of interest among scholars and practitioners. Given the importance of the subject, scholarly contributions have never been lacking as evidenced in the works of Aaker (1991, 1996); Aaker and Keller (1990); Ailawadi et al., (2003); Ellen et al., (2006); Keller, (1993, 2003), and Netemeyer et al., (2004). The interest of marketing scholars has generally been to seek knowledge in BE measurement and what it means for the firm. The interest of managers is to be able to understand factors influencing purchase and consumption related decisions with regards to perceived brand equity and choice. According to Ailawadi et al. (2003), although the concept of brand equity has seen numerous scholarly contributions, there still remains varied view points of the concept in terms of what constitute the dimensions of BE, the major influences on BE, and the perspective from which BE should be studied and measured. As is always the case several different definitions and ways of measuring brand equity have been proposed by academics. Most of these definitions appear to be inspired or emanate from Farquhar's (1989) definition which states that "brand equity is the added value with which a given brand endows a product". As a business concept, BE is useful as it provides the bedrock for gaining and sustaining competitive advantage. This is the case because a brand with high brand equity,

according to Farquhar (1989) and Kotler (2000) can lend itself to brand extensions, and withstand various competitive threats among other things.

Although, there are several definitions, it is arguably the added value or equity that a brand generates that makes branding a useful subject of study. According to Srivastava and Shocker (1991) brand equity should be seen as “the incremental value a brand name gives a product”. Similar to Srivastava and Shocker (1991), Park and Srinivasan (1994) define brand equity by noting that a brand has an economic function, which essentially is the value (brand equity) that the brand derives from its capacity to generate an exclusive, positive, and prominent meaning in the minds of a large number of consumers. Clow and Baack (2005) brand equity comprises a set of characteristics that make a brand unique in the market place, and allows the company to charge premium price and retain a greater market share than would be possible with an unbranded product. Berry’s (2000) definition of brand equity holds some similarity of ideas to Keller’s (1993) definition as he describes brand equity as the differential effect of brand awareness and meaning combined with customer response to the marketing of the brand.

Yoo et al., (2000) sees brand equity in terms of “the difference in consumer choice between a branded and unbranded product given the same level of product features”. Extant literature also reveals a number of conceptualization of brand equity (Farquhar, 1989; Wood, 2000; Baker et al., 2005; Yoo et al., 2000; Berry, 2000; Keller, 1993). Among the various conceptualizations the works of Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) have received wider patronage in terms of providing the fundamental philosophical underpinnings, and the dimensions for discussing the concept of brand equity. In Aaker’s (1991) view, brand equity refers to “a set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name and symbol that add to or subtract from

the value provided by a product or service to a firm and or to that firm's customers". From this conceptualization, Aaker (1991) accordingly put forward four interrelated dimensions of brand equity namely, brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand associations, and perceived quality. Two years after Aaker's conceptualization, Keller (1993) developed the customer-based brand equity model (CBBE), which has gained popularity among scholars and practitioners (see: Wood, 2000; Baker et al., 2005; Yoo et al., 2000; and Berry, 2000). Keller (1993), CBBE is "the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand". Keller's (1993) conceptualization of CBBE is useful as it can arguably be said to be informed by the popular marketing concept or philosophy.

Following from the understanding of the foregoing argument, the study deems it more appropriate to lean on the term CBBE in referring to "the differential knowledge" that consumers have of a given brand and how that knowledge influences their purchase and consumption behaviour. From the definition, brand knowledge comprises two components namely brand awareness and brand image. Brand awareness is typically measured through various recognition and recall tests among actual and potential customers. Recognition describes the ability of consumers to confirm knowledge of a given brand when exposed to one or more elements or cues of the brand. For instance, a customer's knowledge of a given brand may be tested by exposing the customer to the brand's logo, name, jingles, tagline, or catch phrase among other brand related cues.

Marketers may also undertake recall tests to complement recognition test. Recall describes the ability of the consumer to retrieve the brand from memory. The aim of most marketing communications effort is to get target customers to select their brands in a given product category or evoked set (Kotler, 2000). Another component of brand knowledge is brand

image. Unlike brand awareness, the measurement of brand image can be challenging. This is because brand image is a function of the perceptions and attitudes of consumers about the brand in memory. A brand's image is influenced by marketer controlled variables and by other exogenous variables in the marketing environment.

CBBE conceptualization thus reveals an appreciation that a brand's inherent power emanates from what customers have learnt either through direct experience or through vicarious learning (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007). It is useful to mention that, in this study, the term CBBE is used to describe brand equity in the context of marketing and it is used interchangeably with brand equity.

3.4 THE CONCEPT OF CUSTOMER-BASED BRAND EQUITY

Brands are arguably the most valuable assets in business hence, the enormous interest in brand equity studies. According to Keller (2003), Fayrene and Lee (2011), Hoeffler et al., (2002), Kapferer (1997), Cobb-Walgren et al. (1995), and Aaker and Jacobson (1994) brand equity (BE) tend to positively correlate with higher consumer preferences and purchase intentions, and stock returns. High brand equity also makes it less problematic for firms interested in pursuing brand extensions strategies; it allows the firm to withstand promotional pressures from competing brands, and also creates barriers against competition. Successful brand extension is made possible where a brand enjoys high brand equity (Fayrene and Lee, 2011; Farquhar, 1989).

Brand equity as a concept gained popularity in the 1980s according to Fayrene and Lee (2011) citing Barwise (1993) who noted that the term was used largely by advertising practitioners in the 1990s. The concept has since received growing interest and has been kept

alive by scholars including Aaker (1991), Srivastava and Shocker (1991), Kapferer (1992), and Keller (1993, 1998). Although literature abounds on the concept of BE there are still challenges regarding a common meaning, content and measurement of BE. This position is articulated in the works of Vazquez et al. (2002), Keller (2003) and Washburn (2002). The concept of brand equity which Keller (1993) conceptualize as customer-based brand equity (CBBE) is yet to achieve universality in terms of meaning, content, and measurement. However, the term CBBE is generally used to mean the value that is added to a product by consumers' associations and perceptions of a given brand name (Fayrene and Lee, 2011; Chaudhuri, 1995; Winters, 1991).

A content analysis of CBBE of the definitions from Keller (1993) and Shocker et al. (1994) leads one to say that CBBE refers to an evaluation of how a firm's actual and potential consumers respond to, or will respond to a given brand name. Although the meaning of BE is not widely divergent among scholars, One can group scholarly works on the subject into: One, those who are influenced more from a marketing or customer-oriented perspective (Fayrene and Lee, 2011; Farquhar, 1989; Keller, 1993; Cobb-Walgren et al. 1995, van Osselaer & Alba 2000; Rao et al. 1999), and two those reflecting financial perspective (Farquhar et al. 1991, Simon & Sullivan 1990, Swait et al. 1993, Kapferer 1997). The financial perspective is basically concerned with evaluating the assets of the business. On the other hand, the marketing or customer-oriented perspective of brand equity is not an entirely new idea, but gained its popularity through the writings of Keller (1993), Shocker et al. (1994) among others. These scholars have been largely influenced by the growing appreciation of the marketing concept or the customer-orientation philosophy to marketing. This thinking finds expression in Keller's definition. According to Keller (1993), CBBE "is the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the

brand”. Brand knowledge “is the full set of brand associations linked to the brand in long-term consumer memory”. CBBE thus refers to the peculiar responses of consumers that are generated towards a brand because of prior knowledge and associations to the brand. For the purpose of this study, Keller’s (1993) definition of CBBE is adopted.

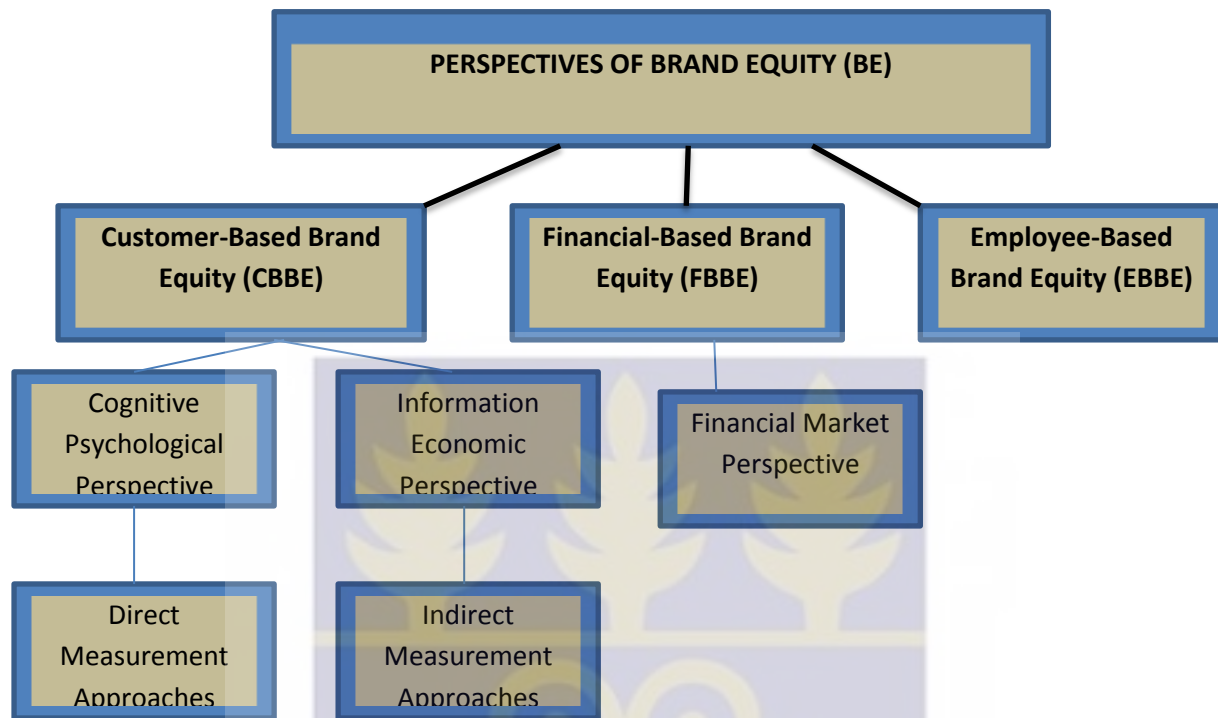
3.5 BRAND EQUITY PERSPECTIVES

Brand equity emanates from three different perspectives. These are the cognitive psychology perspective, the information economics perspective, and the financial markets perspective (Baalbaki, 2012). The cognitive psychology perspective defines brand’s equity as the differential consumer response to a brand’s marketing mix that results from consumers’ associations to a brand (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993). The implication of this perspective is that brands for which consumers have more favourable brand associations, or brands with higher brand equity, has the propensity to generate more positive marketing mix responses from consumers than brands with less favourable brand associations. Therefore, in terms of cognitive perspective, brand equity is the results of consumers’ responses to marketing activities, influenced by consumer brand associations (Anderson, 2007)

The second perspective of brand equity is the information economics perspective. In this perspective, brand equity is viewed as the increased utility that a brand name gives to a product (Erdem and Swait, 1998; Wernerfelt, 1988). The brand name gives signal to consumers of product quality, which is derived from perceived firm costs or investments, and this perceived quality reduces information costs for the consumer, thereby increasing utility. This perspective is important because it recognises that firms make investments and incur costs in marketing their brands. The information economics perspective is therefore useful in the measurement of brand equity (Anderson, 2007).

The financial markets perspective is the third perspective of brand equity. In this perspective, brand equity is defined as a financial measure of a firm's market value minus its tangible assets value (Simon and Sullivan, 1990). The drawback to this approach is that it focuses solely on the brand as the only intangible asset without considering other intangible assets such as human capital. Another drawback of the information economics perspective is that, it measures equity for firm level (corporate) brands only and not a firm's product-level brands (Anderson, 2007).

Brand equity has evolved from three different perspectives as discussed above. However, it is generally classified into two broad categories which are the firm-based brand equity (FBBE), and the customer-based brand equity (CBBE) (Keller, 1993). The firm-based perspective describes the value of the brand for the firm, while the consumer-based perspective describes the value of the brand for the client. From the foregoing other definitions of brand equity are discussed in Figure 3.1. Kapferer (1997), brand equity has an economic function. Kapferer's contribution to brand equity leans towards the financial perspective. On the other hand Farquhar's definition describes "the added value which a given brand endows a product" follows through with the customer-based perspective. Given that brand equity affects and brings value to multiple stakeholder groups, a third category of brand equity called employee-based brand equity (EBBE) has been recently proposed. King and Grace (2009, p. 130) define employee-based brand equity as "the differential effect that brand knowledge has on an employee's response to their work environment." In spite of the various categorization of brand equity described above, the term consumer-based brand equity is popularly used to refer to brand equity in general (Baalbaki, 2012; Rajassekar and Nalina, 2008).

Figure 3.1 Brand Equity Diagramme

Source: Adopted from Baalbaki, 2012

Brand equity has also received scholarly attention and studied from various business disciplines. From the perspective of marketing, brand equity is “the added value that a brand endows a product. In the area of finance, brand equity is described in terms of “the incremental cash flow that accrues to the company as a result of owning a brand”. In the subject area of accounting, brand equity “is replaced by trademark and associated goodwill”. This is so because accountants see the world in terms of assets not brands (Knowles, 2008).

3.5.1 Brand Equity Perspective of this Study

This study adopts the customer-based brand equity perspective and will not discuss FBBE and EBBE, as these two perspectives do not relate to the objectives. The reasoning in taking

this stance is that the financial value of brand equity is the eventual outcome of consumer response to a brand name. Unlike FBBE, CBBE on the other hand is the driving force of increased market share and profitability of the brand since it is based on the perception of the market (Baalbaki, 2012; Christodoulides et. al., 2006). Given that the financial-based perspective measures the outcome of customer-based brand equity, the study considers it more expedient to first focus on CBBE (Baalbaki, 2012).

3.6 DIMENSIONS OF CUSTOMER-BASED BRAND EQUITY

A careful consolidation of the dimensions of CBBE from extant literature generates four key dimensions of CBBE in accordance with Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993). The following section describes the dimensions of brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality and brand loyalty.

3.6.1 BRAND AWARENESS AS A DIMENSION OF CBBE

CBBE model suggest that the differential effect of a brand name on consumer responses emanates from brand knowledge or the perceptions held in consumer memory. One can thus argue that the consumer must be exposed to a brand or be aware of the brand for the concept of CBBE to be meaningful. Keller's (1993) definition of CBBE makes reference to this line of thinking by using a phrase such as "the differential effect of brand knowledge", where brand knowledge is the full set of brand associations linked to the brand in consumer's long-term memory (Fayrene and Lee, 2011).

According to Aaker (1991) brand awareness describes "the ability of a potential buyer to recognize or recall that a brand is a member of a certain product category". Brand awareness can thus be described as consumers' ability to identify or recognise the brand. In more

specific terms, awareness is conceptualized and measured in terms of recall and recognition (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993), top-of mind, brand dominance, brand knowledge and brand opinion (Aaker,1996) of a given brand as having certain associations that are in consumer's memory. According to Kotler and Lee (2005), these associations may be activated by such brand elements like brand name, symbol, logo, package among many other marketing stimuli.

The importance of brand awareness as a key element in the composition of CBBE cannot be overemphasized (see Aaker 1991; Kapferer 1991; Keller 1992; Agarwal and Rao, 1996; Krishnan, 1996; Na, Marshall and Keller, 1999, Mackay 2001, Keller, 2003). Scholars have also discussed the concept of brand awareness under the marketing mix element of promotion (Kotler, 2007). This is because the promotion element typically creates brand awareness, persuades, and reminds target audiences of a given offer or brand. It is important to mention that the aim and level of awareness necessary for a brand may depend on several factors including firm's competitive strategy and the stage of life-cycle of the brand. For instance awareness and recognition may prove useful for relatively new brands, or brands that are targeting niche markets (Aaker, 1996). Washburn and Plank (2002), and Aaker (1996) claim that firms must first focus on creating brand awareness before attempting to build positive associations to the brand among target markets. The crucial first step in building brand equity is therefore to create brand awareness.

3.6.2 BRAND ASSOCIATIONS/BRAND IMAGE AS A DIMENSION OF CBBE

Marketing management is essentially about satisfying consumers by understanding the reasons for their purchase and consumption related behaviour (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007; Kotler, 2010; Aaker, 1991). Because consumer behaviour is influenced by multiple set of factors, marketers often consider the image of their brands as crucial for marketplace success.

The brand's image is thus dependent on the various associations that are linked to the brand in consumers' memory. These associations are simply the totality of what the brand means to consumers. Pappu et al. (2005) claim that although a typical brand may derive associations from a multiplicity of sources brand personality and organizational associations are among the key sources that impact brand equity (Aaker, 1991; 1996). Brand personality in this regard is conceptualised in terms of the traits and characteristics that consumers give or can give to a brand (Pappu et al., 2005; Keller, 1993; Aaker, 1991). It is also useful to mention that brand personality is well vocalised in the marketing literature (Betra et al., 1993) and may be used to refer a composite of humanlike or non-humanlike characteristics that consumers ascribe to a given brand (Pappu et al., 2005; Aaker, 1991). Brand association is considered useful as it generates affect or feelings or certain emotional states that can provide actual and potential customers with reasons for purchase among other consumption related behaviours. Brand association is thus seen in terms of the totality of brand-related thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images, experiences, beliefs, and attitudes. The importance of brand association as a concept therefore, lies in its linkage with consumer purchase decision and brand loyalty.

This knowledge is what led Aaker (1992) to consider brand association as “the most accepted aspect of brand equity”. It is also important to add that marketers see brand associations basically in terms of anything that is linked in memory to a given brand either through direct experience and or through vicarious learning (Pappu et al., 2005; Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007). This point is buttressed by Pappu et al., (2005) who reiterated that brand association tend to be stronger where the consumer has many experience or exposures to communications, and when a network of other links supports it.

Brand associations thus represent what a brand is to customers (Aaker, 1991) that are stored in their memories in a form of a schema (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007). This is why marketers need to understand that any contact and or experiences or interaction between the consumer and a brand has the potential to “create, change, or reinforce certain favourable or unfavourable associations”. Keller (2003) has also pointed out that to achieve brand equity; managers need to ensure that consumers perceive the brand as unique, strong, and favourable.

Although brand personality and organizational associations have been mentioned as key sources of brand associations, other scholars have identified organizational and product associations as the two broad sources of brand association (Chen, 2001; Brown and Dacin, 1997; Keller, 1998; Kotler and Keller, 2006). To identify the specific source of brand association, product association is further classified into functional attribute associations and non-functional associations (see: Brown and Dacin, 1997; Chen, 1996):

- (i) The functional attributes refer to the tangible features of a product. Many scholars including (Keller (1993), Hankinson and Cowking (1993), de Chernatony and McWilliam (1989) have made references to the functional attributes of a product which simply refers to the tangible features of a product or service. The performance of the functional attributes is important in the consumer brand evaluation process according to Pitta and Katsanis (1995) and Lassar et al. (1995) and therefore has implication for brand equity. This relationship tends to be directly correlated. It is useful to mention however, that a brand’s performance is often a subjective matter based on consumer’s idiosyncratic judgment of what constitute performance.
- (ii) the non-functional association - Unlike the functional attribute associations which are tangible in nature, the non-functional association can best be described as

psychogenic (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007) and usually has to do with consumers need for safety and security (protection, order, and stability), social needs (affection, friendship, belonging), Ego needs (prestige, status, self-esteem), and Self-actualization needs (self-fulfilment). Although these needs are intangible, they represent powerful consumer motives, hence its importance in studying brand association and CBBE (see Park et al. 1986; de Chernatony and McWilliam 1989; Aaker 1991, Hankinson and Cowking 1993; Keller 1993, Farquhar & Herr 1993, Chen 1996, Pitta & Katsanis 1995). Related to social needs (that is the need for affection, the need for friendship, and the need for belonging), Fayrene and Lee (2011) identified social image, perceived value, trustworthiness, differentiation, and country of origin of a given brand as factors that can shape non-functional association to the brand.

3.6.3 PERCEIVED QUALITY AS A DIMENSION OF CBBE

Based on the dictates of customer orientation philosophy to marketing, customer perceived quality has severally been identified as one of the key dimensions of CBBE (see Aaker 1991, 1996; Kapferer 1991; Kamakura and Russell, 1991, 1993; Martin and Brown 1991; Feldwick 1996). It is useful to mention that quality issues must be practically seen from the spectacles of the customer or the target market if an organization is aimed at increasing CBBE for competitive and marketing advantages (Lai et al., 2009; Zeithaml, 1988). Extant literature suggests that quality is a multi-dimensional construct that depends on several factors and subject to consumer's judgement. In other words, the consumer is the final arbiter in quality issues and therefore marketing effort must necessarily aim at satisfying the customer (Zeithaml, 1988). This is to say that perceived quality is not necessarily the actual quality of the product but the consumer's subjective evaluation a given brand or product. Similarly,

Pappu et al., (2005) reasoned that perceived quality of a brand is a measure of value as it provides customers with reasons to buy one product over the other. In the discussion of CBBE therefore, quality issues need to focus on the customer. This is because the concept of quality is essentially as a matter of perception based on attributes or cues important to the customer (Acebro'n and Dopico, 2000).

Review of the concept of quality is considered important because it will enable the study to ascertain the role and the extent to which perceived quality is attributable to CSR.

3.6.4 BRAND LOYALTY AS A DIMENSION OF CBBE

Brand loyalty is a major component of brand equity (Pappu et al., 2005; Chiou et al., 2002; Aaker, 1991; Dodds et al., 1991). In this regard, Uddin (2012), observed that the pursuit of marketing philosophy requires firms to strengthen customer relationships through the creation of value, satisfaction, and brand loyalty among customers (Uddin, 2012).

To Aaker (1991) brand loyalty is “the attachment that a consumer has to a brand”. Thus, customer loyalty describes the attitude of repurchase from the same company. Similarly, Kotler and Keller, (2009) conceptualize loyalty in terms of the commitment to re-patronize a preferred brand or product of a company. Customer loyalty is thus expressed in terms of systematic purchases of same brand by a particular customer or group of customers. It has been noted by Uddin (2012) that loyalty has a sentimental issue and a relative attitude. The sentimental component relates to the consumer’s psychological reaction and passion in terms of the purchase and use of a given product or service. This sentimental behaviour can equally be equated to customer retention (see: Gustafsson and Johnson, 2002). An insightful description of loyalty is captured in Uddin, (2012) where “loyalty is a function of biased

psychological process with respect to one or more available alternative brands that is expressed over time by an individual or a group to repurchase such brands”. Customer loyalty is accordingly measured by looking at the “effectiveness of the relationship between repurchase intentions and relative attitude.

According to Fayrene and Lee (2011), loyalty is a core dimension of brand equity. In a highly competitive market, customer loyalty holds the key to success. Loyalty describes the level of attachment that a customer has towards a brand (Aaker, 1991; Gremler and Brown, 1996). According to Oliver (1997) brand loyalty describes “a deeply held commitment to rebuy or patronize a preferred product/ service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand set purchasing despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behaviour”. Loyalty is often measured in terms of the frequency or the repeated purchases of a given product or service that a consumer undertakes over a given period of time. Loyalty is thus seen in terms of repeated purchases (Keller, 1998; Pappu et al., 2005), or customers commitment to repeat purchase (Oliver, 1997).

According to Aaker (1996) a brand’s ability to command premium price is a key indicator of loyalty. Brands that enjoy high loyalty from customers tend to enjoy high consumer awareness and rank high in consumer evoked set. Gil et al. (2007) have accordingly argued that brand loyalty is an instrumental dimension of brand equity and that loyalty and equity are directly correlated. It is useful to add that brand loyalty is largely dependent on the perceptions of customers about the brand which could impact positively or negatively on the marketing of the brand. From the foregoing, it is useful to mention that there are two key perspectives of brand loyalty namely, the attitudinal and behavioural perspectives (see: Yoo and Donthu, 2001; Pappu et al., 2005). From the attitudinal perspective, brand loyalty simply

describes consumers' tendency to be loyal to a particular brand which is manifested by "the intention to buy the brand as a primary choice". The definition of brand loyalty from the behavioural perspective is concerned with the consumer's actual loyalty to the brand as reflected in purchase choices. Based on the objectives of this study, we will seek to ascertain the role and the extent to which customer brand loyalty is attributable to perceived CSR.

3.6.5 RELATIONSHIPS AMONG CBBE DIMENSIONS

Based on Pappu et al., (2005) and Baalbaki (2012) six interrelated or typical associative relationships among the four CBBE dimensions of brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality and brand loyalty are expected as follows:

- (i) A consumers' perception of quality tend to be associated his/her brand loyalty. Thus where brand loyalty is high, consumers perception of brand quality tend to be high and vice versa.
- (ii) A consumer's positive association to a brand tends to increase loyalty to the brand and vice versa.
- (iii) A consumer's favourable associations towards a brand tend to lead to positive quality perceptions and vice versa.
- (iv) A Consumer's brand awareness tends to be high when he/she has strong associations for the brand, and when he/she perceives the quality of the brand to be high and vice versa.
- (v) A consumer's perception of quality of a brand is likely to be high when he/she has strong association with the brand and vice versa.

3.7 MEASURING CUSTOMER-BASED BRAND EQUITY

As an important asset to companies, brands must be measured for their value or equity. Brand equity measurement gauges the performance of the brand for the purposes of devising, modifying and or consolidating marketing strategies. Typically, the performance of a brand could be considered in terms of brand equity and customer equity according to Leone et al., (2006). In measuring brand equity scholars such as Keller and Lehmann, (2003); and Epstein and Westbrook, (2001) have suggested that brand equity measurement should be comprehensive and therefore must incorporate the customer perspective, the firm level perspective and also the financial market perspective. Others have argued for single perspectives, thus placing emphasis on the customer, the firm, or the financial markets as the units of measurement (Baker et al., 2005; Chen, 2001; Tong and Hawley, 2009; Keller, 1993; Doyle, 2001; Kapferer, 1997; Kim et al., 2003; Simon and Sullivan, 1990; Aaker and Jacobson, 1994).

3.7.1 Measuring Brand Equity at the Consumer-level

In measuring brand equity at the consumer-level, Baker et al., (2005) pointed out the need to seek understanding of consumer behaviour in relation to a given product or brand. Thus, consumer-level measures are interested in gauging the cognitive, the affective and the conative aspects of consumer behaviour (Schiffman and Kanuk (2007). Understanding brand equity at the consumer level in this regard, requires an appreciation of the value of the brand in the eyes of the consumer (Keller, 1993; Yoo and Donthu, 2001).

3.7.2 Measuring Brand Equity at the Company-Level

In the measurement of company-level brand equity, marketers are interested in gauging the added value that accrues to the company because of having a branded product (Kim et al.,

2003; Doyle, 2001; Farquhar et al., 1991). This is to say that the brand would not have gained added value if it were unbranded. Company-level measures of brand equity are mostly concerned with issues regarding new product introduction and brand extensions, price premiums, effects of competitor pricing, distribution and channel advantages, promotional effectiveness and consumer responsiveness to advertising efforts (Hoeffler and Keller, 2003; Cobb-Walgren et al., 1995).

3.7.3 The Financial Measure of Brand Equity

A third measure of brand equity is the financial measure where brands are seen essentially as assets that can be offered for sale in a given market at a price determined by forces of demand and supply. The value or the price is what is termed by financial market analysts as stock price which represents the monetary worth of the brand or asset. To Doyle (2001) therefore, brand equity signifies increasing market price and cash flow. The meaning of financial measure of brand equity is well articulated in Simon and Sullivan (1990) who define brand equity as “the incremental cash flows which accrue to branded products over and above the cash flows which would result from the sale of unbranded products”.

3.7.4 Customer Equity versus Brand Equity

The value of a customer to the firm (that is customer equity) is conceptualized as the “sum of the profit from the sale of generic products and the additional value from the sale of branded products – brand equity (Ambler et al., 2002). According to Baalbaki (2012) citing Rust et al. (2000), customer equity is also the sum of the lifetime values of all customers which is also referred to as customer lifetime value (CLV). It is interesting to mention that both the concepts of customer equity and brand equity have the ability to generate value to the firm through repeat purchases and premium price charges (see Leone et al., 2006).

3.8 MODELS OF BRAND EQUITY MEASUREMENT

Extant literature reveals a number of brand equity models (see: Berry, 2000; Srinivasan et al., 2005; Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993) mainly focusing on the buyer (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000) the company, and the employees (King and Grace, 2009) among other variations. From these models of brand equity, two main approaches have been identified namely **the direct approach** and the **indirect approach**.

The indirect approach to customer-based brand equity measurement according to Baalbaki (2012), “assesses potential sources of customer-based brand equity by identifying and tracking customers brand knowledge structure”. The second approach to brand equity measurement which complements the indirect approach is **the direct approach** which directly measures customer-based brand equity by assessing the actual impact of brand knowledge on customer response to different marketing elements over a given period of time. A good example of the direct approach to brand equity measurement is the financial (market-outcome-based) measures which include: brand equity as a price premium measure (Holbrook, 1992; Randall et al., 1998), brand equity as a revenue premium (Ailawadi et al., 2003), and brand equity as a measure of brand extendibility (Randall et al., 1998). Recognising the importance of financial (market-outcome-based) measures to brand equity measurement, Anderson (2007) sees brands as infinitely-lived or perpetual assets and describes brand equity in terms of the financial value that a company derives from customer response to the marketing of a brand. Accordingly Anderson (2007) proposed that brand equity should be measured as “total revenue minus total marketing cost, divided by periodic interest rate”.

Another model on the subject of brand equity is by Netemeyer et al. (2004). In this model four main tenets are named as including perceived quality, perceived value for cost, brand uniqueness, and the willingness to pay premium price for the brand. Brand uniqueness is considered an important tenet of the model because it has the potential to influence purchase intention and behaviour. The model also has secondary tenets of CBBE which includes brand awareness, familiarity, and popularity. Netemeyer et al. (2004) conducted some empirical investigations to test the model in terms of predictive validity regarding consumer purchase behaviour. The best predictor of future behaviour from the study is said to be perceived quality of the brand. The study could not distinguished perceived quality of the brand from elements such as perceived value for cost and brand uniqueness whose effect on purchase behaviour of consumers was found to be mediated by consumer willingness to pay a premium price for the brand.

In the measurement of customer-based brand equity, several scholars have put forward or developed various scales to measure brand equity at different levels and in various context contexts. Lassar et al. (1995) used survey data to develop a 17-tem scale; Vazquez et al. (2002) develop a 22-item scale. Other studies which have also developed measures of customer-based brand equity include Christodoulides et al., (2006), Yoo and Donthu (2001). Notwithstanding the various customer-based equity measures put forward in the extant literature, the conceptualization of customer-based brand equity with a four component item by Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) appears to have received popular acceptance as evidenced by the numerous references to these works in the scholarly community (see: Aaker and David, 1996; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; Ailawadi et al., 2003; Ambler et al., 2002; Bendixen et al., 2003; Berry and Leonard, 2000; Buil et al., 2008; Christodoulides et al.,

2010; Davis, 2002; Chen and Arthur, 2001; Netemeyer et al., 2004; Pappu et al., 2005; Rajasekar and Nalina, 2008).

3.9 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Several researches in the area of brand equity have focused on the brand equity dimensions put forward in Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993). Marketing scholars also are generally of the view that multiplicity of factors influence consumer behaviour and therefore brand equity (Schiffman and Kanuk, 1997; Kotler and Armstrong, 2008). Although there is no argument to the contrary, the 4Ps/7Ps tactical frameworks have largely been put across as mainly responsible for brand equity in the field of marketing.

It is equally interesting to add that the macro environmental factors such as political factors, economic factors, socio-cultural factors, technological factors, environmental factors, and legal factors can also influence brand equity. Thus one can mention several other sources of brand equity. It is clear from these revelations that the factors influencing brand equity can indeed be numerous. In spite of this knowledge, this study seeks to ascertain the role of CSR in terms of CBBE. This is motivated by the paucity of work establishing the interrelationship between CSR and CBBE. The study is thus expected to increase understanding on how consumers perceive the role of CSR in CBBE. In more specific terms the study will address the role of CSR in terms of consumer brand awareness, perceived quality, brand image/associations, and brand loyalty.

3.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter reviewed the concept of CBBE by first looking at the topic in the broader domain of branding, its role and origins in marketing. The rest of the chapter then focused on the meaning of brand equity which provided the basis for defining and explaining the concept of CBBE as the perspective of brand equity adopted by the study. To wholly appreciate the concept of CBBE and its measurement, four key dimensions namely brand awareness; brand association/image, perceived quality, and brand loyalty were discussed. The chapter ended by drawing attention to the potential research questions and contributions.



CHAPTER FOUR

THE CONCEPT OF CUSTOMER-PERCEIVED VALUE

4.0 INTRODUCTION

The objective of the study is to ascertain the role of CSR in building customer-based brand equity. The study objective thus necessitates the need to explain the value of CSR in terms of brand equity from the perspective of customers. In this regard the study is interested in ascertaining the value that CSR brings to a given brand in terms of enhancing brand awareness, brand associations (brand image), perceived quality, and brand loyalty. The chapter starts by defining customer value and provides a brief justification on its relevance in addressing the study objectives. The rest of the chapter reviews extant literature on the concept by seeking answers to two pertinent questions of: (1) what is customer perceived value? and (2) how does customer value relate to customer decision making?

4.1 CUSTOMER-PERCEIVED VALUE AS A MARKETING TOOL

The concept of customer perceived value (CPV) is considered useful in this study because it can reasonably be assumed from marketing perspective that CBBE is enhanced or achieved where the customer perceives value in a given product or service (see: Kotler, 2000; Weinstein and Johnson, 1999; Woodruff, 1997; Kohli et al., 1993; Aaker, 1991; Zeithaml, 1988; Shapiro, 1988; Parasuraman et al., 1985). It is argued therefore that a firm's CSR initiatives (e.g. philanthropic donations and cause sponsorship) can only create CBBE if the customer considers such initiatives as useful in relation to his/her need (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2010). The concept of CPV is important in understanding the relationship between CSR and CBBE. In other words, customers must perceive value in a company's CSR in order to lead to CBBE. This is against the backdrop that the marketplace is characterised by very

demanding customers and global competition (see: Lai et al., 2009; Teas and Agarwal, 2000; Rust et al., 2000; Hunt and Morgan, 1995). It has been observed that past attempts by firms have largely looked internally within the organization for improvement, such as reflected by quality management, reengineering, downsizing, and restructuring. Over the years however, it is becoming increasingly obvious among marketing theorists and practitioners that the major source of competitive advantage emanates largely from an outward orientation towards customers. This thinking has necessitated the call on firms to focus their competitive strategies on delivering superior customer value (Woodruff, (1997).

Customer value is defined as “the customer’s overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given” (Zeithaml, 1988). It is worth mentioning that scholarly works on the concept of customer value have focused mostly on the perceived role of customer value in consumption contexts. For example, Zeithaml (1988) provided some evidence highlighting the influential role of value in consumer purchase decision making process and behaviour. According to Zeithaml (1988), consumer perceived value is a direct antecedent of a purchase decision and a direct consequence of perceived service quality. Customer perceived value is generally describes a trade-off between perceived quality and perceived psychological/ monetary sacrifice. Perceived value is a thus, a direct antecedent of consumer purchase intention (Dodds and Monroe, 1985; Monroe and Chapman, 1987; Teas and Agarwal, 1997).

In contributing to the understanding of value, Woodruff (1997) laid out a customer value hierarchy model in which customer value was viewed as a hierarchically structured construct at levels of consumption goals, consequences, and attributes. In other words, customer value resides in every stage of customers’ expectancy-disconfirmation process. The importance of

customer value in understanding consumer behaviour including behaviour towards CSR initiatives has also received prominence in the works of Slater (1997) and Parasuraman (1997) among other scholars. In terms of conceptualization, customer value describes the overall perception of the subjective merit regarding a product's utility, considering all benefits and costs of consumption (Chen and Tsai, 2008; Lai, Griffin and Babin, 2009). From Kotler and Lee (2009) customer perceived value is measured as the difference between the total customer value and total customer costs. Typically total customer value may include bundle of product, service, personnel and image value. On the other hand total customer costs refer to bundle of monetary, time, energy, and psychic costs.

According to Uddin (2012) customers usually estimate the expected perceived value in a typical exchange situation. Thus, companies need to understand the expectation of customers because perceived value relates to customer satisfaction and behavioural intentions for repurchase. The factors affecting customer value include competencies, communication, promotional investments, and relational investments. Scholars have also observed the predictive role of perceived value in service quality and customer satisfaction (Hutchinson, Lai and Wang, 2009). Customer expectations and perceived performance of a product or service have been mentioned in the marketing literature as important predictors of perceived value on customer overall satisfaction (Lapierre, 2000; Chen, 2008; Chen and Tsai, 2008; Wu and Liang, 2009).

Notwithstanding the importance of customer value, there is knowledge and capabilities gaps needed for gauging the value of CSR and other company sponsored activities from customer perspective (Anderson and Narus, 1999). Resolving this problem is important as it impacts on the competitive advantage of the companies. Achieving CBBE therefore requires an

understanding of the drivers of customer-perceived value (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993; Lichtenthal et al., 1997).

4.1.1 The Importance of Value in Relationships

Understanding CPV as a key requirement in modern marketing management cannot be overemphasised (Kotler, 2000). As a resource for management, marketers need to appreciate what is meant by perceived value, and how typical customers form their valuations, and how to measure it (Riog et al., 2006). An appreciation of CPV is considered a panacea to achieving long term relationship goals of the firm (Jacoby and Chestnut, 1978). According to Sheth and Parvatiyar (1995), firms can achieve productivity in marketing through relational practices where the firm keeps the customers loyal to the firm.

Scholars have echoed this position as it is considered a major source of competitive advantage and profitability (see: Reichheld and Sasser, 1990; Heskett et al., 1990; Gwinner et al., 1998; Weinstein and Johnson, 1999). Studies have also indicated that firms that pursue relationship marketing strategies avoid the extra cost associated with attracting new customers (Heskett et al., 1990; Gwinner et al., 1998).

4.2 THEORETICAL ISSUES OF PERCEIVED VALUE

The conceptual domain of customer-perceived value is discussed below under various subheadings.

4.2.1 Domain of Perceived Value

With regard to the domain of perceived value, Mazumdar (1993) is of the view that: “Today’s value-conscious customers are neither impressed by the best product nor persuaded by the lowest price alone. Instead, customer purchase decisions are often guided by a careful assessment of what benefits they obtain in exchange for the costs they incur to acquire and consume the product.” Based on this knowledge scholars define customer-perceived value in terms of the difference between the benefits and sacrifices as perceived by customers with regard to their expectations of needs and wants (see: Narver and Slater, 1990; Day, 1990; Zeithaml, 1988; Ravald and Gronroos, 1996; Berry and Yadav, 1996; Slater, 1997). Sacrifices simply relates to both monetary and non-monetary costs that a customer incur in order to maintain relationship with a seller. Non-monetary costs relates to the time, effort, and the energy expended by the customer in order to establish relationship with the seller. Non-monetary costs are especially considered important as many customers according to Carothers and Adams (1991) tend to count time rather than money as the most valued asset.

4.2.2 Scope of Customer-Perceived Value

The importance of understanding the potential sources of customer value cannot be overemphasised (Woodruff, 1997; Slater, 1997; Day, 1990; Zeithaml, 1988). This notwithstanding, scholarly contribution by Woodruff (1997) has expressed concern about the underdevelopment of the sources from which customers may perceive value. Lapierre (2000) observe that, the attention of extant literature usually discusses customer value by looking at

the attribute of product or service offerings and its usage. The nature of today's competition however, meant that marketers need to pursue innovative strategies in order to deliver unique value to customers.

In the pursuit of innovative strategies therefore, marketers are expected to go beyond the boundaries of product-based and process-based sources of customer value creation to limit imitation by competitors. Innovation in customer value creation can for instance, come in the area of relational value-based drivers (Ravald and Gronroos, 1996). The need to create customer value through relationships has also been given currency by Sheth and Sharma (1997). Notwithstanding the importance of relational sources of customer value creation, gaining competitive advantage in the market place would require firms to develop and offer more comprehensive sources of value such as in the area of the product, services, intermediaries, and ideas.

From the foregoing, it is clear that customer value proposition is a complex phenomenon which requires managers to accordingly develop value strategy along the lines of product, service and relationship (Lapierre, 2000; Sheth and Sharma, 1997; Parasuraman, 1997; Woodruff, 1997; Ravald and Gronroos, 1996; Mazumdar, 1993; Zeithaml, 1988). It is useful to add that as a concept, customer value drivers vary for different customers and across industries and therefore marketers need to pursue different strategies for different market situations. This thinking is critical as it conforms to the dictates of the market orientation philosophy which requires marketing organizations to be driven by customer needs (Day, 1990; Kohli and Jaworski, 1990; Narver and Slater, 1990).

4.2.3 Drivers of Customer-Perceived Value

A number of key drivers of customer-perceived value have been identified in the extant literature (Zeithaml, 1988; Angleitner et al., 1986; Lapierre, 2000; Woodruff, 1997; Slater, 1997). According to Lapierre (2000), these drivers (benefits) are product, service and relationship related. Product related drivers have to do with mainly product quality, product customization and alternative solutions. For the service related drivers, we can talk of responsiveness, flexibility, reliability and technical competence. Supplier's image, trust, and supplier solidarity with customers are the key drivers that are service related. It is important to note however that customer's frame of reference largely affects their assessment of value. It has also been observed that different customer groups or segments have different criteria for assessing value for a given brand and across industries.

4.3 SOME KEY ISSUES IN PERCEIVED VALUE FRAMEWORK

As a concept, customers perceive value has generated different points of view in scholarly community (Lapierre, 2000; Woodruff, 1997; Slater, 1997; Zeithaml, 1988). However, there are two eminent characteristics in the discussion of customer value. One relates to the use of the product or brand in question and secondly, it is subjectively perceived by customers and cannot therefore be objectively determined by the marketer (Roig et al., 2006). This means that the perception of value, which is inherent in the use of the product or brand comes from the customer only. Typically, customer perception of value is gauged by assessing the differences between the perceived benefits (utility derived from the product, services or relationship) and the perceived sacrifices or costs (Roig et al., 2006; Bigne et al., 2000; Teas and Agarwal, 2000; Zeithaml, 1988).

Riog et al. (2006) identify two key approaches to perceived value when it comes to conceptualizing and the determination of the dimensions of the concept. In the first approach, scholars including Rapp and Collins (1996), Cronin et al. (2000) and Bigne et al. (2000) usually describe perceived value as consisting of two-sides namely: (i) the benefits received by the customer which is represented by economic, social, and relational factors and (ii) the sacrifices that the customer has to make in order to acquire and or consume the brand or product. Sacrifices are measured in terms of price, time, effort, risk and convenience required to obtain and or consume the brand or product in question (Monroe, 1990; Gale, 1994; Dodds et al., 1991).

Being a purely subjective concept, customer perceived value needs to be largely considered as a personal construct (Parasuraman et al., 1985). This is the case because, value that is perceived by a consumer in given product tend to emanate from the differences between benefits derived and sacrifices made (Riog, 2006; Teas and Agarwal, 2000; Zeithaml, 1988). Citing Zeithaml (1988), Riog (2006) observed that “the benefits component, or what a consumer receives from the purchase, would include the perceived quality of the service and a series of psychological benefits.” Marketers have continuously focused on delivering service quality as it can offer unique basis for harnessing the benefits of differentiation and competitive advantage (Riog, 2006; Parasuraman and Grewal, 2000; Berry, 1995; Reichheld and Sasser, 1990). The implication for a two-side perceived value means that, marketers can create value for customers by increasing the benefits derived from the product and or reducing the sacrifices associated with the acquisition and consumption of the product in question (Riog, 2006; Dodds et al., 1991).

The second view of perceived value from extant literature sees the concept as a multidimensional construct (Sanchez et al., 2006; Riog, 2006; Sweeney and Soutar, 2001; Mattsson, 1991). According to Riog (2006), the key dimensions or values are two, namely: (i) the functional dimension which primarily focuses on how the individual measures value from rational and economic point of view. A typical item under this perceived value dimension is brand quality from the customer's perspective and (ii) the affective dimension which relates to the individual customer's emotional and social behaviour in a given purchase and consumption setting. Accordingly, the affective dimension can be measured in terms of the customer's feelings and also the social impact of the purchase (Riog, 2006; Sweeney and Soutar, 2001; Mattsson; 1991). Contributing to the multidimensionality of perceived value, scholar such as Sheth et al. (1991) put forward a five-key dimension of perceived value which they listed as including, the social, the emotional, the functional, the conditional and the epistemic dimensions. Riog (2006) provided explanations to these dimensions as follows:

- (a) **Functional value:** - this measures the perception of a given product or brand in terms of its functionality or the utility to the customer.
- (b) **Emotional value:** - this measures the perception of a given product or brand in terms of the affect or feelings or emotions that are ignited in the consumers as a result of exposure, purchase and or consumption of the said product or brand (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007).
- (c) **Social value:** - this measures the perception of the individual in terms of what members of his or her social environment thinks of his acquisition and or purchase of a given brand or product. The concerns or psychological puzzle of the consumer usually has to do with whether the acquisition and or consumption of a particular brand or product will elicit favourable responses or ridicule from his or her social environment.

(d) Epistemic value: - this measures the perception of the individual consumer in terms of the products' capacity to surprise, arouse curiosity or satisfy the desire for knowledge (Riog, 2006).

(e) Conditional value: - according to Sheth et al., (1991), conditional value describes or refers to conjunctural or situational factors such as illness or specific social situations.

Just like other scholars, De Ruyter et al. (1997) put forward a comprehensive approach in the measurement of perceived value. Here value measurement considers both the cognitive response (value for money) as well as the affective component. These two components yields three specific dimensions called the emotional, functional, and logical dimensions. As explained earlier, emotional dimension simply is the customer's affective evaluation of a given service encounter. The functional dimension deals with the practical aspects of the service encounter. With regard to the logical dimension, quality and the price are the main considerations. The logical dimension can also be described in terms of the popular catch phrase called "value for money" consideration.

According to Sweeney and Soutar (2001), epistemic and conditional dimensions as put forward by Sheth et al. (1991) are not relevant measures of value and were thus reduced from the original five dimensions to three namely functional value, social value and emotional value. To this end Sweeney and Soutar (2001) developed a measurement scale called the PERVAL which is made up of the items described below:

- Functional dimension involve factors including price (value for money), perceived product or service quality, and versatility, which refers to adaptability and practicality of the product.
- The other two dimensions of the PERVAL are the social and emotional dimensions

which also describes the set of intangibles elements that affect the relationship between the customer and the service provider (Riog, 2006).

4.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter reviewed extant literature on the concept of customer-perceived value and its importance in marketing. The chapter also discussed theoretical issues of perceived value including the domain, scope and drivers of perceived value.



CHAPTER FIVE

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the conceptual framework of the thesis. The conceptual framework provides a snapshot highlighting patterns of concepts and interrelationship among key variables of the study. The term conceptual framework as used in this study describes a set of relevant concepts and principles selected from two or more fields of enquiry for purposes of providing some explanation(s) to a study of interest (Fisher, 2007). From the writings of Smyth (2004) one can add that a conceptual framework is typically aimed at engendering awareness of a research phenomenon and aid the researcher in presenting ideas in a systematic and graphical manner for clearer understanding. A conceptual framework thus possess the potential to scaffold research and therefore if well-articulated can assist a researcher in giving meaning to a given research findings.

From the foregoing, it is useful to mention that, the conceptual framework developed for the purposes of this study is named CSR-CBBE Conceptual framework labelled as Figure 5.1. The framework captures key concepts and themes in the subject area of corporate social responsibility (CSR) under which the six types of CSR initiatives are listed. The framework also captures customer-based brand equity (CBBE) and its four dimensions of brand awareness, brand association/image, perceived quality and brand loyalty as respectively discussed in the literature review chapters of the study. The rest of the chapter discusses and explains the various concepts and themes and how they are interconnected.

5.1 OVERVIEW OF CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 5.1 presents the conceptual framework of the interrelationship between CSR and CBBE in the services sector. This framework shows the relationship between CSR and CBBE. In the framework, firm CSR is depicted as the independent variable while CBBE is modelled as the dependent variable of the relationships. The framework is supported by Kotler and Lee (2005), Keller (1993) and Aaker (1991). The next section begins with statements of the assumptions underlying the conceptual framework.

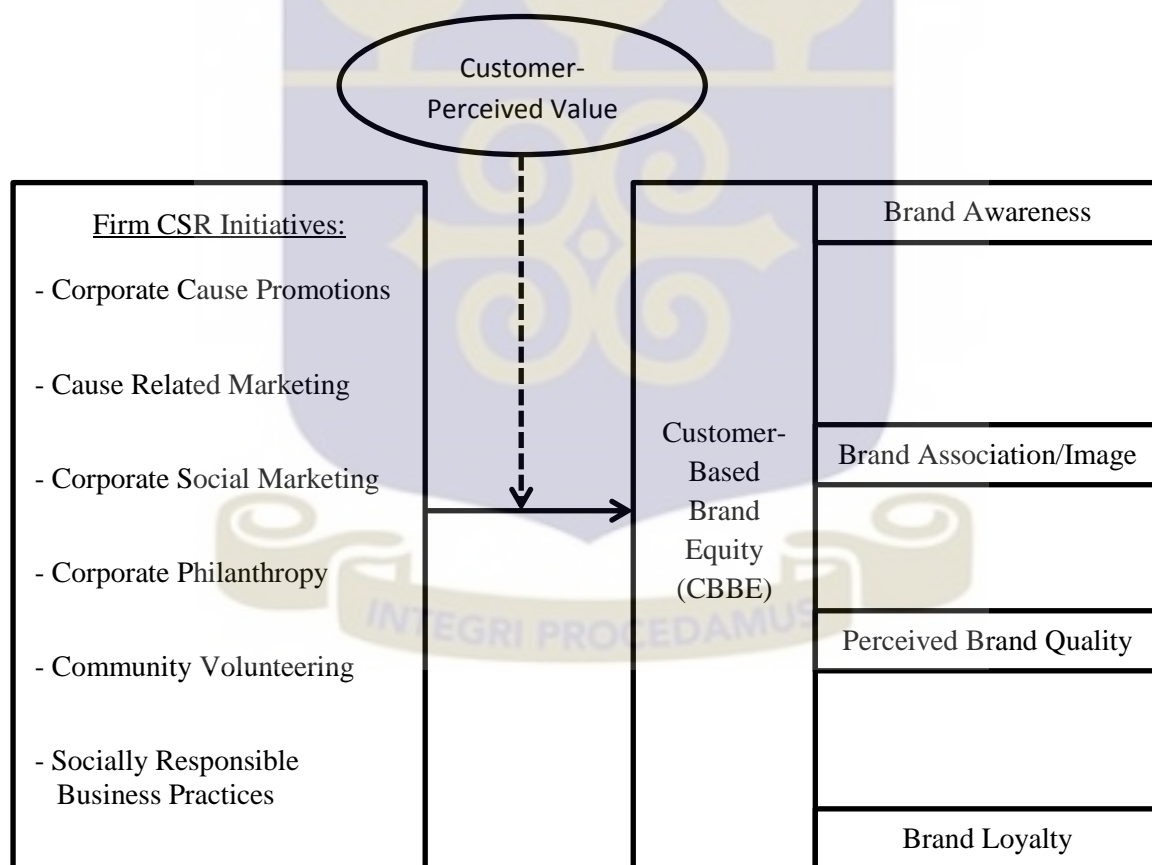


Figure 5.1: CSR - CBBE Conceptual Framework

5.2 ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING CSR –CBBE FRAMEWORK

In order to enhance understanding of the conceptual framework above, certain assumptions underlying the framework are presented below:

Assumptions

The conceptual framework assumes that:

- (1) A firm's CSR initiatives are grouped under six distinct sub-headings namely, corporate cause promotions, cause-related marketing, corporate social marketing, corporate philanthropy, community volunteering, and socially responsible business practices.
- (2) Pursuit of CSR leads to the achievement of customer-based brand equity which come in the form of four major dimensions namely, brand awareness, brand association, brand loyalty and brand image.
- (3) CSR activities directly predict CBBE perceptions of firms' customers.
- (4) The relationship between the independent variable (CSR) and the dependent variables (CBBE) are moderated by customer value.

Thus, a typical firm can increase or achieve one or more of the four customer-based brand equity dimensions of brand awareness, perceived quality, brand image/association and brand loyalty through the pursuit of specific CSR initiative (s). For CSR to lead to CBBE, the customer must have been exposed to the firm's CSR initiative(s). The firm's CSR initiative (s) or message must be of value or importance to the customers in order to achieve CBBE. In other words, the potential of CSR to lead to or create CBBE depends on customer perceived value (CPV) of the CSR. The relationships among these constructs are further explained below.

5.2.1 The Concept of CSR and its Dimensions

Although the subject of CSR have evoked a wide stream of interest and multiple conceptualizations from scholars, it is universally accepted to refer to all activities or practices of the firm that contributes to the general welfare of society. Such activities may not necessarily be required by law. According to Frederick (1997), corporations should have an obligation to constituent groups in society other than shareholders and beyond what the law or union contract prescribes. Conceptualizing along the same line is Wood (1991) who communicated the CSR idea in terms of interrelationship. This is because business and society cannot be detached from each other because they are interwoven. To McWilliam and Siegel (2001), firms should not only abide by the law but must act in furtherance of the good of society. The same idea is raised in the works of Buhmann (2006, p.197), where CSR is generally conceptualised as “doing more than what is required by law”. The World Business Council of Sustainable Development (1999) holds the view that, CSR is the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as the local community and society at large. CSR activities can broadly include one or more of the following: cause promotion, cause-related marketing, corporate social marketing, philanthropic donations (corporate philanthropy), community volunteering, and socially responsible business practices (Kotler and Lee, 2005).

5.2.2 Customer-Based Brand Equity and its Dimensions

According to Keller (1993) CBBE “is the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand”. Brand knowledge “is the full set of brand associations linked to the brand in long-term consumer memory”. CBBE thus refers to the peculiar responses of consumers that are generated towards a brand because of prior

knowledge and associations to the brand. For the purpose of this study, Keller's (1993) definition of CBBE is adopted. It is important to note that the definitions from extant literature are essentially the same and explicitly or implicitly propound the same philosophy captured in Keller's (1993) work. A careful consolidation of CSR with the dimensions of CBBE from extant literature generates four key relationships given below:

(i) CSR and Brand Awareness

According to Aaker (1991) brand awareness describes the ability of a potential buyer to recognize or recall that a brand is a member of a certain product category. Rossiter and Percy (1987) describe brand awareness as consumers' ability to identify or recognise the brand. Awareness is conceptualized and measured in terms of recall and recognition (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993), top-of mind, brand dominance, brand knowledge and brand opinion (Aaker, 1996) of a given brand as having certain associations that are in the consumer's memory. According to marketing scholars such as Kotler and Lee (2005), these associations may be activated by such brand elements like brand name, symbol, logo, package among many other marketing stimuli. Thus, as a firm undertakes CSR initiatives, it is expected that customers become increasingly aware of the brand as many of such initiatives are communicated. It is therefore hypothesised that CSR positively predicts brand awareness.

(ii) CSR and Brand Associations/Brand Image

Brand association is conceptualised as the totality of brand-related thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images, experiences, beliefs, and attitudes (Kotler and Keller, 2006) which are linked in memory to a given brand (Aaker, 1991). Organizational association and product associations are the two broad types of associations (Chen, 2001; Brown and Dacin, 1997; Keller, 1998; Kotler and Keller, 2006). Product association is further classified into

functional attribute associations and non-functional associations. The functional attributes - simply refers to the tangible features of a product or service. The non-functional association - are intangible in nature, and has to do with consumers need for safety and security (protection, order, and stability), social needs (affection, friendship, belonging), Ego needs (prestige, status, self-esteem), and Self-actualization needs (self-fulfillment) (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2010; Fayrene and Lee (2011) identified social image, perceived value, trustworthiness, differentiation, and country of origin of a given brand as factors that can shape non-functional association to the brand (Keller, 1993; Hankinson and Cowking, 1993; de Chernatony and McWilliam, 1989). The argument is that as firms pursue various CSR initiatives it leads to enhanced brand associations among customers. In this regard, it is hypothesized that, CSR positively predicts brand image or associations among customers.

(iii) CSR and Perceived Quality

Extant literature suggests that quality is a multi-dimensional construct that depends on several factors and subject to consumers' judgement (Zeithaml, 1988). This is to say that perceived quality is not necessarily the actual quality of the product but the consumer's subjective evaluation a given brand or product. As in the case of brand associations, Pappu et al. (2005) reasoned that perceived quality of a brand is a measure of value to consumers as it provides them with reasons to buy one product over the other. Quality has thus been conceptualized as a matter of perception based on certain attributes or cues important to the customer (Zeithaml, 1988). It is argued in this study that firm CSR initiatives can lead to increased quality perceptions among customers. It is therefore hypothesised that CSR positively predicts quality perceptions among customers.

(iv.) CSR and Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty is conceptualised by Aaker (1991) as the attachment that a consumer has to a brand. Similarly, Kotler and Keller, (2009) conceptualize loyalty in terms of the commitment to re-patronize a preferred brand or product of a company. Customer loyalty is thus expressed in terms of systematic purchases of same brand by a particular customer or group of customers. Thus, loyalty is a function of biased psychological process with respect to one or more available alternative brands that is expressed over time by an individual or a group to repurchase such brands (Uddin, 2012). Customer loyalty is accordingly measured by looking at the effectiveness of the relationship between repurchase intentions and relative attitude. According to Oliver (1997) brand loyalty describes a deeply held commitment to rebuy or patronize a preferred product/ service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand set purchasing despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behaviour. Drawing on the conceptualizations offered by Aaker (1996) the study also takes the position that a brand's ability to command premium price is also a key indicator of loyalty. Brands that enjoy high loyalty from customers tend to enjoy high consumer awareness and rank high in consumer evoked set. Consumers are also more willing to do word-of-mouth advertisement for the brand. Based on the objectives of this study, we argue that firm CSR initiatives can lead to brand loyalty among customers. It is hypothesised therefore that CSR positively predicts brand loyalty among customers.

5.2.3 The Moderating Role of Customer Perceived Value on CSR and CBBE

The importance of customer value in understanding consumer behaviour including behaviour towards CSR initiatives has received prominence in the works of Slater (1997) and Parasuraman (1997) among other scholars. Lichtenthal et al., (1997) is of the view that, having the knowledge of customer-perceived value of a company's activities is critical as it

can impact on competitive advantage. In building customer-based brand equity therefore, there is the need to understand the drivers of customer-perceived value (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993; Lichtenthal et al., 1997). In terms of conceptualization, customer value can be said to be used to describe the overall perception of the subjective merit of some activity or object regarding product utility, considering all benefits and costs of consumption (Chen and Tsai, 2008; Lai, et. al., 2009). From Kotler and Lee (2005) customer perceived value is measured as the difference between the total customer value and total customer costs. Typically total customer value may include bundle of product, service, personnel and image value. On the other hand total customer costs refer to bundle of monetary, time, energy, and psychic costs. According to Uddin (2012) customers usually estimate the expected perceived value in a typical exchange situation. Thus, companies need to understand the expectation of customers because perceived value relates to customer satisfaction and behavioural intentions for repurchase. In other words customer perceived value relates directly with customer-based brand equity given that brand equity comprises of customer brand awareness of a given cue or marketing stimulus or stimuli, customer perceived brand quality, brand image or associations, and customer brand loyalty. The argument put forward in this study is that, for CSR to lead to CBBE, customers must perceive value in the firm's CSR initiatives.

5.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provides the justification for the conceptual framework used in this study. The framework depicts the relationship between CSR and the four dimensions of customer-based brand equity. The assumptions underlying the framework are then stated to aid understanding.

CHAPTER SIX

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

6.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the telecommunication sector. The chapter provides insights needed for the appreciation of the study within the context of the Ghanaian mobile telecommunications sub-sector. To this end, the chapter situates mobile telecommunications within the services domain and accordingly defines and explains the concept of service. Building on the service background, brief overview of the Mobile Telecommunication Sector in Ghana in terms of history, regulatory environment, key service providers (players) in the industry and nature of competition are presented.

6.1 THE CONCEPT OF SERVICE

There is the growing perspective that marketing is evolving towards a new logic which Vargo and Lusch (2004) refer to as service dominant logic (S-D). This logic is anchored on three key understanding that: (i) service is regarded as a common denominator of exchange; (2) It embraces a process orientation (“service”), and not an output orientation (“goods and service”). Thirdly, the logic regards the customer “endogenous in the creation of value. Value is normally co-created by participants in exchange relationship and not unilaterally created by the firm for onward distribution to the customer. In the service dominant logic, goods are seen more as vehicle for service provision (Merz et al., 2009). It is reasonably therefore to make the S-D logic the foundation for studies in branding. It is useful to note that, marketing was founded on goods-centred model which described economic exchange relationship during the neo-classical era dating back from the early part of the twentieth century (Vargo and Morgan, 2005). From the beginning of the 1900s however, the scope of marketing

assumed a broader perspective with services becoming an important subdiscipline of marketing. From that time onwards marketing was seen as exchange for both goods and services (Fisk et al. 1993). In terms of conceptualization, services are characterized by intangibility (lack a tactile quality of goods), inseparability (simultaneously produced and consumed), heterogeneity (cannot be standardized), and perishability (cannot be produced ahead of demand and inventoried). These unique characteristics of service therefore demands different marketing strategies.

According to Vargo and Lusch (2004b), it is advisable not to focus on differentiating services from goods. This is because the four key characteristics of service suggests that services marketing subdiscipline is built on the same goods-and manufacturing-based model as the marketing of goods which is referred to as the goods –dominant logic (G-D). In this perspective, the firm produces value and that customers are exogenous to value creation, and as such constitute operand resources –resources on which an operation or act is performed to produce benefit (in this case for the producing firm). Operand resources can be contrasted with operant resources- resources capable of causing benefits by directly acting on other resources, either operand or operant, to create benefits (Constantin and Lusch, 1994). The adaptation of philosophy that emphasizes co-creation is therefore beneficial to the firm. In this regard Merz et al. (2009) have pointed out that the characterization of firms as either services firms or goods firms serves no meaningful purpose. The authors prefer the use of a singular term, service firms, some of which use goods in their service delivery. Thus services can be provided directly or through goods and that all stakeholders actively participate in the brand value creation process.

6.1.1 Broad Categorization of Services in Ghana

In Ghana, the services sector is the key channel through which the primary and secondary sectors of the economy operate. It is categorized into 10 different sub-sectors (ISSER, 2013) namely: (i) Trade, Repair of Vehicles, Household Goods, (ii) Hotels and Restaurants, (iii) Transport and Storage, (iv) Information and Communication, (v) Financial Intermediation, (vi) Business, Real Estate, and others, (vii) Public Administration and Defence; Social Security, (viii) Education, (ix) Health and Social Work, and (x) Other Community, Social and Personal Service. The sector has dominated the economy in terms of its contribution to Ghana's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the past few years. The services sector contributed about GHC33, 963 million to the Ghanaian economy in the year 2012, representing 50% of GDP. The sector also recorded 10.2% growth rate during the same period. Interestingly, this growth was largely due to a significant improvement in the output of three sub-sectors: (1) Transport and Storage, (2) Information and Communication, and (3) Financial and Insurance Activities. These three sub-sectors contributed to over half (55.3%) of the growth in the sector.

6.2 PERFORMANCE OF THE SERVICES SECTOR AND ITS SUB- SECTORS

The growth in the real GDP of the service sector was much higher than the targeted rate of 7.7% for 2012. Within the services sub-sectors, the Transport and Storage sub-sector has been leading in contributing to the services sector since 2008. The sub-sector's contribution has been increasing year after year, with the current value in 2012 being GH¢7,704 million (Table 6.1). The sub-sector contributed about a quarter of the total growth for the services sector, which amounted to a real change of GH¢ 1, 312 million in 2012. The largest change in real GDP growth for the sub-sectors was 22%, which was observed for the Financial and

Insurance Activities sub-sector, followed by about 10% change for the Hotels and Restaurant sub-sector (9.5%) and over 6% for the Information and Communication sub-sector (6.4%).

TABLE 6:1: Sectoral Contribution to GDP by the Services Sector, 2008 – 2012, based on Gross Domestic Product in Current Prices (in millions of Ghana Cedis)

Activity/Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
ALL SERVICES	13,935	17,543	22,184	27,423	33,963
% Contribution of Services Sector to GDP	48.6	49.2	51.1	49.1	50.0
Trade, Repair of Vehicles Household Goods	1,710	2,109	2,701	3,282	3,784
Hotels and Restaurants	1,716	2,196	2,593	3,007	3,611
Transport and Storage	3,262	3,758	4,578	5,997	7,704
Information and Communication	622	657	831	989	1,233
Financial and Insurance Activities	1,089	1,547	2,240	2,466	3,385
Real Estate, Professional, Administrative and Support Service Activities	1,185	1,462	1,945	2,591	3,279
Public Administration and Defence; Social Security	1,799	2,479	3,024	3,897	4,871
Education	1,132	1,506	1,877	2,307	2,732
Health and Social Work	381	513	674	728	872
Community, Social & Personal Service Activities	1,039	1,318	1,721	2,159	2,492

Source: Ghana Statistical Service

The declining trend in the growth of output for services related to 'Education and Health was halted in 2012, when the rates for the sub-sectors began to rise, after three years of slow growth (Table 6.2). The real GDP growth for the Education sub-sector increased from 3.8% in 2011 to 6.7% in 2012, and increased from 4.9% to 8.0% for the Health and Social Work sub-sector over the period.

Two sub-sectors experienced significant reduction in the growth of real GDP: the Community, Social and Personal Activities, and Trade, Repairs of Vehicles and Household Goods sub-sectors. Services related to Community, Social and Personal Activities grew by only 4.0% in 2012, compared to about 13.0% growth in 2011. This performance may be related significantly to lower than expected inflows of grants received by the government, which are normally used to finance such activities.

TABLE 6: 2: Real Growth Rates of Service Sector and Sub- Sectors at 2006 Constant Prices, 2008-2012 (%)

Activity/Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
All Services	8.0	5.6	9.8	9.4	10.2
Trade, Repair of Vehicles, Household Goods	9.5	5.4	13.3	11.0	5.8
Hotels and Restaurants	9.1	3.8	2.7	3.5	13.0
Transport and Storage	3.8	4.4	8.0	11.0	9.8
Information and Communication	19.5	3.8	24.5	17.0	23.4
Financial and Insurance Activities	10.8	9.4	16.7	1.0	23.0
Real Estate, Professional, Administrative and Support Service Activities	0.0	0.2	13.9	14.0	13.1
Public Administration and Defense; Social Security	12.7	11.6	3.4	7.4	4.2
Education	13.0	12.4	5.2	3.8	6.7
Health and Social Work	4.4	15.1	11.2	4.9	8.0
Community, Social & Personal Service Activities	9.2	7.5	10.8	12.9	4.0

Source: Ghana Statistical Service

6.3 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) SERVICES

Information and communication technology (ICT) has gained prominence in the Ghanaian economy. The ICT sub-sector is made up of various services, which include telecommunications and the internet, among others. Over the years, ICT has consistently contributed to the GDP of Ghana. Starting from as low as GH¢ 511 million in 2007, the sector's contribution in the year 2012 increased to GH¢ 1,233 million. In spite of the tremendous contribution of the ICT sub-sector to GDP, the sectors real growth rate has been oscillating. There were years when the real growth of the sub-sector reached as high as 24.5% (that is, in 2010) and years when the sector grew by only 3.9% (that is, in 2009). In the year 2011, the ICT sub- sector grew by 17.0%, and this fell to 12.1% in 2012.

Most government policies over the years have been geared towards promoting and improving the quality of the delivery of services through the expansion of the information and communication sub-sector's activities. Some of the policies and programmes implemented over the years within the ICT sub-sector include the improvement in the fibre-optic base of the country, opening-up the ICT market to the private sector, provision of laptops for school children and so on.

The mobile telecommunication industry has been expanding considerably from a subscriber base of about 383,000 in 2002 to 25.6 million in 2012. The data on number of subscribers, their percentage change and market share of telecommunications companies is presented in Table 6.3. The table shows that the subscriber base of MTN consistently increased from 245,000 in 2002 to 11,734,500 in 2012. However, the market share of MTN has been decreasing from 64% in 2002 to 45.8% in 2012. Although the number of subscribers

increased from 10,156,112 in 2011 to 11,734,500 in 2012, the market share decreased from about 48% in 2011; to 45.8% in 2012.

From the year 2011 Vodafone has taken over from Tigo as the second leading mobile service operator in Ghana, with a market share of 20.2% in 2011 and 20.5% in 2012, compared to that of Tigo, which stood at 18.8% in 2011 and 14.4% in 2012. Whereas the number of subscribers for Vodafone has been increasing year after year, those of Tigo started to fall from 2010 (Table 6.3). Similarly, Expresso (Kasapa) has experienced a consistent decline in its number of subscribers, from 394,051 in 2008 to 165,863 in 2012. The market share of Expresso (Kasapa) decreased from 4.9% in 2003 to 0.6% in 2012.

The network operator Tigo is now the third leading network provider in Ghana, after Vodafone and MTN, followed by Airtel (Iain). The market share of Airtel (Iain) has increased over the years from 3.8% in 2008 to 12.5% in 2012. In terms of the number of subscribers, about 463,824 individuals subscribed to the Airtel (Iain) network in 2008 and the figure for 2012 was about 3,192,154. Another provider of mobile services, Globacom Ghana limited (Glo) launched its operations in the year under review with a subscriber base of 1,568,014 for the network in 2012. The market share of Globacom Ghana in 2012 was about 6.1%.

Table 6.4 represents the fixed telephone subscriber base per operator over the period, 2001 to 2012. Considering the period under review, Ghana Telecom/ Vodafone has had the largest market share in the fixed telephone sub-sector. The number of subscribers using Vodafone and Airtel fixed lines increased consistently from 270,100 in 2002 to 386,060 in 2007 but there was a sharp drop to 152,938 in 2008. From the year 2009 and subsequent years the number of fixed line subscribers has been increasing from 267,389 in 2009 to 284,981 in

2012. In 2011, the market share of Vodafone was 96.4% of the fixed lines with the remaining 3.6% for Airtel.

TABLE: 6:3 Mobile Phone Subscriber Base and Market Share per Operator, 2008-2012

Operator	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Kasapa (Expresso)	394,051	262,259	239,815	186,751	165,863
% change	36.32	-33.45	-8.56	-22.13	-11.18
Market Share	3.3	1.7	1.4	0.9	0.6
MTN	6,428,218	8,000,946	8,721,249	10,156,112	11,734,500
% change	60.06	24.47	9	16.45	15.54
Market Share	54.6	53	50	48	45.8
Tigo	2,887,927	3,420,354	3,999,262	3,971,754	3,698,409
% change	42.75	18.44	16.93	-0.69	-6.88
Market Share	24.5	22.6	22.9	18.8	14.4
Vodafone	1,592,451	2,132,119	2,722,364	4,275,521	5,259,487
% change	24.82	33.89	27.68	57.05	23.01
Market Share	13.5	14.1	15.6	20.2	20.5
Zain (Airtel)	463,824	1,293,238	1,751,259	2,625,705	3,192,154
% change		178.82	35.42	49.93	21.57
Market Share	3.9	8.6	10	12.4	12.5
Glo *	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1,568,014
% change					-
Market Share					6.1
Total	11,766,471	15,108,916	17,436,949	21,165,843	25,618,427
% change	54.74	28.41	15.41	21.39	21.04

Source: National Communication Authority, 2012

* Figure not available

Table 6.5 summarizes the performance of the information and communication technology services sub-sector from 2004 to 2012. The table shows an upward trend in the number of ICT services providers. The same trend holds for the rise in internet service providers between 2006 and 2012. In 2006, the number of internet service providers was 99, increasing to 129 in 2012. The number of fixed phone operators has been the same from 2006 to 2012, while the number of cellular phone operators increased from 5 in the year 2006 to 6 in 2012.

TABLE 6: 4: Fixed Telephone Subscriber Base per Operator, 2008-2012

Operator / Year	2008	2008	2010	2011	2012
Vodafone	150,062	265,236	267,033	274,607	274661
% change	-60.84	76.75	0.68	2.84	0.02
Airtel	2,876	2,153	10,864	10,114	10320
% change	0	-25.14	404.6	-6.9	2.04
Total	152,938	267,389	277,897	284,721	284981
% change	-60.38	74.83	3.93	2.46	0.09

Source: National Communication Authority, 2012

TABLE 6.5: overall performance of the information communication Technology service sub sector, 2006-2012

Item / year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Authorized Television Stations	47	50	55	55	55
Authorized Radio Station	190	212	223	248	288
Internet service providers	114	122	122	126	129
Fixed phone operators	2	2	2	2	2
Cellular Phone Operators	6	6	6	6	6

Source: National Communication Authority, 2013

6.4 OVERVIEW OF TELECOMMUNICATION IN GHANA

6.4.1 Regulatory Environment and Policy Objectives of the Telecom Sector

Ghana deregulated its telecommunications sector in 1994 when the Government announced a five-year comprehensive restructuring of the industry known as the "Accelerated Development Program 1994-2000 (ADP 2000)." The main policy objectives of the programme are formulated and aim to:

- Achieve a density between 1.5 and 2.5 lines per 100 people;
- Improve public access in rural and urban areas, through the provision of payphone facilities (public and private);
- Expand the coverage of mobile services;
- Promote Ghanaian ownership and control of telecommunications companies; and
- Retain an overall public regulatory control of the sector through the creation of a single agency: the National Communications Authority (NCA).

The ADP adopted the following strategies to achieve the above-stated policy objectives:

- the authorisation of two national network operators: Ghana Telecom and a new independent operator;
- support of new financing: arrangements which promote investment in new telecommunications infrastructure throughout the country; and privatisation of Ghana Telecom through the sale of a strategic stake to an international operating company combined with measures to broaden share ownership in Ghana.

The telecommunications industry in Ghana has witness an impressive progress in a very short period of time. The sector is facilitating communication probably among more than half of Ghana's estimated 24 million plus population. The latest National Communication Authority (NCA) Report on subscriber numbers indicate as at the close of September, 2013 there were 27,551,503 mobile subscriptions in the country and 277,350 fixed line subscriptions, which represents 10.7% telephony penetration with data penetration standing at 39.2%. This impressive development can be largely attributed to the liberalization and deregulation of the sector.

In this regard, it is important to mention that Ghana is one of the pioneering countries to liberalize and deregulate its telecommunications sector within Africa. For instance, the privatization of Ghana Telecom (GT) in 1996, which was later re-privatized in 2008, was a major catalyst for an extraordinary growth in market competition across the mobile, internet and fixed-line sectors. The second national operator, Westel, was also re-privatized, in 2007, becoming a member of the Zain Group, one of Africa's leading mobile operators. The Group was taken over by Bharti Airtel of India in 2010. The arrival of an additional two new international submarine fibre optic cables in 2012 and 2013 has significantly increased international bandwidth, and has added considerable competition to a sector previously dominated by GT through its interest in the SAT-3/WASC cable. Augmented international connectivity combined with the roll out of national fibre backbone networks by a number of players is continuing to revolutionize the country's broadband market and pave the way for the convergence of technologies and services.

6.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provides a general understanding of the concept of service and the categorization of the services sector in Ghana. The performance of the various sectors and sub-sectors are also discussed within the context of the study. The later part of the chapter focused on the mobile telecommunications services sector in Ghana by describing the industry environment including the nature of competition among the service providers.



CHAPTER SEVEN

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

7.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the relevant issues of the research methodology as it relates to approaches followed in this study. Generally, scholars on research methodology including Hair et al. (2006), Malhotra (2002); Babbie (2001), and Crotty (1998) agree that a researcher's choice of research design is necessarily determined by the goals of the research questions involved. Thus, the design and analytical paths of any research programme should have a specific methodological direction based on its research objectives and framework. The framework of this research seeks to explain the relationship between CSR and customer-based brand equity (CBBE). Accordingly, this research uses a mixed methodological research design to examine the role of CSR in building CBBE in the mobile telecommunication sector. The rest of the chapter highlights the rationale for using both qualitative and quantitative methods. To this end the chapter begins with a description of the various philosophical foundations and provide reasons for the philosophical stance chosen for this study. Methodological issues pertaining to the chosen philosophical foundation are described for both quantitative and qualitative data elements.

7.1 PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS

A typical dissertation or research need to articulate a philosophy or philosophies that provide the foundation or framework for conducting a research study. These philosophies are assumptions about gaining knowledge. The assumptions provide a guide for carrying out the research (Creswell, 2011). Thus from the onset, a framework is needed for thinking about how research philosophy fits into the design of a research study. Crotty (1998) noted that

there are four major elements in the design of a study (see figure 7.1). At the broadest level are the issues of philosophical assumptions, such as the epistemology behind the study or how researchers gain knowledge about what they know. These philosophical assumptions then inform the theoretical stance that the researcher might use. The stance is what informs the research methodology which basically spells out the techniques or procedures used to gather, analyse, and interpret the research data.

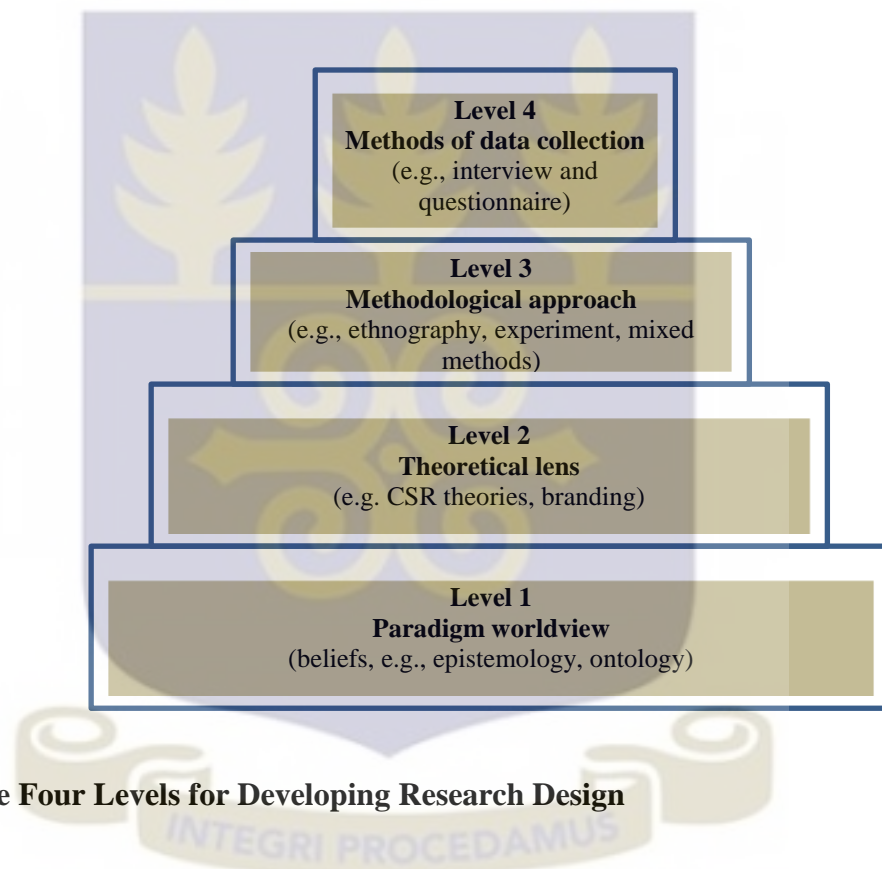


Figure: 7.1: The Four Levels for Developing Research Design

Source: Adapted from Crotty (1998)

The articulation of the various philosophical assumptions involves acknowledgement of worldview(s) providing the foundation of the study. This involves describing the elements of the worldview, and relating these elements to specific procedure of the chosen research methods. A framework is needed for thinking about how a philosophy fits into the design of a

chosen research method. In this study, Crotty's (1998) conceptualization is adapted (see figure 7.1) to position the philosophy of study within a mixed method study. There are four possible worldviews that can inform mixed method research. These worldviews are important for giving a research a philosophical orientation. Below are brief descriptions of the four worldviews:

Postpositivist Worldview: - This is often associated with quantitative approaches. Under this worldview, knowledge is derived based on determinism or cause-and-effect thinking, reductionism, which require researchers to narrow and focus on select variables to interrelate. Knowledge is also acquired by observations and measures of variables. Sometimes it requires the testing of theories that are continually refined (Slife and Williams, 1995).

Constructivism: - is usually qualitative in method where knowledge is derived from the subjective views of participants. The understanding of participant on issues is largely shaped from social interactions and also from their own peculiar personal past experiences or histories. Experiences of others, observed vicariously also form part of the constructivism worldview. Under this worldview, the individual perspective of research participants is put together to generate broad patterns which leads to broad understanding of a given subject.

Participatory Worldview: - is associated more with qualitative than quantitative approaches to conducting research inquiry. This approach is influenced by the political need to improve society and its occupants. In this regard, participatory worldview seeks collaboration with individuals or groups experiencing a given social problem for solutions. The motive of this world view is to provide guide for making society and its inhabitants better.

Pragmatism: - takes the view that the selection of particular research method(s) need not be more important than the outcome or the consequences of the research. This worldview thus stress the importance of focusing on the questions asked instead of the method(s) used. Pragmatist worldview therefore recommends relying on multiple research methods in

addressing a research problem. In effect, pragmatism leans towards pluralism of methods by considering what works and what is valuable in the practical context.

From the foregoing discussion of the various worldviews the following can be noted. All four worldviews have common elements but take different stances on these elements. These differences are in the area of ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology (Creswell, 2011; Lincoln and Guba, 2000). These differences influence how researchers conduct and report their inquiries.

Based on the frameworks of Creswell (2011) and Crotty (1998) four popular views are compared and contrasted namely, Postpositivist worldview, constructivist worldview, participatory worldview and the pragmatist worldview. What is peculiar about the worldview is that every worldview leans towards particular research paradigm. For instance, constructivism is qualitative-based paradigm while pragmatism adopts mixed research-based paradigm. Table 7.1 below accordingly describes the different worldviews and the corresponding ontological, epistemological and the methodological foundations. The table also shows how these elements and worldviews are translated into practice:

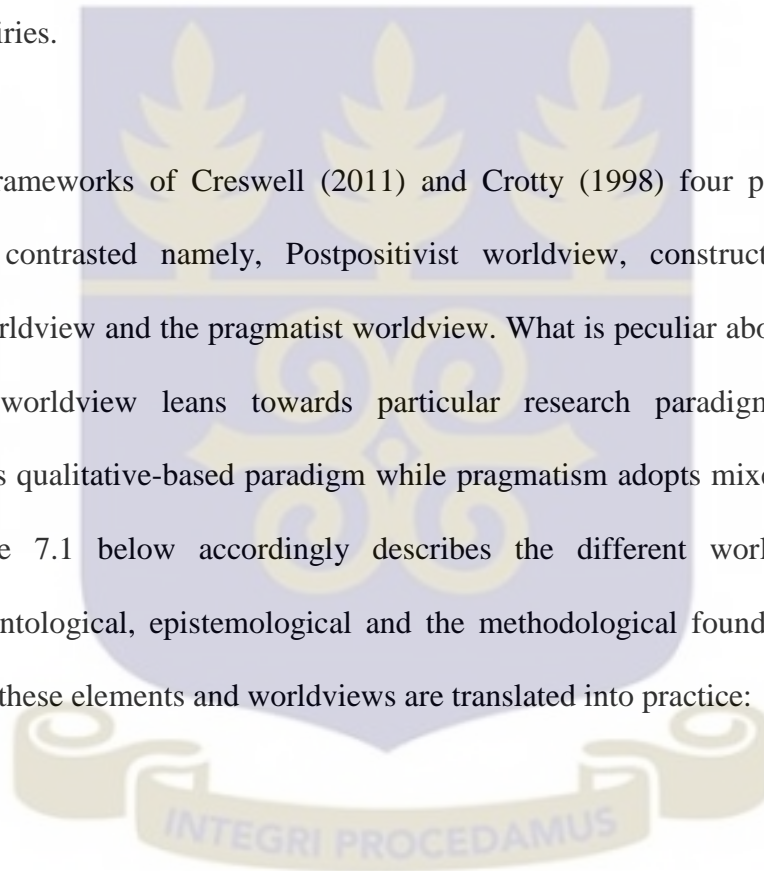


Table 7.1: Elements of Worldviews and Implication for Practice

WORLDVIEW ELEMENT	Postpositivism	Constructivism	Participatory	Pragmatism
Ontology (what is the nature of reality?)	Singular reality (e.g., researchers reject or fail to reject hypothesis)	Multiple realities (e.g., researchers provide quotes to illustrate different perspectives)	Political reality (e.g., findings are negotiated with participants)	Singular and multiple realities (e.g., researchers test hypothesis and provide multiple perspectives)
Epistemology (what is the relationship between the researcher and that being researched?)	Distance and impartiality (e.g., researchers objectively collect data on instruments)	Closeness (e.g., researchers visit participants at their sites to collect data)	Collaboration (e.g., researchers actively involve participants as collaborators)	Practicality (e.g., researchers collect data by “what works” to address research question)
Axiology (What is the role of values?)	Unbiased (e.g., researchers use checks to eliminate bias)	Biased (e.g., researchers actively talk about their biases and interpretations)	Negotiated (e.g., researchers negotiate their biases with participants)	Multiple stances (e.g., researchers include both biased and unbiased perspectives)
Methodology (What is the process of research?)	Deductive (e.g., researchers test an a priori theory)	Inductive (e.g., researchers start with participants’ views and build “up” to patterns, theories, and generalizations)	Participatory (e.g., researchers involve participants in all stages of the research and engage in cyclical reviews of results)	Combining (e.g., researchers collect both quantitative and qualitative data and mix them)

Source: Adapted from Creswell and Plano Clark (2011, p.42)

The next section is devoted to the discussion of mixed methodological approach which is positioned within the pragmatist worldview as described above. To this end the philosophical justification for analysing qualitative and quantitative data within the same study is provided.

7.2 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This research employs a triangulation research method. It is a mixed method which is multiple research methodology based on both quantitative and qualitative data (Hair et al., 2006). Mixed method research is defined as research in which the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches and methods in a single study or a programme of enquiry (Tashakkori and Creswell, 2007). Arguably, mixed methods could be seen both in terms of

methods and as a philosophical orientation. To this end, Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) stated that mixed methods research is a research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry. As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative data in the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analysing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches, in combination, provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone.

From the foregoing there is the need to justify the adoption of a mixed method in any particular study. Typically, research problems suited for mixed methods are those in which one data source may be insufficient, results need to be explained, exploratory findings need to be generalised, a second method is needed to enhance a primary method, a theoretical stance needs to be employed, and an overall research objective can be best addressed with multiple phases, or projects. In reference to the study objectives, the mixed method is considered useful in this particular study because of the following reasons or situations:

(1) A need exists because one data source may be insufficient: The use of a survey method to establish the extent to which CSR creates CBBE from the perspective of customers of mobile telecommunication companies is useful but does not explain fully why and how the relationship occurs or does not occur. To understand the “why and how” this relationship exist or does not exist requires some explanation or detail information which is only possible through a complementary qualitative study. In this regard managers responsible for marketing and or CSR in the mobile telecommunication companies were asked to express their views and explain the role of CSR in building CBBE dimensions through qualitative interviews.

The respondents were also asked to express their views on the key issues to consider in communicating CSR for the achievement of CBBE dimensions.

(2) A need exists to explain initial results: the results of the quantitative study provides an incomplete understanding of the research problem necessitating the need for further explanation through content analysis of in-depth interview of management personnel of the mobile telecommunications companies. In this study, there is the need to also collect qualitative data to explain the quantitative results. Although the quantitative data explains the relationships among CSR and CBBE variables, it is lacking in terms of providing more detailed understanding of what the statistical tests or effect sizes actually mean.

(3) A need exists to enhance a study with a second method: Advocates of the mixed method research are of the view that a second research method can be added to a given study to provide an enhanced understanding of the research phenomenon. In this study therefore, the researcher embedded qualitative data within a quantitative study to gain more insight into the research problem.

Specifically, the research is based on a cross-sectional study which relied on secondary data analysis, survey and face to face interviews. The research setting is the Ghanaian mobile telecommunication sector where data were collected from the firm level as well as from customers of these firms. The purpose is to address the research objectives and the conceptual model depicted in Chapter Five. As the proposed CSR-CBBE conceptual model shows, this research proposes an empirical setting to investigate the theoretical relational path of CSR and CBBE. The conceptual framework seeks to quantify the data (Malhotra, 2002) for the purposes of explaining the causal relationships between CSR and CBBE. The approach for

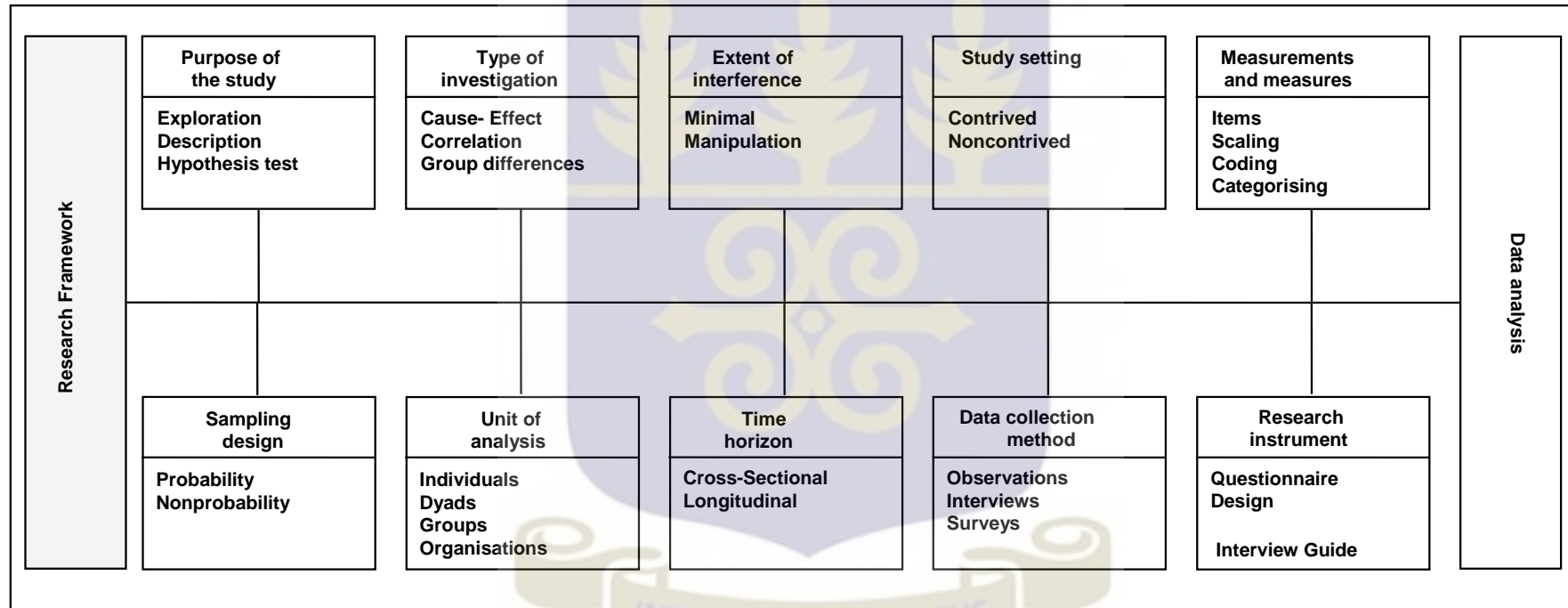
this investigation is therefore exploratory and comprises the use of both quantitative and qualitative research tools and techniques.

It is equally important to mention that, for further conceptual validation of quantitative information, scholars have suggested that qualitative information might be worth considering in any research approach (Creswell, 2011; Hair et al., 2006; Malhotra, 2002). To that end qualitative information (in-depth interviews) is collected so as to gain insight necessary for the validation of the relationship between CSR and CBBE. Incorporating both quantitative and qualitative triangulation of data in this case is significant for two reasons. One, the empirical findings indicate the level of significance of the relationship between CSR and CBBE dimensions, and two, the qualitative information explores interpretation of the phenomena. The subsequent section describes the specific processes employed in the research design.

7.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research process of this study is discussed in this section and organised according to the framework provided by Sekaran (2000) as depicted in Figure 7.2. The discussion however focuses on only items in the framework that are relevant to this study.

Figure 7.2 A Framework for Organising the Research Process



Source: Sekaran, U. (2000), "Research Methods for Business: A Skill Building Approach", (2nd ed), John Wiley and Sons Inc., New York, pp.93

7.3.1 The Purpose of the Study

The overall aim of the study leads to the need to ascertain the role of CSR in building CBBE dimensions of brand awareness, brand association/ image, perceived quality, and brand loyalty as put forward by Keller (1993) in the mobile telecommunications services sector of Ghana. The study was also interested in finding out the role of various types of CSR initiatives in creating customer-based dimensions in the mobile telecommunications industry. Although not the focus of the study, key strategies on how to communicate CSR to enhance CBBE dimensions were also addressed as an integral part of the study. In order to fulfil this purpose a conceptual framework depicting the relationships between CSR and CBBE was developed in Chapter Five of the study. The framework which resulted from review of extant literature on key concepts was of the assumption that, for the firm to achieve CBBE from its pursuit of CSR, customers must perceive value in such CSR initiatives. Arguably, this will mean that the firm need to communicate effectively its CSR messages in a way that increases customer perception of value in such activities. In this regard, the study develops a conceptual framework encapsulating the strategic role of CSR in building CBBE. The research programme required to enable the model to be tested involved both quantitative and qualitative data.

7.3.2 Types of Investigation

The study employed Descriptive Statistics, Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). The use of SEM yields benefits not possible with first-generation statistical methods. One important benefit is that it is possible to take into account types of error confounding first-generation procedures (Edwards and Bagozzi, 2000). SEM provides a useful forum for sense-making and in so doing link philosophy of science criteria to theoretical and empirical research (Schumacker and Lomax, 2004). Fit indices were

employed to assess the strength and acceptability of the construct measurements. The selection of these fit indices was based on the classification proposed by Kline (2005) and Byrne (2013) as being the most commonly accepted criteria in social sciences.

The study describes the role of CSR in building CBBE dimensions of brand awareness, brand association/ image, perceived quality, and brand loyalty from the perspectives of customers/ subscribers of mobile telecommunications service providers and also from management and staff of these companies. The study also explores through in-depth interviews of six management personnel from all the six mobile telecommunication companies on how to effectively communicate CSR to enhance CBBE for the firm. These interviews together with the regression analysis and structural equation modelling provide insight on the relationship between CSR and CBBE.

7.3.3 Extent of Researcher Interference with the Research

As discussed in section 7.3.2, the study was both exploratory and descriptive in research design. The descriptive part was concerned with establishing the relation between CSR and CBBE dimensions of brand awareness, brand association/ image, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. The analysis did not allow for manipulation on the part of the researcher as no variable was deliberately manipulated. The extent of the researcher interference in this case was low. The exploratory part allowed the researcher to control the direction of the research by the questions asked and how the data was interpreted. In this regard, the extent of interference with the research was high.

7.3.4 Study Setting

The study uses the same natural environment in which subject normally go about their daily activities including home, work and shopping. In surveying customers of mobile telecommunication companies, the researcher used the mall intercept approach to administer the questionnaire.

In the case of management, in-depth qualitative interviews were carried out in the offices of all the six mobile telecommunications companies involved in the study. In general, these approaches tend to have a wider generalizability than in the case of laboratory experiments. In particular, field surveys also tend to have much greater external validity than lab experiments (Sekaran, 2000). This is because inferences can be generalised from the research environment to the environment of the decision maker (Aaker et al., 2001). The foregoing arguments motivated the use of field survey and in-depth qualitative interview to investigate the phenomenon under investigation.

7.3.5 Measurements and Measures

The study is based on both quantitative and qualitative measures. In the case of the quantitative study, a set of questionnaire was designed to solicit information from the customers (subscribers) of the mobile telecommunication companies operating in Ghana. The questionnaires consisted of 7 sections. Apart from the demographic variables all sections of the questionnaire used 7-point Likert scales to measure all the items of concern. Specifically, respondents were asked to rate their perceptions on 7-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). It is instructive to mention that, in terms of the use of scales, variants of scales are common from five to nine. Instead of asking for any objective information (Kaynak and Kuan, 1993), this study used seven point scales as it integrates ideal

precision of seven categories of absolute judgement (Miller, 1956). The seven point scale is also said to be universally adaptable, relatively insensitive and statistically sophisticated (Malhotra, 2002).

The items for the questions were derived mainly from the works of Keller (1993), Aaker (1991), Kotler and Lee (2005). Typically, questionnaire is used as a systematic way to find information. Questionnaires are also chosen due to the fact that they are very cost effective and easy to analyze. This method may sensitize the respondent to the subject matter, and hence influence the responses given. Between the period July and September, 2012 a panel of eight experts made up of business academics and high-ranking marketing practitioners from Ghana's telecommunication sector reviewed the draft set of questionnaire which was in English before pre-testing. Based on the reviewers' comments, the questionnaire was revised and modified. The questionnaire was pre-tested for its clarity on twenty-five Executive Masters of Business Administration students of the University of Ghana. Based on the pre-test, the wordings of the two sets of questionnaire items were slightly modified before final printout and administration. The two key measurement variables used in the study are described below:

CSR was measured using the six types of CSR initiatives identified in Kotler and Lee (2005) namely, cause promotion, cause-related marketing, corporate social marketing, corporate philanthropy, community volunteering and socially responsible business practices.

CBBE was measured using the four dimensions as conceptualised by Keller (1993) which include brand awareness, brand image/association, perceived quality, and brand loyalty.

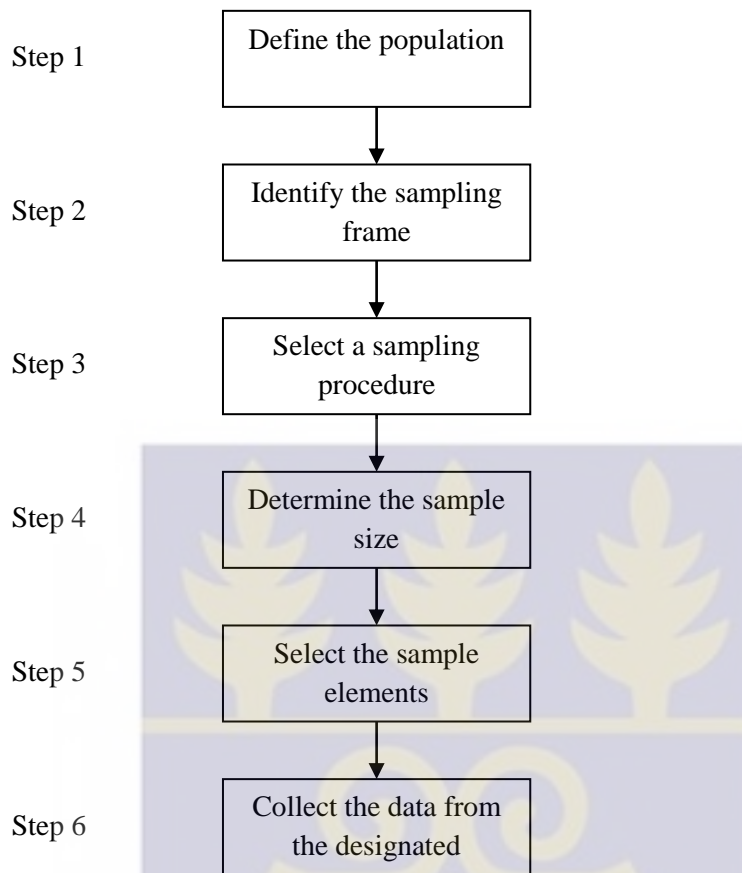
Details of measurement items for the various dimensions used in the questionnaire are found in Appendix I.

In the case of the qualitative study, the research protocol (see Appendix II) was used to guide the interview process. The research protocol which served as a question guide for teasing out rich data from the targeted interviewees was developed mainly based on literature (Kotler and Lee, 2005; Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993; Bhattacharya and Sen 2009; Morsing and Schultz, 2006; Morsing; 2003; Hoeffler and Keller, 2003; Keller and Lehmann, 2003). It provided the researcher the opportunity to explain the role of CSR in building CBBE dimensions of brand awareness, brand association/ image, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. In addition, the protocol provided a guide that allowed the researcher to explain the CSR communication strategy required for achieving CBBE for the firm.

7.3.6 Sampling Design

This section deals with the sampling design of the study. The adopted sampling design follows the six-step process suggested by Churchill (1995) and illustrated in Figure 7.3 below.



Figure 7.3 A Six-Step Procedure for Drawing a Sample

Source: Churchill, G., Jnr. (1995); *Marketing Research: Methodological Foundations, Seventh Edition*; The Dryden Press, Fort Worth, p. 575.

Step 1: Define the Population

The study is based on two sets of populations. The survey data was targeted at all customers or subscribers of mobile telecommunication services in Ghana. In the case of the in-depth qualitative interviews, the population was defined to include all managers responsible for CSR and or marketing in all the six mobile telecommunication companies in Ghana.

Step 2: Identify the Sampling Frame

In line with the chosen mixed methodological approach of the research. The in-depth qualitative interviews was based on a census of all the six managers responsible for Marketing/ and or CSR in the six mobile telecommunications companies operating in Ghana.

These companies are licensed by the National Communication Authority to operate in the Ghanaian market (NCA, 2013). In the absence of list or directory of mobile telecommunication service subscribers or customers the sampling frame for the survey, was described to include all adults who are subscribers to at least one mobile telecommunications network within the Accra metropolitan area.

Step 3: Select a Sampling Procedure

In the case of customers, the study used the mall-intercept approach where respondents were purposively selected. Given that the study was interested in ascertaining the views of mobile network subscribers, respondents needed to be qualified to participate in the survey. Potential respondents (customers) were first asked whether or not they are subscribers of at least one mobile telecommunications network operating in Ghana and whether they are willing to complete a set of questionnaire on the role of CSR in branding (i.e. CBBE). A “Yes” answer to both questions qualified one to participate in the survey. In this regard all the respondents self-selected themselves by agreeing to complete the questionnaires.

For the qualitative part of the study, as has already been stated in the preceding section a census was carried out among the mobile telecommunications companies. Each of the six mobile telecommunications companies were represented by a manager considered very knowledgeable in the subject area under investigation. These respondents were nominated by management following request by the researcher to management for assistance in the in-depth qualitative interviews.

Step 4: Determine the Sample Size

According to Hair et al. (2006), a study population describes “an identifiable set of elements of interest to the researcher and pertinent to the information problem”. Sampling is thus the “selection of a small number of elements from a larger defined population and expecting that the information gathered from the small group will allow judgements to be made about the population. Tabachnick and Fidell (1996) have recommended that in statistical analysis, a sample of 200 is considered fair and 300 as good. Similarly, Hair et al. (1998) is of the view that 200 is a ‘critical sample size’ and that such a figure can lend itself to common statistical estimations and produce results that are valid (Hoelter, 1983). With regard to this study, a total of 500 respondents successfully completed the questionnaires out of 550 respondents. The sample is considered adequate for the type of analysis required for the study. According to the prescriptions of Tabachnick and Fidell (1996), a minimum sample of 50 is adequate for computing regression analysis as required in this study.

Step 5: Select the Sample Elements

In collecting data from customers, efforts were made to get those willing and able to complete the questionnaires on their own without much assistance. To this end, the researcher briefed each customer (potential respondent) about the content and purpose of the research. The potential respondents were then asked whether they are able and subsequently willing to complete the questionnaire. Those willing to complete the questionnaire were further instructed to keep their major mobile network in mind while they filled out the questionnaire provided. This instruction was aimed at avoiding confusion in the mind of respondents as to what particular network the questionnaire relates to. This instruction emanates from a preliminary study undertaken for the purposes of this study which found that some customers (subscribers) use multiple mobile networks and that their perceptions of the various networks

in terms of CSR engagements vary. The researcher assured respondents that the study was being conducted for academic purposes, and that participation was completely voluntary, anonymous and confidential. The researcher indicated on the questionnaire that access to the supplied information would be limited to the university researcher only.

With regard to the qualitative part of the study as already indicated knowledgeable key informants were used for the in-depth interviews. Using such knowledgeable informants across the firms is considered more reliable and enabled standardization of information from firms' perspective (Mitchell, 1994). In this regard, considerable effort was made to persuade six knowledgeable personnel responsible for Marketing and or CSR in each of the various mobile telecommunications companies for their views on the research questions. With the consent of the management of the mobile telecommunications companies, the researcher was allowed access to the offices of the respondents for the interview. Notes were taken during the interviews which took between forty minutes to one hour to complete in each case.

Step 6: Collect Data from the Designated Elements

A set of questionnaire which consisted of seven sections was designed to solicit information from customers of mobile telecommunication companies in Ghana. The questionnaire used 7-point Likert scales to measure all the items of interest in the study. Specifically, respondents were asked to rate their perceptions on 7-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). It is instructive to mention that, in terms of the use of scales, variants of scales are common from five to nine. Instead of asking for any objective information (Kaynak and Kuan, 1993), this study used seven point scales as it integrates ideal precision of seven categories of absolute judgement (Miller, 1956). The seven point scale used for the questionnaire is also said to be universally adaptable, relatively insensitive and

statistically sophisticated (Malhotra, 2002). The use of questionnaire provides the researcher with a systematic way to find information. The researcher also chose questionnaire due to the fact that they are very cost effective and easy to analyze. The method may sensitize the respondent to the subject matter, thereby influencing the responses given. Between the period July and September, 2012 a panel of eight experts made up of business academics and high-ranking marketing practitioners from Ghana's telecommunication sector reviewed the draft set of questionnaire which was in English. Based on the comments from these reviewers, the questionnaire was revised and modified. The questionnaire was then pre-tested for its clarity on twenty-five Executive Masters of Business Administration students of the University of Ghana. Following the pre-test, the wordings of the questionnaire items were slightly modified before final printout and administration. The choice of this sample was motivated by the knowledge base of the students who are mostly senior business executives and also customers of the various mobile telecommunication companies. It was therefore convenient to work with this group as the researcher is a lecturer at the University.

7.3.7 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis refers to the level of aggregation of data during subsequent analysis (Sekaran, 2000). It also refers to the type of unit a researcher uses when measuring a given research phenomenon (Neuman, 2007). The individual, the group, the organization, the social category, the social institution and the society are some typical units of analysis in social research. In Sekaran (2000) and Zikmund (2000), unit of analysis is also described as the extent to which the level of aggregation or the level of investigation of collected data focuses specifically on objects or an object. The object(s) in this case could be an entire organization, department, group, activity and or individuals. Among these units of analysis, the individual is by far the most common unit of analysis in survey and in depth interviews especially. In

this study therefore, the units of analysis are the mobile telecommunication companies and their customers or subscribers. Given that this study is aimed at ascertaining the role of CSR in CBBE, it is considered prudent to establish the perceived relationship between CSR and CBBE dimensions from two important perspectives namely the company (that is at the organizational level represented by marketing and or managers responsible for CSR) and secondly from the customer. In addressing the research questions, a census of the six registered mobile telecommunications companies in Ghana was undertaken. The companies used in this study have been assigned pseudo names to protect the image and name of the organizations involved in the study. This was a promise made to the respondents prior to the administration of the survey. The six companies have accordingly been named Company A, Company B, Company C, Company D, Company E, and Company F.

7.3.8 Time Horizon

In order to reduce the possibility of extraneous influences of news stories or events affecting the dependent variables (see Section 7.3.4), the study adopted a cross-sectional, or one-shot design. In this regard, primary data were collected at a single point in time from customers and also from marketing managers and or managers responsible for CSR in the mobile telecommunications companies. This type of study has two features: firstly a cross-sectional study provides a snap-shot of the research variables at a single point in time and secondly, the sample of elements collected is typically selected to be representative of the whole population (Churchill, 1995). On the other hand cross sectional study come with certain disadvantages, including superficial analysis of the phenomenon, high cost in terms of time and money and the technical sophistication required to conduct survey research (Churchill, 1995). Consequently, the ability of a cross-sectional study in detecting change is weaker than a longitudinal study and so this study will only provide indirect evidence of the correlation

between variables. However, as already mentioned, cross-sectional study has the advantage of reducing the need to control extraneous influences that may cause change in the research variables. On the basis of these compelling advantages, a cross-sectional design was considered appropriate and chosen for the study.

7.3.9 Data Collection Method

In line with the mixed methodological approach of the study both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were required to address specific research objectives and question. The quantitative part as has already been mentioned employed the survey or the use of structured questionnaire. The qualitative aspect relied on in-depth face-to-face interviews of six managers from the six companies. These respondents were chosen as managers with the requisite knowledge in the subject matter. The survey and the in-depth face-to-face interview method of data collection are respectively discussed below:

Survey: the quantitative data collection method used for the study

Conventionally, quantitative research methodology belongs to the positivist approach to seeking answers to a given research phenomenon or problem where deductions are used to established hypothesised relationships. As pointed out by scholars including Aaker et al. (2001) and Davis (2000), such deductions tend to be obvious and allows for the quantification of observable consequences statistically. Similarly, Cooper and Schindler (2001) observed that based on the nature of a given research variable, the interpretation or the direction of the causal hypothesis or relationship tend to be obvious. The idea of causal relationships or hypothesis testing in quantitative research is primarily to match the underlying assumptions of the scientific observation of the “known” but not to uncover the “unknown” (Kuhn, 1970). In analysing quantitative data, researchers employ statistical tool

and techniques that permits the drawing of “concrete answers to specific research questions” (Rosner, 1990). According to Hair et al. (2006) quantitative research tends to place enormous emphasis on using formalized standard questions and predetermined response options in questionnaires or surveys administered to large numbers of respondents. Thus, quantitative techniques may be used to gauge some specific variables or characteristics through the use of structured data collection procedures usually from a large representative sample enabling the projection of such results to an entire population set (Davis, 2000). This approach has the inherent strength of providing concise answers to particular research problem or question due to the nature of data collection and the method of analysis employed (Hair et al., 2006). Again, the empirical findings of quantitative research allows for generalisation of results. It is instructive to mention that quantitative research is typical of the deductive approach which can enable the researcher to uphold or reject a given hypothesis or research question.

Specifically, a set of questionnaire was designed to solicit information from customers of the mobile telecommunication companies in Ghana. The questionnaire started with an introduction in which the purpose of the research was spelt to the respondents together with assurances of confidentiality and anonymity. The questionnaires consisted of 7 sections. Apart from the demographic variables, all sections of the questionnaire used 7-point Likert scales to measure all the items of concern. Specifically, respondents were asked to rate their perceptions on 7-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). It is instructive to mention that, in terms of the use of scales, variants of scales are common from five to nine. Instead of asking for any objective information (Kaynak and Kuan, 1993), this study used seven point scales as it integrates ideal precision of seven categories of absolute judgement (Miller, 1956). The seven point scale is also said to be universally adaptable, relatively insensitive and statistically sophisticated (Malhotra, 2002). The items for

the questions were derived mainly from the works of Keller (1993), Aaker (1991), Kotler and Lee (2005). As a systematic way to find information, the researcher chose to use questionnaire due to the fact that they are very cost effective and easy to analyze. The questionnaire method of data collection may also sensitize the respondent to the subject matter, and hence influence the responses given. Between the period July and September, 2012 a panel of eight experts made up of business academics including principal academic supervisors in Ghana and in the United States of America, and other high-ranking marketing practitioners from Ghana's telecommunication sector reviewed the draft set of questionnaire which were in English before pre-testing. Based on the reviewers' comments, the questionnaire was revised and modified. The questionnaire was pre-tested for its clarity on twenty-five Executive Masters of Business Administration students of the University of Ghana. Based on the pre-test, the wordings of the questionnaire items were slightly modified before final printout and administration. Details of the key measurement variables used in the study are attached as Appendix I.

Notwithstanding the rationale for quantitative research study, there are some limitations associated with this approach that is worth considering in this study. One limitation of the quantitative approach is that it is handicap when it comes to uncovering rich details of individual phenomenon or idiosyncrasies. It may not be appropriate especially in situations where subjective information is needed for in-depth or detailed discussion of a given phenomenon. As have already been stated in preceding sections, the study used a mixed methodology. The qualitative part is therefore presented below:

In-depth interview: the qualitative research method used for the study

Fielding and Fielding (1986) are of the conviction that qualitative data possess great potential when it supports quantitative research findings. Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research method allows for the exploration of real issues of a complex nature which cannot always be easily quantified. It is thus subjective in terms of providing answers to research questions or phenomenon. It also has the inherent possibility or advantage of making “the intricate details of a given phenomenon” available to consumers of research findings whereas such details are sometimes impossible to compose in quantitative research. In a qualitative study, the researcher is also able to employ a more intrusive and less structured technique of enquiry thereby enhancing insight into the research phenomenon (Neuman, 1997; Jarratt, 1996). It sometimes takes the form of a semi-structured interview which increases the possibility of exploring or uncovering hidden and sometimes sensitive issues (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011; Hair et al., 2006; Malhotra, 2002). Notwithstanding the advantages of the qualitative method, researchers face the problem of generalising the results of such research findings. This emanates from the problem of quantifying qualitative data which often tend to possess rich and complex data (Eisenhardt, 1989; Miles and Huberman, 1984). In this study, the qualitative interviews compliment and provide intricate details on the research phenomenon for enhanced understanding on the role of CSR in building customer-based brand equity. The interviews also enabled us to find out how firms can communicate CSR to enhance customer-based brand equity.

7.3.10 Research Instrument

The research instruments as mentioned throughout this chapter were obtained from the extant literature and fine-tuned through pre-test on Executive Masters of Business Administration students. The questionnaire set is attached as Appendixes II. The interview protocol is also

attached as Appendix III. The questionnaire used 7-point likert scale. Respondents were asked to rate their perceptions on 7-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The questionnaire had the various research questions group under seven heading (A to G). Section A is about the type of CSR activities the companies engaged in. This section had six items or statements. Section B was concerned the value of firm CSR initiative from the perspective of the customer and it also had six measurement items. Sections C, D, E and F sought to ascertain the relationship between six types of CSR initiatives (which are the independent variables) and the four customer-based brand equity dimensions (CBBE) as (which are the dependent variables). Specifically, Section C was concerned with the relationship between the various types of CSR and Brand Awareness, Section D dealt with CSR and Brand Image whereas E and F dealt with CSR and Brand Quality Perceptions and CSR and Brand Loyalty respectively. Section G measures six demographics characteristics of respondents.

To ensure reliability and validity, three marketing professors and five top marketing practitioners reviewed the draft questionnaire. The questionnaire was then revised and printed out. It was then pilot tested with twenty-five Executive Masters of Business Administration students of the University of Ghana which led to some minor changes before actual field data collection. The 36 items used for the scales for the constructs were factor analyzed and subjected to principal components analysis (PCA). Based on the conceptual framework for the study, the variables measuring the dependent constructs were assessed for their validity and reliability. A benchmark acceptable loading of 0.5 and a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.6 was used (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007). Some variables were dropped for further analysis. Consequently, 25 variables remained in the final structure.

In the case of interview protocol, there were two interrelated sections. Section A was mainly concerned with understanding the nature and value of CSR in the mobile telecommunications sector. The section also sought to know the key issues to consider in CSR communication strategy that enhanced customer-based brand equity. Section B of the protocol was interested in understanding the role of CSR in creating customer-based brand equity dimensions of awareness, brand association/image, perceived quality, and brand loyalty in the mobile telecommunications sector.

7.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter describes the various research methodological approaches used in the study. The Detail arguments for the adoption of the various philosophical foundations have been spelt out. Based on the arguments advanced for the philosophical foundations vis a vis the objectives of the study a mixed methodology was considered the most appropriate methodological stance. An overview of both quantitative and qualitative research methods was presented necessitating the discussion of specific methodological issues. In this regard, the chapter describes the design, by first reiterating the purpose of the study. The chapter then discusses the rationale for the types of investigation adopted and describes the research setting. The rest of the chapter focused on the measurement and measures used in the study, the sampling design, and the units of analysis, together with a description of the time horizon. The chapter concludes by describing survey and the in-depth interviews that were used for data collection and how the research questionnaire and interview protocol were developed for the study.

CHAPTER EIGHT

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

8.0 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Eight presents the findings, analysis and discussion of the research data. The presentation is accordingly based on survey data and insight from in-depth face-to-face qualitative interviews as necessitated by the mixed methodological stance of the study. In this regard, the survey data gathered from customers serve as the main data in addressing the key objective of the study which is to ascertain the relationship between CSR and CBBE dimensions of brand awareness, brand association/image, perceived brand quality, and brand loyalty using various statistical analyses.

In terms of organization, the chapter commences with a presentation of the findings from the survey (questionnaire). The presentation includes various statistical tests showing the relationship between CSR and the dimensions of CBBE. Although the results of these quantitative findings are useful, they do not fully address all the research objectives and questions. In order to gain a more comprehensive view on the phenomenon of study therefore, the survey data are followed by an analyses and discussion of the quantitative findings in the light of the insights gathered from the in-depth qualitative interviews and extant literature. The Chapter also integrates and analyzes other aspects of the study which could not be addressed by the quantitative study. In complementing the results of the quantitative study, the qualitative part of the study is anchored on three key questions as the backbone of the discussion. The questions ascertain how actively telecoms are involved in CSR and to describe the importance/benefits of CSR from the perspective of management. The section is also interested in understanding issues bordering on CSR communication

strategy. Details of the interview questions are captured in Appendix 3 of this dissertation. The relevance of this chapter is thus to enable the researcher integrate and enhance the quantitative findings with qualitative data while making references to extant literature.

8.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

Respondents for the survey have been profiled according to age, gender, level of education, number of networks subscribed to, as well as the number of years with their primary network. Results from the demographic data of the sampled respondents reveal that there were 47.1% males and 52.9% females who took part in the study with majority of them having ages ranging from 18-30 years (cumulatively 81.6%). There were also 14.4% within the ages of 31-40 years. The remaining 4.0% of the sampled respondents were within the ages of 41-50 years. These characteristics were not skewed towards any age and gender as respondents who provided answers were contacted based on their willingness and availability. In terms of educational level of the respondents as of the time of study, the bulk of them had up to degree level (69.9%) with 25.9% having postgraduate certificates. Only 4.2% of the sampled respondents had educational qualifications up to high school level. Furthermore, regarding the number of telecommunication networks subscribed to, 31.9% used only one network; 53.3% used two networks; 11.6% used three networks whereas 3.2% of the sampled respondents used four networks. In relation to the number of years the sampled respondents have been with their primary mobile telecommunication networks, 20.6% have been with their mobile networks for 1-2 years; 37.1% have been with their network for 3-4 years; 10.4% have been with their network provider for 5-6 years with 13.4% being with their network providers for 7-8 years. Only 6.0% have been using their networks for 9-10 years with 12.6% of the sampled respondents using their mobile networks above 10 years. These descriptions give an indication that the bulk of the respondents understood and could relate to

the elements in the questionnaire. As such, their responses could be held accurate and representative of the issues being studied. The table below illustrates the above descriptions.

Table 8.I: Profile of Respondents

Profile	Measurements	Frequency	Percent
<i>Age</i>	18-30 years	409	81.6
	31-40 years	72	14.4
	41-50 years	20	4.0
<i>Gender</i>	Male	236	47.1
	Female	265	52.9
<i>Educational Level</i>	Senior High School	21	4.2
	Degree	350	69.9
	Post-graduate	130	25.9
	Diploma		
<i>Number of networks subscribed to</i>	One	160	31.9
	Two	267	53.3
	Three	58	11.6
	Four	16	3.2
<i>Number of years with primary network</i>	1-2 years	103	20.6
	3-4 years	186	37.1
	5-6 years	52	10.4
	7-8 years	67	13.4
	9-10 years	30	6.0
	Above 10 years	63	12.6
<i>N = 501</i>			

8.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

For most consumer research, scholars suggest the need to first subject the data to descriptive analysis before any further data validation and analysis (Malhotra and Birks, 2007; Hair et al, 2010; Pallant, 2011). Such descriptive statistics include the mean, standard deviation, range of scores, skewness and kurtosis. The table below displays the descriptive statistics of the variables used in survey instrument particularly based on mean results of the scale variables. Since the questionnaire were scaled 1-7 (from strongly disagree to strongly agree with 4 being neither agree nor disagree), the mean values here indicate the extent to which the respondents disagreed or agreed with the statements in the questionnaire. From the table the highest mean was 5.2455 (Corporate Philanthropy undertaken by network provider) while the lowest was 4.5329 (Corporate Cause Promotion undertaken by network provider). The 36 variables displayed in Table II below represented the components of the constructs depicted in the conceptual framework for the study.

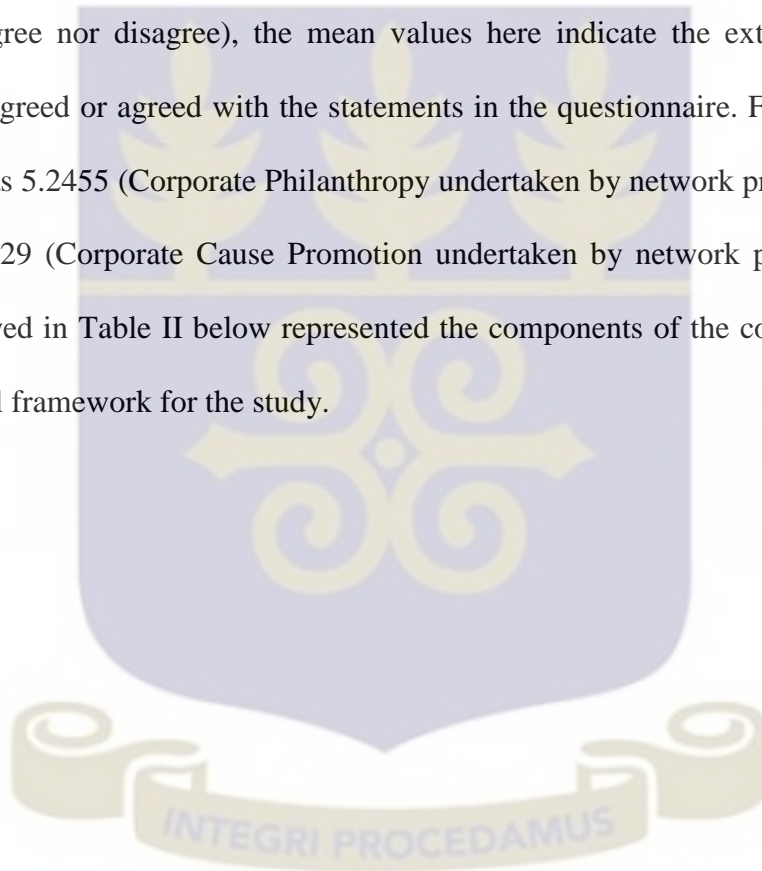


Table 8.2 Descriptive Statistics

Scale Variables	Mean	S. Dev.	Code
Corporate Cause Promotion undertaken by network provider	4.5329	1.81257	CCP
Cause-Related Marketing undertaken by network provider	4.6926	1.61534	CRM
Corporate Social Marketing undertaken by network provider	4.6148	1.68443	CSM
Corporate Philanthropy undertaken by network provider	5.2455	1.61790	CPH
Community Volunteering undertaken by network provider	4.5549	1.63813	CV
Socially Responsible Business Practices undertaken by network provider	4.5529	1.54910	SRBP
Initiatives to increase awareness and concern for social causes	4.8064	1.62371	VCCP
Commitment to contribute or donate to specific cause(s) based on product usage	4.9840	1.49390	VCRM
Support of behaviour change campaigns to improve public health, safety	5.0299	1.59534	VCSM
Direct donations or contributions in cash and/or in kind to charity or cause(s)	5.1198	1.57659	VCPH
Encouragement of employees etc. to volunteer to support local community causes	4.9780	1.64970	VCV
Discretionary initiatives (use of sustainable and environmentally friendly materials	4.9940	1.63889	VSRBP
Corporate Cause Promotions increase my awareness of its brand	5.0240	1.50047	BA1
Cause-Related Marketing increases my awareness of its brand	4.8483	1.38164	BA2
Corporate Social Marketing increases my awareness of its brand	5.0000	1.37986	BA3
Corporate Philanthropy increases my awareness of its brand	4.9541	1.50329	BA4
Community Volunteering increases my awareness of its brand	4.9261	1.51147	BA5
Socially Responsible Business Practices increase my awareness of its brand	4.9461	1.46530	BA6
Corporate Cause Promotions increase the image I associate with the them	4.8543	1.50756	BI1
Cause-Related Marketing increases the image I associate with the them	4.9202	1.41054	BI2
Corporate Social Marketing increases the image I associate with the them	5.0898	1.41913	BI3
Corporate Philanthropy increase the image I associate with the them	5.0998	1.43039	BI4
Community Volunteering increase the image I associate with the them	5.0220	1.41050	BI5
Socially responsible business practices increase the image I associate with them	5.0599	1.43680	BI6
Corporate Cause Promotions increase my perceptions of the brand's quality	4.7804	1.54522	QP1
Cause-Related Marketing increase my perceptions of the brand's quality	4.8184	1.42581	QP2
Corporate Social Marketing increase my perceptions of the brand's quality	4.8922	1.55318	QP3
Corporate Philanthropy increase my perceptions of the brand's quality	4.9142	1.45004	QP4
Community Volunteering increase my perceptions of the brand's quality	4.6527	1.56177	QP5
Socially responsible business practices increase quality perceptions of the brand	4.8663	1.59125	QP6
Corporate Cause Promotions increase my loyalty toward the brand	4.6347	1.69361	BL1
Cause-Related Marketing increases my loyalty toward the brand	4.8144	1.47359	BL2
Corporate Social Marketing increases my loyalty toward the brand	4.8862	1.45775	BL3
Corporate Philanthropy increases my loyalty toward the brand	5.0020	1.45258	BL4
Community Volunteering increases my loyalty toward the brand	4.9062	1.50239	BL5
Socially Responsible Business Practices increase my loyalty toward the brand	5.0240	1.53474	BL6

8.2.1 Reliability of the Measurement Variables

The 36 items used for the scales for the constructs were factor analyzed and subjected to principal components analysis (PCA). Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed the presence of many coefficients with acceptable values of 0.3 and above. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was .922, exceeding the recommended value of 0.6 (Kaiser, 1974) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Bartlett 1954) reached statistical significance (Approx. Chi-square= 12672.908, df. 630, sig. 0.000), supporting the factorability of the scale variables. Overall, the entire measurement variables altogether explain a total of 69.79% of the variance, with the highest component contributing 42.202% and the lowest component contributing 2.943%. Based on the conceptual framework for the study, the variables measuring the dependent constructs were assessed and for their validity and reliability. Using the benchmark acceptable loadings of 0.5, Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.6, and item-to-total correlation was above 0.3 (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007), some variables were dropped for further analysis. Consequently, 25 variables remained in the final structure. The table III below represents the final measurement model representing the conceptual framework for the study.



Table 8.3 CFA Results for Final Measurement Model

Constructs	Items	Standardized Loadings	t-Values	(CR)	(AVE)	Cronbach's α
CSR Practices	CCP	0.75	17.43	0.76	.51	.7347
	CRM	0.82	17.46			
	CSM	0.74	14.00			
	CPH	0.76	14.20			
	CV	0.80	11.72			
Brand Awareness	SRBP	0.71	11.02	0.79	.63	.8640
	BA1	0.78	18.20			
	BA2	0.77	17.36			
	BA3	0.83	17.72			
	BA4	0.77	16.77			
Brand Image	BI1	0.83	17.62	0.83	.64	.8657
	BI2	0.77	18.67			
	BI3	0.76	17.13			
	BI4	0.79	17.78			
Brand Quality	QP1	0.74	18.32	0.88	.70	.8958
	QP2	0.75	16.64			
	QP3	0.78	17.12			
	QP4	0.78	17.00			
	QP5	0.76	16.03			
	QP6	0.80	17.11			
Loyalty	BL1	0.76	17.37	0.84	.65	.8817
	BL2	0.76	17.36			
	BL3	0.87	19.40			
	BL4	0.74	16.07			
	BL5	0.75	16.08			
	BL6	0.75	16.08			
RMSEA = 0.067		GFI = 0.94	$\chi^2/df = 2.7$	CFI = 0.96	NFI = 0.94	

From the table above, the reliability measures in this study meet the acceptable satisfactory levels (Cronbach's alphas $> .70$, Average Variance Extracted $> .50$, composite reliability $> .70$) as recommended by scholars (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Vandenberg, 1996). Furthermore, the factor loadings (ranging from 0.71 to 0.87) showed good convergent validity. The resulting validity and reliability indicators reveal that the measurement model adequately fits the data for this research.

8.3 STRUCTURAL MODEL

Regarding the proposed model for this research, regression analysis or structural equation modelling techniques is best suited for a dependence method (Hair et al., 2014). Nevertheless, due to the complex nature of the framework/model, and the fact that interrelationships between latent constructs were of interest, regression analysis was not considered suitable. Thus the application of structural equation modelling was deemed appropriate. The testing of a structural model is the main stage of an SEM analysis, after all constructs are validated and the measurement model is fit (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Kline, 2005) as demonstrated in the earlier section of this chapter. A structural model best describes the causal relationship among latent variables (Blunch, 2008). The aim here is to specify which latent constructs directly or indirectly influence the values of other latent constructs in the model (Byrne, 2013). The structural model conducted in this study was therefore intended to test some hypothetical propositions based on the conceptual framework (composed of CSR practices, and outcome constructs made up of brand awareness, brand image, perceived brand quality, and Loyalty) for this research.

In evaluating the structural model, the attention is on the proposed hypotheses that reflect the relationships between the latent variables. The purpose is to assess whether the data supports

the proposed conceptualization. STATA version13 for windows was used to run the structural equation modelling, and the output provided some measures which allow assessment of the absolute and incremental fit of the proposed model. Fit statistics are typically the principal measures through which alternative factor structures are compared. Based on the conceptual framework for the study, a series of model relationships were estimated. Results from the structural equation modelling are presented in the below.



Table 8.4 Structural Model Assessment Results

MODEL	Structural Relationships	β Estimate	t-Value	P-value
1	CCP ----> Awareness	.054	1.88	.061
	CRM ----> Awareness	.179	5.47	.000
	CSM ----> Awareness	.101	3.34	.001
	CPH ----> Awareness	.180	5.65	.000
	CV ----> Awareness	.038	1.23	.221
	SRBP ----> Awareness	.076	2.38	.018
2	CCP ----> Image	.065	2.26	.024
	CRM ----> Image	.231	7.09	.000
	CSM ----> Image	.137	4.54	.000
	CPH ----> Image	.153	4.80	.000
	CV ----> Image	.013	0.44	.664
	SRBP ----> Image	.009	0.27	.787
3	CCP ----> Brand Quality	.019	0.66	.510
	CRM ----> Brand Quality	.171	5.11	.000
	CSM ----> Brand Quality	.124	4.03	.000
	CPH ----> Brand Quality	.168	5.14	.000
	CV ----> Brand Quality	.073	2.35	.019
	SRBP ----> Brand Quality	.091	2.80	.005
4	CCP ----> Brand Loyalty	.101	3.32	.001
	CRM ----> Brand Loyalty	.155	4.55	.000
	CSM ----> Brand Loyalty	.140	4.45	.000
	CPH ----> Brand Loyalty	.193	5.79	.000
	CV ----> Brand Loyalty	.029	0.92	.356
	SRBP ----> Brand Loyalty	.014	0.43	.667
$\chi^2/df= 2.71$	RMSEA= 0.069	GFI= 0.95	NFI= 0.95	CFI= 0.96

In the study model, a chi-square of 140.92 (d.f = 52, $p < .01$) indicating a normed chi-square fit value of 2.71. The root-mean-square-error of approximation (RMSEA) value is 0.069; goodness-of-fit index (GFI) is 0.95. Regarding the incremental fit measures, a normed fit index (NFI) value of 0.95 is observed with a corresponding non-normed fit index (NNFI) of 0.95., while comparative fit index (CFI) value was 0.96. These results from the structural model assessment statistics above reveal that the model appears to have established an acceptable fit and thus accomplished a satisfactory level of nomological validity. Most of the coefficients are significant and appear to support the theorizations represented in the research model.

Results from the first model reveal that from the individual factors, Corporate Philanthropy was found to be the highest contributor for engendering brand awareness ($\beta = 0.180$, $t = 5.65$, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$). This was followed by Cause-Related Marketing ($\beta = 0.179$, $t = 5.47$, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$), Corporate Social Marketing ($\beta = 0.101$, $t = 3.34$, $P = 0.001 < 0.05$), and Socially Responsible Business Practices ($\beta = 0.076$, $t = 2.38$, $P = 0.018 < 0.05$). Although Corporate Cause Promotions ($\beta = 0.054$, $t = 1.88$, $P = 0.061 > 0.05$) and Community Volunteering ($\beta = 0.076$, $t = 1.23$, $P = 0.221 > 0.05$) were positively associated brand awareness, they were statistically insignificant in the first structural model relationships. In the second model, Cause-Related Marketing was found to be the highest CSR practice for stimulating brand image ($\beta = 0.231$, $t = 7.09$, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$), followed by Corporate Philanthropy ($\beta = 0.153$, $t = 4.80$, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$), Corporate Social Marketing ($\beta = 0.137$, $t = 4.54$, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$) and Corporate Cause Promotions ($\beta = 0.065$, $t = 2.26$, $P = 0.024 < 0.05$). However, Community Volunteering ($\beta = 0.013$, $t = 0.44$, $P = 0.664 > 0.05$) and Socially Responsible Business Practices ($\beta = 0.009$, $t = 0.27$, $P = 0.787 > 0.05$) were found to be statistically insignificant in relation to brand image, though positively associated. Results from the third structural model also demonstrates that Corporate Philanthropy ($\beta = 0.168$, $t =$

5.14, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$) communicates high perceptions of mobile telecom brand quality. Other CSR practices contributing to this outcome are Cause-Related Marketing ($\beta = 0.171$, $t = 5.11$, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$), Corporate Social Marketing ($\beta = 0.124$, $t = 4.03$, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$), Socially Responsible Business Practices ($\beta = 0.091$, $t = 2.80$, $P = 0.005 < 0.05$), and Community Volunteering ($\beta = 0.073$, $t = 2.35$, $P = 0.019 < 0.05$). Only Corporate Cause Promotion ($\beta = 0.019$, $t = 0.66$, $P = 0.510 > 0.05$) did not have a significant relationship with consumer's perceptions of mobile telecom brand quality. In the fourth structural model, Corporate Philanthropy ($\beta = 0.193$, $t = 5.79$, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$) again emerged the highest CSR practice contributing to consumers' brand loyalty in mobile telecommunication services. This was followed by Cause-Related Marketing ($\beta = 0.155$, $t = 4.55$, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$), Corporate Social Marketing ($\beta = 0.140$, $t = 4.45$, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$), and Corporate Cause Promotion ($\beta = 0.101$, $t = 3.32$, $P = 0.001 < 0.05$). It was yet observed from the results that Community Volunteering ($\beta = 0.029$, $t = 0.92$, $P = 0.356 > 0.05$), and Socially Responsible Business Practices ($\beta = 0.014$, $t = 0.43$, $P = 0.667 > 0.05$) were statistically not significant in relation to engendering consumers' brand loyalty.

8.3.1 Test for Moderation

In line with the framework for the study, a moderation test was also carried out. The study assessed the moderating effect of Customer Perceived Value on the relationship between CSR Practices and Customer-Based Brand Equity. Using a simple stepwise regression, the composite scales derived from the CFA and structural modelling are used as continuous variables with the interaction effects applied (i.e. the moderating effect of Customer Perceived Value). Theoretically the moderating/interaction term(s) should not only change the direction and/or strength of the relationship between the constructs being tested but

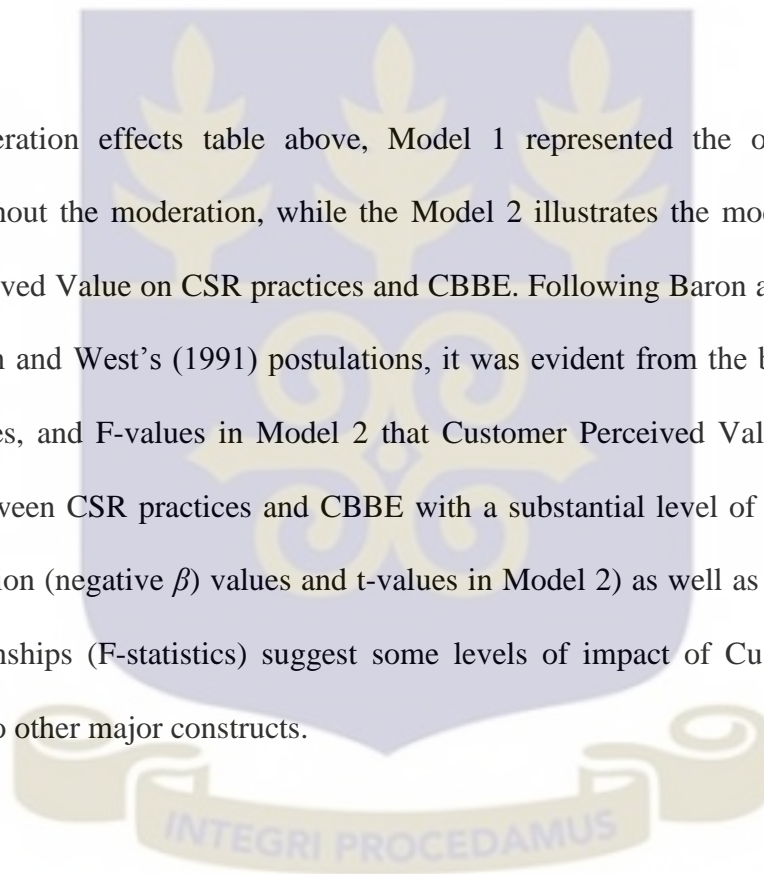
should as well be a statistically significant predictor symptom (see Baron and Kenny, 1986; Aiken and West 1991). The moderation test results are displayed in table V below.



Table 8.5 The Moderating Effect of Customer Perceived Value

Model	Relationships	<i>B</i>	<i>T</i>	Sig.	<i>R</i> ²	Adj. <i>R</i> ²	<i>F</i>
1	CSR ----> CBBE	.627	18.88	.000	.4168	.4156	356.56
	CPV ----> CBBE	.554	21.06	.000	.4705	.4694	443.35
2	CSR*CPV ----> CBBE	.080	10.53	.000	.5229	.5210	272.94
	CSR ----> CBBE	-.039	-0.56	.577			

From the moderation effects table above, Model 1 represented the original structural relationship without the moderation, while the Model 2 illustrates the moderating effect of Customer Perceived Value on CSR practices and CBBE. Following Baron and Kenny (1986) as well as Aiken and West's (1991) postulations, it was evident from the beta (β) values, t-values, R^2 values, and F-values in Model 2 that Customer Perceived Value moderates the relationship between CSR practices and CBBE with a substantial level of significance. The change in direction (negative β) values and t-values in Model 2) as well as in the strength of the path relationships (F-statistics) suggest some levels of impact of Customer Perceived Value on the two other major constructs.



8.4 UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE AND IMPORTANCE OF CSR

Extant literature identified six main types of CSR that a firm may engage in (Kotler and Lee, 2005). In this regard, a firm's CSR may manifest in the form of a cause promotion initiative, cause-related marketing, corporate social marketing, corporate philanthropy, community volunteering, and socially responsible business practices. Based on the interviews conducted among the CSR/marketing managers of the six mobile telecommunications firms, it became evident that many of the firms are active in various types of CSR activities. When a respondent from one of the leading telecoms was asked about the type of CSR activities engaged in by his company and how important such activities are, he reiterated that *“There is a general commitment and excitement from telecoms in responding to the needs of our communities”*. He went on further by saying: *“I see the pride with which staff talks about Healthline for example and it is a sign that my company genuinely loves CSR. The various philanthropic endeavours we provide to poor communities are well appreciated. This is why several communities continue to ask telecos including my company to come to their aid in the area of education, health and even during annual festivals”*. The respondent summed up his conviction by stating that these CSR activities provide evidence to the people that telecos are genuine partners for development. It is useful to mention that the “Healthline” referred to in this paragraph by the respondent is a flagship CSR programme by Company B where the company pays for the health needs of members from poor and deprived communities in Ghana.

Interestingly, the other companies also engage in similar philanthropic donations as described above. According to a senior manager in charge of corporate communications in Company A, *“CSR has become a brand building tools for all the Telecos in Ghana. You will notice that my company (that is Company A) has done and continue to do community development*

programmes including drilling of boreholes and classroom renovation in less privileged parts of the country.”

It must be said that the companies are not only interested in philanthropic donations. Some of the telecommunications companies in Ghana also engage in Cause-related marketing. From the interview, it was revealed that one of the companies in the sector set aside a percentage of its profit after tax to invest in the area of education, health and economic empowerment projects across the country. The respondent from Company A for instance confirmed the claim at the company’s websites that more than GH¢13m have been invested into CSR projects by the company from the time it was established in the country. The company’s commitment to CSR is well articulated on the company’s website as: *“our community investment is about long-term sustainable contribution. Our approach is to achieve this through meaningful partnerships and pro-active community involvement”*. In 2006 the board of the company’s CSR foundation stipulated that all operations were to reinvest up to 1% of profit after tax (PAT) in corporate social responsibility activities. Overall the study has revealed that the telecoms sector is especially committed to promoting education and health for the financially underprivileged persons in the country.

The feedback from the field studies also indicates that CSR is an important part of the operation of the mobile telecommunications companies in Ghana. Respondents were asked “How active are mobile companies in the pursuit of CSR?” A respondent observed that mobile telecommunications companies attached commitment to community development. Indeed, she buttressed this point when she said that *“different foundations have been established to support our poor communities”*. She believes, CSR engagement also presents unique platform for competitive rivalry among industry players. Interestingly, another

respondent supported the claims made earlier when he succinctly noted that *“CSR has become a very important part of our industry; it has almost become competitive among players in the industry as everybody tries to set up a CSR agenda that appeals to the public and also sells their value proposition”*. The CSR function has indeed become an important part of the organization of the mobile telecoms. A respondent in charge of the CSR function in Company C emphasized this claim when she said that *“because CSR is important to us, everything on CSR is reported to the C.E.O, allowing him to monitor and give his input on CSR related issues”*. This assertion is very true for the main fact that, *“telecoms are doing more than they use to do for the society.”* This is because *“customers are also aware of these activities as the companies continue to expose more of these activities on all forms of media platforms.”*

The comment from the various respondents above have been rightly observed in Hinson and Kodua (2012) who suggested that CSR has become a brand building tool for telecoms in Ghana. From the foregoing, we can attribute the interest and commitment by the telecoms in CSR to its brand building potential and the nature of competition in the telecoms industry as can be inferred in scholarly works such as Muthuri and Gilbert (2011), Ofori and Hinson (2007), and also in the work by Morsing and Schultz (2006) on CSR communication. On the basis of the insight generated from the study the point can be strongly made that telecoms engage in various CSR activities that relates to the socio-economic development of the community. The establishment of foundations and budgetary allocations to CSR by some telecoms buttresses the growing importance of CSR in the sector. The use of various media platforms enable the telecoms to drive passion of actual customers and potential customers towards the brand. CSR thus possess enormous advantages as it can be used as a public relations tool to indirectly sell brands thereby impacting the company’s bottom-line (Kotler

and Lee, 2005). Asserting that CSR is becoming a strategic tool (McDonald and Lai, 2011; Du et. al, 2010; Farache and Perks, 2010; Porter and Kramer, 2006) is thus justifiable as indicated in this study.

8.4.1 Assessing the General Benefits of CSR

There are some general benefits that can be achieved from CSR practice according to extant literature (Wigley, 2008; Morsing and Schultz, 2006 Sen et al., 2006; Kotler and Lee, 2005; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2004). From the survey results of the study, there was the general agreement among respondents that CSR attracts customers to the network; strengthen the brand in the mind of customers; enhances the company's corporate image and importance among customers; increases the company's ability to attract, motivate and retain employees among other benefits.

Useful as this result may be there was the need to explain how these benefits accrue and to get the story behind these results thereby enhancing understanding of the research phenomenon. This approach is in line with the mixed methodology chosen for the study. The interviews conducted among marketing managers of the six telecoms fully affirm the survey results and also throws more light on the study. In line with the study objectives, respondents were asked to share their views on how CSR benefits the firm and the consuming stakeholders. A notable remark is that of the Respondent from Company C who stated that *“Obviously, as a staff one looks forward to the linkage between CSR and Profits. Whether, it is the Christmas promo or any other activity, one tries to connect to customers emotionally. The anticipation is that emotional engagement will help keep existing customers while at the same time break any barriers for which potential customers will be unwilling to join the network.”* The opinion shared here indicates that CSR is useful because it impacts company

bottom-line which has relevance in the debate on the purpose of business as argued in the extant literature. Thus society and the organization depend on each other for mutual benefits in the long run as emphasized in the work of McWilliams and Siegel (2001). In other words, the pursuit of economic profit is a legitimate duty of the firm which is enhanced with CSR initiatives, given that business and society are intertwined (Buhmann, 2006; Steiner, 2000).

In terms of explaining how CSR leads to profit, a number of reasons have been adduced. CSR is said to be beneficial because it creates top of mind brand awareness among customers; and also leads to the development of positive emotions for the brand. Where CSR activities are executed effectively it eventually builds customers' affinity for the brand among competing brands. A consolidation of the interview responses suggest to a large extent that fundamentally, CSR seeks to intervene with projects that focus on solving needs of individuals or the community at large. The benefits of any CSR intervention are first traceable to the immediate beneficiary or beneficiaries. It can also be broadly traced to the communities whose general welfare has been improved through the CSR intervention. CSR initiatives also impact on the person or the organization that provided the support. In other words, CSR can be described as a win-strategy for the firm and the stakeholder(s) who receive such benefit(s) or value. Some notable comment from the interview provides impetus to the foregoing arguments. According to Respondent of Company D, *"Such persons or communities develop emotional attachment towards the company and its products"*. The respondent elaborated his point by saying that *".... as companies help societies, they incite passion from everybody including customer. Such persons are motivated to patronize the product and services of that company because, a positive reputation is created for the company and its brand as the company is also portrayed as a good corporate citizen in the eyes of members of the community"*. Similarly, Respondent F, asserts that:

“... it is equally useful to mention that not only does CSR promote the image of brands, but it also plays a huge role in employer branding. Stakeholders would want to be associated with the brand and choose the brand over other brands where the CSR engagements are relevant and sustainable to the community. This Respondent continues the argument by adding that, “CSR also harmonizes the business and the publics by creating an indirect form of communications about a company’s and its products. It also plays a major part of revenue generation to the company as the public see the company as a partner in development.”

By inference, the view is that CSR has implication for company profit because of its potential to drive demand and loyalty. These points are buttressed with the observation by the Respondent from Company E who noted: *“that the benefits of CSR happen through the process of increased brand awareness, development of emotional attachment to the brand due to enhanced reputation and perception of the brand as a good corporate citizen”*. CSR initiatives thus enhance the reputation of the company in the eyes of stakeholders including current and potential customers.

Notwithstanding these explanations, engagement in CSR is sometimes said to be motivated by a sense of responsibility and duty towards the community and not necessarily to accrue material benefits. Thus material benefits may not always be the end goal of these companies as they assume the role of development partners to government. Thus CSR activities are not always perceived as beneficial to the company due to differences in customer or stakeholders’ opinion. Some see it more as a responsibility being executed while others think of it as public relations stunts.

8.5 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CSR AND THE DIMENSIONS OF CBBE

In this section, the four key dimensions identified in extant literature and depicted in the conceptual model in Chapter Five are discussed in the light of the research findings.

8.5.1 The Role of CSR in Creating Brand Awareness

As conceptualized in Keller (1993) and Aaker (1991), brand awareness is a key dimension of CBBE. It is measured in terms of recognition and recall of brand name and features from the perspective of the customer. It also deals with customer's ability to differentiate the brand from competing brands. The potential of CSR in creating brand awareness has been brought to the fore in the quantitative and the in-depth qualitative interviews conducted for this study. In the quantitative study (survey), the relationship between CSR and brand awareness was established through structural equation modelling as earlier indicated under previous sections of the chapter. In essence the different CSR activities that the various telecommunication companies are engaged in positively affects brand awareness among customers. Thus, CSR activities have the potential of increasing recognition and differentiation of one brand from other competing brands. It is worth mentioning that in terms of contribution corporate philanthropy emerged as the most important type of CSR that builds brand awareness, followed by cause-related marketing, corporate social marketing and socially responsible business practices. Although corporate cause promotion and community volunteering were positively associated with brand awareness, they were statistically insignificant. Firms seeing to enhance brand awareness need to know which type of CSR initiative(s) that has the potential to achieve such a strategic intent.

In seeking explanations for the perceived relationship between CSR and brand awareness through in-depth interviews, some interesting responses emerged from the question: Does

CSR leads to brand awareness?” One of the Respondents interviewed opined bluntly that: *“telecoms in Ghana are actively engaged in CSR because it creates wider publicity and also activates a wide range of interest among various stakeholders including customers. The opinion generally expressed by other Respondents interviewed, suggests that CSR activities to a large extent create brand awareness and widen publicity. On the basis of these opinions, it is reasonable to theorize that the benefit of brand awareness gives firms the impetus for actively embarking on CSR initiatives among other things. A more elaborate comment on the relationship between CSR and brand awareness came from the Respondent of Company B, who stressed that:*

“CSR by telecommunications forms an integral part of marketing communications and it’s one of the key brand building tools that creates a niche in the market place. It’s therefore, an indirect form of selling the company’s brand or making revenue through benevolence”. He added that “Brand marketing through CSR is one of the most important developments among telecos today because CSR initiatives attract identifiable customers to acquaint themselves to the network”. The Respondent summed up his opinion by declaring: “We must also note that CSR plays a major PR role for the telecos in today’s marketplace. Exposure to firms’ CSR helps customers to process information about the major offerings of the company - Pure and simple!”

The process of creating brand awareness can also be reinforced when telecoms sponsor popular programmes or sports. For instance Company A through its CSR foundation is known for its commitment to sports. The Company has a sport academy and sponsors Ghana Premier League through the Football Association. In response to the question on the relationship between CSR and Brand awareness, a Senior Manager of the company noted that:

“To a greater extent even though Company A’s foundation is an autonomous organization separate from the Company; the CSR programmes of the foundation will rob off to benefit the company and its brand. A brand is what people say about your service when you are not there. As such the company will benefit when the work of the foundation is positively received by Ghanaians. In effect the level of people knowing about the brand goes up because of CSR programmes of the foundation. I need to also say that brand awareness is enhanced due to the publicity received from these initiatives through effective communication channels like TV, Radio, Online, and Print amongst others. Channel members also become aware of the brand through the Corporate Social Investment Initiatives of the foundation.”

On the same subject, a Respondent in Company B said that: *“CSR in itself is a means of advertising your brand so that people, who do not know about you, get to know about you through your good works to others.”* The manager went on to support his point with the argument that: *All telecos will definitely want to expose what they do in terms of CSR activities thereby putting the brand in the eyes of the public.”* Interestingly, other respondents share similar views on CSR ability to enhance brand awareness. Some of the views are: *“Sir, I must say that CSR widens the scope of advertisement and publicity; it also attracts potential subscriber segments to the brand; and incites passion from targeted subscribers. All the CSR projects that we do will definitely lead to brand recognition and perception of uniqueness among customers”*. Similar opinion was expressed by a manager from Company C who stressed that *“public exposure to CSR enhances information processing about the company and its brand.”*

Based on the commentaries it can be mentioned that CSR presents unique opportunity for promoting brands to target audiences. In communicating CSR, there is the opportunity to

indirectly sell the brand by highlighting the company's benevolence. CSR by its nature tend to attract publicity thereby activating wide range of interest and passion among the target group. The publicity that is associated with CSR means that the company benefits from 'free advertising.' The reason for these benefits is because CSR increases customer acquaintance with the brand. In other words, exposure to CSR enhances information processing about the company and its brand. Thus, CSR plays an important PR role in the process of marketing communications.

8.5.2 The Role of CSR in Creating Brand Association/Image

The survey results as presented in table 8.4 suggest that CSR and Brand Association/Image are generally positively correlated. In other words, CSR creates positive Brand Association/Image among customers in the telecommunication sector. It can be inferred that the association/image that customers build in their mind for the various telecommunication networks or brand increases with the increase in CSR activities. In essence, CSR activities tend to increase Brand image by enabling customers to perceive their respective brands as caring, trustworthy, favourable and unique among competing brands. Given that, there are six types of CSR activities that a typical firm can pursue, the study also sought to establish the relative importance of these initiatives with regard to creating positive brand association or image for the firm. Cause-related marketing emerged the most important type of CSR for enhancing brand image. This is followed by corporate philanthropy or philanthropic donation. Corporate social marketing and corporate cause promotion follows in that order. Community volunteering and socially responsible business practices were considered not very important in terms of creating brand image for the firm. To make a strong case and to understand in more detail the story behind this relationship, the study sampled the views of

six telecoms managers. They were primarily interviewed on the perceived relationship between CSR and brand association or image.

According to the Respondent from Company B, *“Healthline has definitely improved our brand scores and how customers perceive us. So when we do CSR, we expect brand affinity.”* He made the argument stronger when he said: *“Customer even decides to relate to the brand well and say positive things about the brand always. I think the assertion that CSR enhances brand association or image is reasonable because the more good things the companies do for society; the more the public develop favourable impressions about the company. As the community experiences or sees the contributions of the company, they tend to associate the firm with a particular initiative.* The respondent from Company A added his voice to the discussion with an industry wide example when he reiterated that: *“Company A’s continuous sponsorship of football has created favourable image of the company among football lovers. The same thing can be said of Company B’s sponsorship of health related matters, and Company C on music and related activities.”* The point is even made stronger because according to the Manager of Company F, *“these sponsorships have also gone a step further to create emotional associations with which customers identify these brands.”* Another interviewee is of the view that, *“CSR puts the brands in the customers’ brand reference and selection bracket”*. Other respondents believe that customers will definitely want to associate themselves with brands they see as CSR focused. The foregoing submissions suggest that the role of CSR in marketing need to be analyzed from a competitive point of view. Thus, the Respondent of Company D emphasized *“that creating a very good image for any company especially in a highly competitive market like in the telecoms sector through CSR is undoubtedly a good and innovative means of positioning a brand.*

It is equally useful to mention that CSR does not automatically lead to brand association or image but is dependent on the value of such initiatives in terms of satisfying the needs of important stakeholders over time. One of the respondents to the qualitative interview is of the view that, *“as the company engages in CSR that addresses important needs of the public, such as health and education, members of the community overtime regard the brand as a good and responsible person. The company then earns the respect of the community for undertaking socially beneficial projects.”*

The discussions on CSR and brand association/image has been revealing in the sense that CSR is receiving prominence as an important marketing communication tool in brand management (Louma-aho and Paloviita, 2010). The point is made that consumers tend to develop positive brand associations as they perceive the brand as giving back to society through valuable CSR engagements.

8.5.3 The Role of CSR in Creating Quality Perception

The study generally reveals that CSR activities have a positive effect on perceived quality of the brands in question (see table 8.4). This values still gives an indication of how the perceived quality of the various brands can either be built or improved with an increase in the engagement of CSR activities by the mobile telecoms. Thus, a company’s engagement in CSR can give the customer some idea that the company’s brand is of quality. In terms of the usefulness of the various of the six types of CSR in creating quality perception for the brand or firm, it emerged that cause-related marketing was the most important type of CSR followed by corporate philanthropy, corporate social marketing, socially responsible business practices and community volunteering. Unlike these five types of CSR initiatives mentioned

Corporate cause promotion was considered not important in creating quality perceptions among customers.

Notwithstanding the quantitative results, management of the telecommunications companies are generally of the view that CSR cannot be relied on for the development of enduring quality perception among customers in the telecommunication sector.

As was the case in ascertaining the relationships between CSR and the dimensions of brand awareness, and brand association, the study asked management of telecoms to express their opinion on the relationship between CSR and quality perceptions among customers. The insights harnessed were quite interesting and largely reflects the results of the quantitative study. However, quality perceptions depends largely on the performance of the telecoms service providers in terms of satisfying the core needs of customers. In other words, quality perceptions among customers are not primarily or necessarily dependent on company's CSR activities. This argument is clearly vocalized in the commentaries provided by some of the Respondents. For instance, Respondent A retorted:

“I do not think that customers equate CSR to service quality. On our social media page for example, you can see a user who will praise you on Healthline or any other CSR initiatives but will also give you the bash of a lifetime if you mess up their user experience.”

Other respondents also hold contrary views on the subject. For instance, a respondent from Company C thinks that:

“CSR to some extent creates perception of brand quality due to the value that impacts on people's lives. There is a positive correlation between CSR and brand quality due to the association of the brand to its corporate social investments. The reason according to the

Respondent is that: *“If a company invests a lot in CSR, automatically this affinity robs into the brand quality perception among customers.”*

In the telecoms industry in Ghana, various companies are well noted for certain sponsorship or CSR activities. For example Respondent E gave an industry perspective when he said that: *“Customers see the personality in the brand through what it sponsors. Company B will not sponsor anything that will not suggest quality and power to the customer. Company A will do anything to sponsor anything based on quality personality in sports especially football.”*

Another view expressed by a respondent took into consideration the fact that quality is a multi-dimensional construct that depends on several factors with different levels of importance (Zeithaml, 1988). This position comes from the conditional statement made by Respondent E, who is not certain about the role of CSR in creating quality perception. He said that:

“I am not too sure about CSR creating perceptions of quality. A lot of factors must be present to make people perceive your brand as a quality network. CSR may be one of them but it is definitely not a key factor. Customers are loyal and glad to be associated with your brand if you are seen to be playing an active role in social issues. It however, does not create the quality of your brand when other things like quality of service, network quality, etc. are not seen to be working.”

Contrary to the views expressed by Respondents A, B, C and E, others are of the view that CSR relates quite strongly with customer quality perceptions of brands. To Respondent F, *“This is practically true. For instance, members of a community that has benefited tremendously from CSR may develop positive attitude towards the company and its brand and associate it with quality.”* This notion is important because to Respondent D:

“Perception of brand quality among telecos is a key selling point that ought to be carefully looked at by managers. Although there are more important indicators of brand quality among customers such as ease of connectivity and clarity of network; a well thought out CSR has the potential of increasing quality perception of brand among customers. This is likely to be the point where there are no substantial differences in the offerings of the telecos.”

The arguments put forth by various respondents leads to certain conclusions. First, CSR does not necessarily equate or denote service quality. Typically, customers appreciate CSR engagements but are more interested in the company delivering on its core mandates or promises. This position is premised on the fact that customers do not really measure a brand's quality on the basis of the company's CSR alone. The second observation however, is that CSR activity can reinforce the position of the brand as a caring and quality brand especially where there are no significant differences among competing brands in the delivery of core functions. Thus customer perception of brand quality is fundamentally dependent on the core service delivered by the company. In this regard, CSR can be said to affect quality perceptions of brands but not the main determinant of quality among customers. Notwithstanding this argument, it is useful to add that what constitutes quality is personal and unique to the idiosyncratic needs of the customer. Therefore, drawing definite conclusions could be problematic. This position has been upheld in the works of Acebro'n and Dopico (2000) who theorize that the concept of quality is essentially a matter of perception based on attributes or cues important to the customer. Similarly, Pappu et al., (2005) reasoned that perceived quality of a brand is a measure of value as it provides customers reasons to make a given purchase decision.

8.5.4 The Role of CSR in Building Brand Loyalty

Certain observations in the quantitative findings are worth elaborating in this section. The survey results suggest that CSR and Brand Loyalty are positively correlated as suggested under section 8.2. In other words, CSR largely creates Brand Loyalty among customers in the telecommunication sector. By inference, it can be said that customer trust, and commitment to particular brand increases with increases in CSR activities. Like was mentioned in preceding subsections, the study revealed that in terms of creating brand loyalty, the various types of CSR initiatives holds different potential. For instance, the study suggests that corporate philanthropy is the most important type of CSR in this regard. It is followed by cause-related marketing, corporate social marketing and corporate cause promotion in that order. Community volunteering and socially responsible business practices were considered not significant in terms of building brand loyalty.

Notwithstanding this revelation, the choice of a mixed methodology as dictated by the pragmatist world view demand for some qualitative insights on the research phenomenon. In accordance with the methodological position, the study sought the views of six managers, with knowledge in CSR and marketing. These personnel were to express their views on whether there is relationship between CSR and brand loyalty among customers of telecoms.

The question of CSR and brand loyalty received mixed reactions from the various respondents. The first comment which is in the negative came from the Respondent for Company D. He was of the opinion that: *“Customers will stay with your brand because of network quality and not because of CSR.”* The Respondent was blunt with her views as she claim; *“I don’t see how CSR will deliver brand loyalty significantly by itself even though it may be a critical factor in choosing between two closely matched telecos.”*

This strong view is contrasted by Respondent E who thinks that; *“When CSR activities are embarked on by Telecoms, it gives customers the confidence and justification for being there for the business as there is the conviction that certainly revenue from the business for which the customer is a stakeholder, is being used for societal benefit.”* This idea is buttressed by yet another respondent who believe that everyone works to be associated with a good brand and that; *“it’s even better when you are seen to be giving back to society.* He summed up his personal conviction by reiterating that; *“I believe CSR plays a strong role in creating loyalty for the brand especially among poor rural folks or communities.”* As customers see the brand as caring and reliable in terms of providing the developmental needs of the community it is expected that they will transfer that positive association unto the brand. Thus, customers make decisions to patronize the brand often, and recommend it to family and friends among other purchase and consumption behaviours. These arguments have been supported further by some other definite comments. A respondent retorted that; *“Many customers will remain loyal to any brand they feel cares about other people and the community. These customers will stay on a particular network just because they know they undertake a lot of CSR activities.”*

From the foregoing arguments as in the case of CSR and perceived quality, several factors may affect how loyal a customer is to a brand. A consolidation of all the views expressed in this reports and discussions suggests that there is a common understanding on the relationship between CSR and brand loyalty among respondents. Although respondents are fairly optimistic about CSR in terms of its potential at building brand loyalty, the cases put across requires some reflections. This is necessitated by the fact that respondents recognize the potential of CSR in building brand loyalty but are of the strong opinion that customer brand loyalty is influenced more by network reliability among other core services as was the case

for CSR and perceived quality. The implication is that CSR will not necessarily create brand loyalty but has the potential to enhance brand loyalty which is critical especially in a highly competitive marketplace (Fayrene and Lee, 2011). Loyalty could thus arise as a result of a biased psychological process regarding choosing among alternatives over time. From the discussions so far, it can be inferred that CSR could be an important determinant of brand choice in the mind of a customer. In other words, it can be argued that where CSR is important to the customer either based on sentimental considerations or relative attitude it could potentially lead to commitment to patronize a brand (Uddin, 2012).

8.6 KEY STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNICATING CSR

For CSR to lead to the benefits of CBBE dimensions described above, customers or stakeholders must first be exposed to the CSR initiative by way of communication. This position is implied in the conceptual model developed in Chapter Five. Thus, for customers to perceive value in CSR they must have been exposed to such CSR initiative(s) through communication. Based on this thinking, opinions of six respondents representing the six mobile telecommunications in Ghana were sought through in-depth qualitative interviews. They were to explain how CSR can be effectively communicated to enhance CBBE. The key insight gained from the interviews is that CSR initiatives need to be communicated tactfully in order to enhance brand equity for the firm. The rationale garnered from majority of the respondents in the in-depth qualitative interview is that CSR ought to widen the scope of advertisement and publicity for enhanced brand recognition. This relationship, according to a respondent from Company E is so because “CSR creates a unique image for the firm and attracts potential subscriber segments to the brand. In the literature, scholars have articulated that CSR does affect the reputation of the firm among stakeholders including customer groups (Wigley, 2008; Morsing and Schultz, 2006). However, the difficult decision in

communicating CSR as debated in the literature borders on the amount of CSR information to divulge to customers and other stakeholder groups in order to elicit favourable responses.

Ashforth and Gibbs (1990) take the position that the more companies expose their ethical and social ambitions, the more likely they are to attract critical stakeholder attention. To this end the researcher sought to ascertain from respondents what their views were. The Respondent for Company A reiterated that: *“Although theoretically we do not engage in CSR expecting to receive direct benefits from the public, advocates of CSR in the corporate circles are of the strong opinion that CSR is rewarding to both the firm and the beneficiary”*. She went on to say *“that CSR benefits all targeted stakeholders but when it is well thought out and executed the company can become the greatest beneficiary in the long -run”* She was convinced that *“CSR is good business”*. The conclusion drawn from the commentary is that the potential benefit of investing in CSR far outweighs the losses.

Notwithstanding this strong conviction, others are less optimistic about the actual benefits of CSR to the firm. The argument made by this group is that fundamentally the company should focus on satisfying the needs of target market instead of engaging in sometimes misplaced and very expensive CSR initiatives, the benefit of which may be difficult to estimate. This position was later clarified by the Respondent for Company C who assumes the position that, *“CSR should only be considered where the company can prove that essential customer needs have been adequately met.”* This is to say that even where the company decides to engage in CSR, such initiatives must be based on the real needs of stakeholders. This thinking has received credence in the literature. Du et al. (2010) for instance, hold the view that where there is perceived discrepancies between stakeholders’ CSR motives and a company’s publicly stated motives it will lead to mistrust and negative stakeholder behaviour.

The study was also interested in finding out other factors or issues to consider in designing CSR communication. The responses from the interviews conducted among the managers are varied. Some are of the view that, the company should inform the public of its CSR initiatives without having to provide too much detail explanations on the rationale for such engagements since according to the Respondent from Company D, *“that will amount to self-praise which can trigger dissent especially when the company is not doing well in terms of providing core customer needs”*. Thus communicating the impact of CSR initiative is useful but the company needs to avoid over dramatization or exaggerating its contribution. In other words, the company must not give the audience any reason to doubt or suspect its claim of good citizenship. Interestingly, this has been alluded to in the extant literature to some extent. Sen et al. (2006) for instance, maintained that communication should keep to the bare facts and avoid bragging.

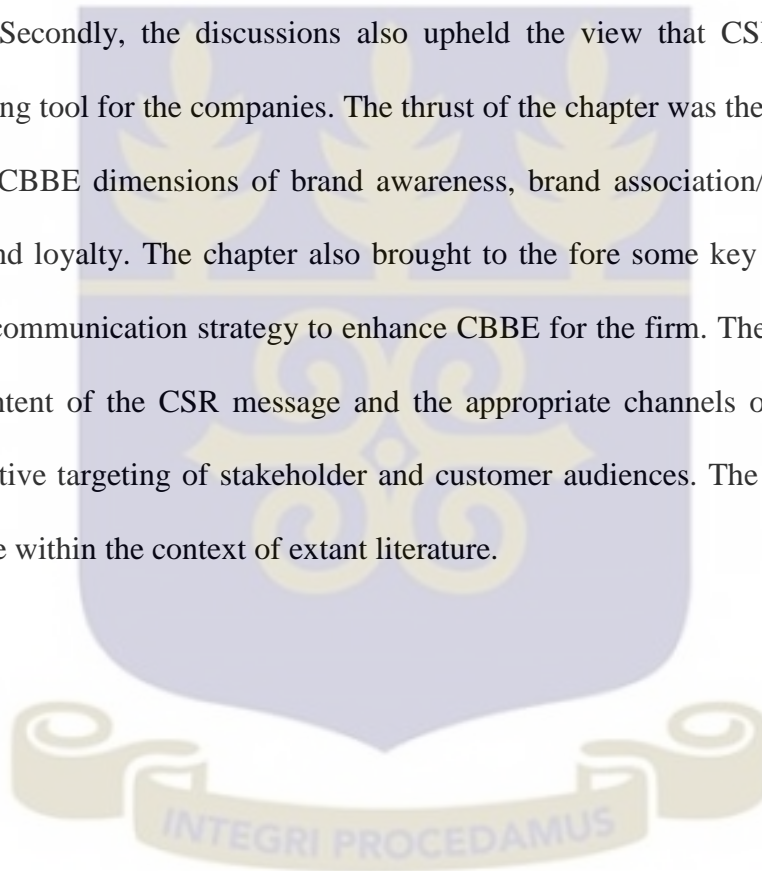
In addition to the foregoing issues on CSR communication, the study also asked the various managers of the telecoms to share their views on the message channels to use to achieve CBBE. As already noted in the literature, there are several channels that can be used to communicate CSR. The major insight gained from the study is that, companies should ensure that regardless of the channel(s) used to disseminate CSR message, the message ought to be factual, consistent and coherent as dictated by the principles of integrated marketing communication strategy. This principle according to Belch and Belch (2007) leads to the achievement of synergy among the various communication tools deployed by the company. All the six companies involved in the qualitative in-depth interviews communicate CSR through the websites of the companies. CSR initiatives are also published in the daily newspapers such as The Daily Graphic, The Ghanaian Times, Business and Financial Times among others. Selected magazines including brochures sponsored by the companies also

provide platforms for the dissemination of CSR initiatives. The companies also highlight CSR activities in the various Annual reports and also via television channels. These companies also use word-of-mouth to inform various stakeholder groups about CSR projects. According to the respondent from Company A, typically word-of-mouth communication of CSR is resorted to during traditional festivals, talk shows, launching of programmes that the company is connected with, and durbar of chiefs, sponsorships and other special events.

Notwithstanding the various channels used by telecoms, extant literature emphasized the need for companies not to rely solely on the above channels. The company needs to also position CSR such as to generate the interest of external media which are to some extent independent of the control of the company undertaking the CSR. In the opinion of the Respondent of Company B, *“getting positive media coverage from independent, unbiased sources, such as editorial coverage on television or in the press lends credibility to the company’s claim or message”*. It also came to light from the interviews that there are audiences or special organizations such as Ghana Club 100 that purposefully seek out CSR information in order to have better profile of companies. Other important issues bordering on CSR communication requires the company to know the profile of the target audience according to the Respondent of Company F. Literature supports this position in that, the medium and the relevance of CSR initiative is pivotal in CSR communications strategy (MacInnis et al., 1991; Petty et al., 1991; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2004). What this means in a nutshell is that effective CSR communication needs to involve stakeholders, from conceptualization through to the implementation of the given initiative.

8.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter analyzed and discussed the research findings by integrating the qualitative insights from management of the mobile telecommunications companies with the results of the survey of customers. Specifically, the chapter provides an understanding of the nature and type of CSR initiative embarked on by the various mobile telecommunications companies in Ghana and the level of importance attached to such initiatives. Although the companies undertake a number of CSR initiatives, philanthropic donations was the most common among the companies. Secondly, the discussions also upheld the view that CSR is becoming a strategic marketing tool for the companies. The thrust of the chapter was the discussion of the role of CSR in CBBE dimensions of brand awareness, brand association/image, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. The chapter also brought to the fore some key considerations in designing CSR communication strategy to enhance CBBE for the firm. These considerations relate to the content of the CSR message and the appropriate channels of communication needed for effective targeting of stakeholder and customer audiences. The discussion in the chapter was done within the context of extant literature.



CHAPTER NINE

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

9.0 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Nine is the last chapter of the study. The chapter synthesizes the key research questions and objectives. The chapter also draws conclusions and highlights the theoretical, managerial and methodological contributions emanating from the study. The study reflects on the limitations of the study and suggests directions for future research.

9.1 SUMMARY

9.1.1 The Core Objectives and Context of the Study

This thesis involved an empirical investigation of the effect of CSR in building CBBE in the mobile telecommunications services sector in Ghana. This is in view of the rather paucity of literature showing the role of CSR in building CBBE. Interestingly marketing literature has witnessed a proliferation of studies into CSR and its impact on business effort at building brand equity (BE) over the past decade (Maignan et al, 2005; Keller, 2003; Aaker, 1996). Again, literature has described and positioned CSR as a strategic tool for marketing; and as a competitive tool which is increasingly becoming a major determinant of brand choice especially in advanced economies. Thus, as a strategic tool, the need to research the impact of CSR on brand building efforts cannot be overemphasized. This positioning emanates from the thinking that marketing management is essentially about building brand equity which Keller (1993) and Aaker (1991) refer to as CBBE.

To guide the study, a conceptual framework was developed to show the perceived relationship between CSR and CBBE. The framework shows the possible impact of CSR in

creating CBBE dimensions of brand awareness, brand association/image, perceived quality, and brand loyalty as conceptualized in Keller (1993). The framework makes the case that, for CSR to lead to CBBE, customers ought to have perceived value in the various types of CSR initiatives undertaken by the firm. In seeking understanding of the role of CSR in creating CBBE, a mixed methodology was employed to provide a broader understanding of the subject. The quantitative part of the methodology involved a survey of 500 mobile phone subscribers selected from within the Accra metropolis. Descriptive Statistics, Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) were used. Apart from the quantitative data, the study also interviewed 6 managers from each of the six mobile telecommunications companies for their perceptions on the role of the various types of CSR in building CBBE dimensions of brand awareness, brand associations/image, perceived brand quality, and brand loyalty.

Although, the study centres on customer-based brand equity, necessitating the ascertainment of customer views on the research phenomenon, the collection of data from both customers and management using quantitative and qualitative research tools is particularly considered important (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Information gathered from management and customer respondents enables us to gauge the views of the two groups on the research phenomenon thereby providing a more encompassing understanding of the subject. In particular, the qualitative part of the data collection was required as some of the research questions are best addressed with qualitative information while also providing some explanation on pertinent research questions.

9.1.2 Highlights of Key Concepts of the Study

The Concept of CSR provided the backbone for the entire study as it served as independent variable. In the study, CSR has been used to represent all efforts or initiatives or actions of the firm that is not required by law but done with the view to enhancing the general welfare of members of a society (Buhmann, 2006). In other words, CSR is an obligation of business towards society given that business exists at the pleasure of society (Frederick, 1997; Ofori and Hinson, 2007). The various CSR initiatives are classified under six main headings such as cause promotions, cause-related marketing, corporate social marketing, corporate philanthropy, community volunteering, and socially responsible business practices (Kotler and Lee, 2005; Maignan and Ferrell, 2004; Brown and Dacin, 1997). Three key theories were relied on to explain the concepts of CSR. These theories include the stakeholder theory, which dictates that organizations should endeavour to take into consideration the needs, interests and influences of peoples and groups who either impact or may be impacted by the policies and deeds of the organization (Frderick et al., 1992; Freeman, 1984; Luoma-aho, 2007; Fassin, 2008).

Although, stakeholder theory recognises the importance of various stakeholders, this study focused on the customer and management as the most important stakeholders in the discussion of customer-based brand equity. Legitimacy theory was also reviewed in this study as it lends some understanding to the concept of CSR. The theory states that organizations can only secure their existence if they are perceived as operating within the values and norms of the society (Moir, 2001; Suchman, 1995; Farache and Parks, 2010; Ferrel et al., 2002). Thus, organizations pursue CSR as a means of legitimizing their existence. Organizational identity theory was also used to enhance our understanding of the concept of CSR. The theory relates to how internal constituents and stakeholders see the firm

and how external constituent and stakeholders see it (Gioia et al., 2010; Sen et al, 2006; Voss et al, 2006). There are multiple rationales for the pursuit of CSR including the need for improved attitude towards the firm and hence how consumers evaluate the firm (Murray and Vogel, 1997; Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001; Wigley, 2008). In the context of the study therefore, it is argued that exposure to CSR initiatives can create CBBE in terms of brand awareness, brand image or association, perception of quality and brand loyalty (Keller, 1993; Kotler and Lee, 2005).

The study also discussed CSR communication. In this regard, CSR is said to have become an important element in strategic business communication. The usefulness of CSR communication in addressing the research question emanates from the fact that effective CSR communication holds enormous potential for building and maintaining favourable reputations and relationships with key stakeholders (Nielsen and Thomsen, 2009; Morsing and Schultz, 2006; Cornelissen, 2004). The suggestion is that CSR has the potential of building equity for the brand. Based on this background, the study sought to understand the key issues that the firm must take into considerations and the communication channels that can be used to enhance CBBE dimensions.

Apart from CSR, the concept of CBBE was also discussed as a key concept in addressing the research objectives. Based on Keller's (1993) conceptualization, the study takes the view that CBBE as a concept refers to the totality of what consumers in particular know about a given brand at a given point in time. To Keller (1993), CBBE should be described in terms of the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand. A careful consideration of the dimensions of CBBE from extant literature generated four key dimensions. In measuring CBBE therefore, four key dimensions were considered useful.

They include brand awareness, brand association or brand image, perceived quality, and brand loyalty (Keller, 2003; Aaker, 1991; Gremler and Brown, 1996; Fayrene and Lee, 2011, Uddin, 2012; Kapferer, 1991; Agarwal and Rao, 1996; Kamakura and Russell, 1991).

In using the CBBE dimensions, the study described brand awareness as the differential effect of a brand name on consumer responses emanating from brand knowledge or the perceptions held in consumer memory. The argument being advanced in this study is that the consumer must be exposed to a brand or be aware of the brand for the concept of CBBE to be meaningful. In this regard, Keller's (1993) definition of CBBE was adopted. The main reference to this line of thinking is in the use of the phrase, "the differential effect of brand knowledge", where brand knowledge is conceptualized as the full set of brand associations linked to the brand in consumer's long-term memory (Fayrene and Lee, 2011). The measurement of brand awareness as used in the study involves the ability of a potential buyer to recognize or recall that a brand is a member of a certain product category (Aaker, 1991). Brand awareness thus requires consumers to recognize, identify and or recall a given brand from memory (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993). Other items used to gauge brand awareness in the study include top-of mind, brand dominance, brand knowledge and brand opinion. Most importantly, brand awareness was aimed primarily at ascertaining from respondents whether a company's CSR creates brand awareness and to what extent.

Another dimension of CBBE is brand image/association. In this study brand image/association describes anything linked in memory to a given brand either through direct experience and or through indirect experience (Pappu et al., 2005; Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007). These associations are simply what the brand means to consumers. Brand association is considered useful as it generates affect or feelings or certain emotional states that can

provide actual and potential customers with reasons for purchase among other consumption related behaviours. In this study therefore, brand association is conceptualized as brand-related thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images, experiences, beliefs, and attitudes. The importance of brand association as a concept thus, lies in its linkage with consumer purchase decision and brand loyalty. Again, brand association is expected to be stronger where the consumer has many experiences or exposures to CSR communications (Pappu et al, 2005). Relating this knowledge to the study objective meant that, the study sought the opinion of respondents on mobile telecommunications service providers' CSR and its potential to "create, change, or reinforce certain favourable or unfavourable associations". Thus, respondents were to indicate whether knowledge of a mobile telecommunication service provider's CSR leads a person to perceive the company and its brand as unique, strong, and favourable among other things. In the study, these perceptions are non-functional associations which are largely derived from a psychogenic need (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007). Although these needs are intangible, they represent powerful consumer motives or needs. Thus, brand association emanating from CSR is expected to generate affect or feelings or certain emotional states that can provide actual and potential customers with reasons for purchase among other consumption related behaviours.

Perceived quality is also a dimension of CBBE. Perceived quality as used in the study is not necessarily the actual quality of the product but the consumer's subjective evaluation of a given brand or product as a result of knowledge or exposure to firm CSR. Perceived quality of a brand is a measure of value as it provides customers with reasons to buy one product over the other. The study adopted the view that quality is essentially a matter of perception based on attributes or cues important to the customer (Acebro'n and Dopico, 2000). In this

regard, the conceptual framework suggests that customers would consider firm CSR as an important attribute or cue.

The fourth CBBE dimension used in the study is brand loyalty which is a major component of brand equity (Chiou et al., 2002; Dodds et al., 1991). The argument is that in pursuance of the marketing philosophy, firms strengthen customer relationships through the creation of value, satisfaction and brand loyalty among customers (Uddin, 2012). Loyalty to a brand in this regard means the attachment that a consumer has to a particular brand due to knowledge of firm CSR. In measuring brand loyalty the study was interested in assessing the attitude or behaviour of respondents in terms of their commitment to re-patronize a preferred brand based on CSR. In other words, “loyalty as used in this study is a function of biased psychological process with respect to one or more available alternative brands that is expressed over time by an individual or a group to repurchase such brands (Uddin, 2012). Accordingly, customer loyalty was gauged by looking at the effectiveness of the relationship between repurchase intentions and relative attitude. The brand loyalty dimension was also used to measure the brand’s ability to command premium prices as a result of respondents’ knowledge of a companies’ CSR. As an instrumental dimension, the study was interested in ascertaining whether CSR and brand loyalty are directly correlated.

In understanding the relationship between CSR and the four dimensions of CBBE described above respondents were made to indicate on a 7-point likert scale whether knowledge of CSR activities of mobile telecom service providers affected brand awareness, brand image/associations, perceived brand quality, and brand loyalty. In-depth qualitative interviews were also used to enhance understanding of the research phenomenon. It must also be mentioned that in seeking understanding on the relationship between CSR and CBBE

dimensions, the study also ascertained the perceived value or benefits of CSR from the management of the six mobile telecommunications operating in Ghana. The assumption is that customers have knowledge of a company's CSR and, that such initiatives are valuable. Perceived Value as used in the study thus describes the overall perception of the subjective merit of some activity or object regarding product utility considering all benefits and costs of consumption (Chen and Tsai, 2008; Slater, 1997; Parasuraman, 1997). In the context of the study, it is suggested that, for the firm to achieve CBBE from its CSR initiatives, such initiatives need to be perceived by customers as valuable (Zeithaml, 1988, Dodds et al., 1991; Monroe and Chapman, 1987; teas and Agarwal, 1997). In terms of the study objectives, in-depth interviews of six respondents from the six mobile telecommunications companies was undertaken to understand the nature of CSR activities and also about managements' opinion on the value of CSR. The interviews also sought to understand how CSR can be communicated to enhance customer-based brand equity.

9.1.3 Highlights of Key Findings

To answer the basic research question and to achieve the research objectives, this study developed a basic conceptual framework which pieced together the six types of CSR initiatives and the four dimensions of CBBE using customer perceived value as the moderator between the two concepts of CSR and CBBE. Based on the mixed methodological approach adopted for the study, respondents were asked questions in order to explain the proposed framework. The responses fitted well with the model. In the quantitative study, the test generally indicates positive correlation between CSR and CBBE variables. The results indicate that most of the constructs are highly correlated and significant as well. This means that most of the constructs are largely related and show a significant relationship between

CSR, brand awareness, brand association/image, brand loyalty and perceived quality (see tables 8.3 and 8.4).

In general, philanthropic donation is the most common and important type of CSR activity pursued by the mobile telecommunications companies. In terms of the specific types of CSR initiatives and its importance or impact on the various dimensions of CBEE, the results were interesting. For creating brand awareness and loyalty, philanthropic donations emerged the most important. Thus, a company aiming at achieving enhanced brand awareness and loyalty need to pursue more philanthropic activities. For enhanced brand image and quality perceptions among customers the result suggest that cause-related marketing is the types of CRS initiative that holds the greatest potential among all the six types of six CSR initiatives. In line with the chosen methodology, the study also interviewed six managers each from the six mobile telecommunications companies in Ghana on the research phenomenon. Interestingly, the qualitative findings are to a greater extent consistent with the quantitative findings. The qualitative findings stimulate richer understanding and appreciation of the role of CSR in building CBEE dimensions. It also adds distinctive insights by way of explanations.

9.2 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

There are several ways in which a study can contribute to the existing body of knowledge. According to Phillips and Pugh (1994) a typical PhD contribution can be the form of carrying out empirical work that has not been done before; making a new synthesis that has not been tried before; making a new interpretation of existing material; trying out something in a geographical area, such as a country, that has previously not been carried out in that area before; applying a particular technique in a novel way; introducing substantial new evidence

to an old issue; being cross-disciplinary and using different methodologies; adding to knowledge in a way that has not previously been tried before. In this respect, the thesis has made important contributions.

This study has established the role of CSR in building CBBE dimensions of brand awareness, brand association/image, perceived brand quality and brand loyalty using primary data. There are works from extant literature that make some references to the importance of CSR in marketing. As has been mentioned above, some scholars believe that CSR is useful in terms of building brand image (Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001); others have also alluded to the perception that CSR can give a firm an inimitable upper hand in the market place (Bhattacharya, 2004). Notwithstanding these contributions, there is limited knowledge on the role of CSR in building CBBE dimensions. In terms of the contribution, the study argues that although marketing scholars have written extensively on the subject of CSR and CBBE separately they have largely overlooked the need to ascertain the correlation between the two concepts. In particular, this study has shown the relative importance of the types of CSR initiatives in terms the achievement of various customer-based equity dimensions.

The study has also contributed to the marketing literature by developing a CSR – CBBE conceptual framework in Chapter Five of this study that depicts the importance of CSR in creating customer-based brand equity. The framework has been validated by the research findings. Thus, the conceptual framework suggests that firm's CSR can lead to CBBE and that for this to happen; customers must perceive value in the firm's CSR activities. Although, the conceptual framework is silent on communication, it is expected that firms that see CSR as a strategic marketing tool will communicate their CSR initiatives in a manner that enables customers to perceive value in the said CSR initiatives. From the foregoing discussion it can

be argued that the current study has contributed to knowledge in a way that has not been done before. The study is novel in bringing six types of CSR initiatives and the four CBBE dimension together in a single study with the view to establishing the relationship thereof. Notwithstanding the popularity and evidence of the proliferation of literature on the key concepts of CSR and CBBE, there is scarcity of literature that systematically explains how CSR can build CBBE. This study developed a conceptual framework to show that, there is relationship between a firm's CSR and CBBE dimensions of brand awareness, brand image/association, perceived brand quality, and brand loyalty. The framework argued further that this relationship is not automatic and that for CSR to lead to CBBE, customers must first be exposed to firm's CSR and, the message ought to be of value to the recipient. In other words, the CSR that a firm embarks on must meet the needs and expectations of customers and must be communicated effectively in order to achieve CBBE.

Moreover, while this study is unique in terms of the objectives of ascertaining the relationship between CSR and CBBE, other studies that bear close semblance were mostly in the context of the developed world (McDonald and Lai, 2011; Du and Bhattacharya, 2007; Kotler and Lee, 2005). This study bridges the scholarly gap by situating the study in the context of Ghana, a developing country. In this regard therefore, the study is novel as it investigates CSR and CBBE in the mobile telecommunications services sector in Ghana. Based on evidence from extant literature therefore, this is the first study that has ascertained the relationship between various types of CSR initiatives and the CBBE dimensions from a developing sub-Saharan African country context. This observation thus lends credence to the novelty of the study.

The uniqueness and contribution of this study is also traceable to the methodology used to investigate the phenomena of interest. The study sought to ascertain the role of CSR in building CBBE using a mixed method. The quantitative part enabled the study to establish the relationship or correlation between CSR and CBBE dimensions. In line with the methodological stance of the study, there was the need to complement and explain the quantitative findings with in-depth face-to-face qualitative interviews. Thus, although the quantitative data explains the relationships between CSR and CBBE variables, it is lacking in terms of providing more detailed understanding of what the statistical tests or effect sizes actually mean. Furthermore, qualitative in-depth interviews were also used to gain knowledge on the type of CSR activities undertaken by the telecommunications companies and their perceived importance to these companies. The choice of a mixed method in this study is thus considered relevant as it provides an enhanced understanding and insight into the research problem. In using the mixed methods, the study also relied on the views of customers and management of mobile telecommunication companies in Ghana to draw conclusions on the perceived relationship between various types of CSR initiatives and CBBE dimensions.

9.3 THEORETICAL AND MANAGERIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Based on the research findings and discussions some theoretical and managerial contributions are presented in this section.

9.3.1 Theoretical Contributions

The phenomena of CSR and CBBE as investigated in the mobile telecommunication sector of Ghana, has useful theoretical implications. Based on the findings of the study, scholars can now affirm that, effective CSR leads to increased brand awareness among customers; improved brand image/association; perceptions of brand quality, and increased brand loyalty.

The evidence that CSR leads to CBBE has to a large extent been established in this current study. This is based on the responses of two sets of samples, namely the customer group and the management who responded to a survey and in-depth interviews respectively on the phenomenon of interest.

In essence, theoretical developments describing the underpinned arguments in the literature have provided impetus for investigating the correlation between CSR and CBBE dimensions. By combining the theoretical approach from extant literature, a new theoretical model has been tested. The results suggest that CSR enhances customers' brand awareness, brand association/image, perceived quality and brand loyalty. In particular the study shows that brand awareness and customer loyalty can best be enhanced through the pursuit of corporate philanthropy or philanthropic donations. Similarly, cause-related marketing is the most reliable type of CSR for enhancing brand image and quality perceptions among customers. Given the context of the study, it is also useful to highlight that from a developing country perspective, this study makes important contribution to the literature. The results and analysis further imply that the four dimensions of CBBE can be achieved or enhanced where customers perceive value in the firm's CSR or CSR communications.

In this study CSR has generally, been positioned as a strategic tool for brand management in terms of CBBE dimensions. Based on the findings of the study, scholars can now affirm that, effective CSR leads to increased brand awareness among customers; improved brand image/association; perceptions of brand quality, and increased brand loyalty. The evidence that CSR leads to CBBE was established in this thesis based on the responses of two sets samples, namely the customer groups and the management/staff of mobile telecommunications services providers in Ghana. The conceptual arguments as advanced in

this study have achieved empirical validation and should therefore be of interest to academics. The study lends support to stakeholder and legitimacy theories as can be inferred in the works of Frederick et al., (1992) and Wilson (2001). In this regard, Luoma-aho (2007) argued that stakeholders' assessment and expectations has a role to play in shaping an organization's reputation and giving it legitimacy. This study has thus provided management tool to facilitate CSR (Morsing and Schultz, 2006). Based on the objectives of the study, the views of customers and management of mobile telecommunications companies in Ghana were used to draw certain conclusions (Hansen et al. (2004).

The study focused on customers and management as two key stakeholders because CSR is at the forefront of corporate consciousness today and also because CSR can make customers act as “ambassadors” for the company (Du et al. 2007). Customers in particular are considered one of the important stakeholder groups (Fassin, 2008). Moral imperatives aside, the increasing commitment to CSR is spurred, to some extent, by the growing sense that consumers reward good corporate citizens through greater, more sustained patronage (Cone Corporate Citizenship study, 2004; Lichtenstein, Drumwright and Braig, 2004, Luo and Bhattacharya, 2006).

The study also has theoretical implications bordering on the benefits of CSR from the organizational point of view. The major reasons, includes the view that CSR; increases sales and market share (Kotler and Lee, 2005; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2004; Barone et al., 2000); strengthens brand positioning (Du and Bhattacharya, 2007); and also improves corporate image and clout (Brickson, 2005; Clarke and Gibson-Sweet, 1999). As in the quantitative approach, the basic conceptual assertion have been synthesized in the qualitative part to explore and validate the role of CSR in building CBBE dimensions of brand awareness,

brand association/image, perceived brand quality, and brand loyalty. This approach provides richer insights of the research phenomenon. In spite of the generally positive correlation that was found between CSR and CBBE dimensions in the quantitative study, some of the evidence is not conclusive and will therefore require further studies. Some of the inconsistent qualitative views suggest that marketing researchers need continuous examination of the perceived relationship between CSR and CBBE dimensions.

9.3.2 Managerial Contributions

The concept of CBBE as conceptualized by Keller (1993) and the concept of CSR have blossomed individually in terms of scholarship. Interestingly, these two important concepts have not been adequately researched together in terms of their relationship. This study thus investigates the concepts of CSR and CBBE in a novel way that enriches scholarship and presents some implications for management.

The managerial contributions leads to the question of how businesses can take advantage of the knowledge generated in the study for decision making purposes. This is against the backdrop that CSR positively correlates with all the CBBE dimensions as revealed in the quantitative analysis of the study. In this regard, firms assuming the strategic view of CSR need to plan and execute the CSR function in a way that enhances equity for the company by way of increased brand awareness, improved brand image or association, increased quality perceptions among target audiences and to achieve brand loyalty. As has been pointed out in the in-depth qualitative study, achievement of CBBE requires firms to pursue effectively the core mandate of delivering customer satisfaction while leveraging on CSR for enhanced marketplace competitiveness. Although the qualitative data complement the quantitative data, there were some minor inconsistencies as regards the relationship between CSR and CBBE.

In particular, some interview data are not conclusive in terms of the causal effect of CSR on CBBE dimensions. In the case of CSR in relation to perceived quality and brand loyalty some interesting comments came to the fore. One respondent opined, *“I do not think customers equate CSR to service quality. On our social media page you can see a user who will praise you on Healthline or any other CSR initiatives but they will also give you the bash of a lifetime if you mess up their user experience.”* Similarly, another respondent who was not certain provided some condition that affect the perception of CSR role in CBBE dimensions. He said that, *“I am not too sure about the role of CSR in creating quality perceptions among customers. A lot of factors must be present to make people perceive your brand as a quality network. CSR may be one of them but it is definitely not a key factor. Customers are loyal and glad to be associated with your brand if you are seen to be playing an active role in social issues. It however does not create the quality of your brand when other things like quality of service, network quality, etc. are not seen to be working.”* In Contrary, others assert that *“CSR to a larger extent creates perception of brand quality due to the association of the brand to its CSR. If a company invests a lot into its CSR, automatically this affinity robs unto the brand quality.”*

The foregoing views are interesting in light of the conceptual framework depicted in Chapter Five. The framework suggests that, firms need to be tactful in communicating CSR in order to achieve CBBE dimensions of enhanced awareness, positive brand association image, perceived quality, and increased brand loyalty. Communication is particularly important if CSR is to lead to CBBE. It has been rightly observed by Wigley (2008) and Nielsen and Thomsen (2009) that consumers want to know more about companies' CSR activities. Hence, firms need to undertake research to ascertain CSR initiatives that hold value for customers in order to elicit favourable responses from the market. Again, managers involved in managing

CSR need to tactfully understand the nuances in communicating CSR. The qualitative data from the study suggests that message content and message channel require particular attention from the firm. The content need not show any semblance of self-centeredness or self-seeking publicity. Such positioning has the tendency of creating disaffection for the brand thereby reducing the brand's equity (Sen et al.2009). According to Morsing (2003) stakeholders are often reluctant to receive too much information about CSR engagements. In this regard, managers need to ensure that the firm's CSR communication is grounded in verifiable facts and devoid of focusing too intently on CSR communication as such actions has the potential of creating the impression among customers that the company is trying to hide something (Brown and Dacin, 1997).

This is not to say that companies need not communicate CSR information in a conspicuous manner (Morsing, 2003). Thus, the company can communicate its motive for engaging in particular CSR initiative. However, such communications ought to be executed with tact in order to avoid customer or stakeholder skepticisms (Du et al., 2010; Porter and Kramer, 2006). This implies that marketers seeking to leverage on CSR for its strategic and competitive significance should build credibility among customers and other stakeholder groups. The firm may achieve credibility by communicating the company's commitment to a given cause; the impact of the company's CSR; and the motive of the firm's CSR initiative. The company may also consider communicating the logical fit or association between particular CSR initiative or cause and the company's line of business.

The implications of the above insights are also useful in the context of the Ghanaian telecommunication sector. Prudent managers can leverage on CRS to enhance brand equity. However, such managers ought to be ensuring that the brand primarily delivers quality on its

core services to customers. As has been pointed out in the study, quality perceptions and brand loyalty in particular are mainly dependent on delivery of the core service or brand promise. In this regard, CSR only serves as a stimulus that augments the process. It is worth mentioning that where the quality differences among competing brand is blurred or not very prominent; CSR can serve as a differentiating competitive tool in enhancing brand awareness, improved brand image or positive brand associations, quality perception and brand loyalty. In simple terms therefore, telecommunications managers need to pursue CSR more as a complementary strategic tool to the brand's core mandate or service.

9.4 CONCLUSIONS

To answer the basic research question and to achieve the research objectives, this study developed a conceptual framework showing the relationship between CSR and CBBE dimensions. Adhering to good scholarly practices, the key research issues in the conceptual framework, was derived after review of extant literature on the various subjects of interest. Although the subject of CSR has evoked a wide stream of interest and multiple conceptualizations, this study adopts the general view that CSR refers to all activities or practices of the firm that are not required by law but contributes to the general welfare of society.

One of the background information needed for a meaningful discussion of the main objective of the study was to ascertain the nature and type of CSR activities engaged in by the telecommunication companies. Based on the interviews conducted among the CSR/marketing managers of the six mobile telecommunications firms, it became evident that many of the firms are active in various types of CSR activities. There is also a general commitment and excitement from the telecommunications companies in responding to the needs of the

communities through CSR initiative. In particular the various philanthropic endeavours provided by the telecommunications companies to poor communities are well appreciated. These philanthropic gestures are common in the area of education, health and popular events and occasions making the community perceive the telecommunication companies as genuine partners for development. In line with the expectation of the study it was observed, that CSR has become a brand building tool in the competitive telecommunications services sector. Again the importance attached to CSR is manifested in the establishment of foundations and budgetary allocations of the telecommunications companies studied. It was also observed that the telecommunications companies disseminate CSR information through multiple media channels which turn to drive passion of actual customers and potential customers towards the brand. CSR thus possess enormous advantages as it can be used as a public relations tool to indirectly sell brands thereby impacting the company's bottom-line among other brand equities.

Like in the case of CSR, the concept of CBBE is also yet to achieve universality in terms of meaning, content, and measurement. Notwithstanding this challenge, the study recognises the fact that the marketing or customer-oriented perspective of brand equity is not an entirely new idea, but gained its popularity through the writings of Keller (1993), Shocker et al. (1994) among others. These scholars have been largely influenced by the growing appreciation of the marketing concept or the customer-orientation philosophy to marketing. This thinking receives prominence in Keller's (1993) definition that CBBE "is the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand". Brand knowledge in this regard "is the full set of brand associations linked to the brand in long-term consumer memory". CBBE thus refers to the peculiar responses of consumers that are generated towards a brand because of prior knowledge and associations to the brand. Based

on Keller's (1993) definition therefore, the dimensions of CBBE as measured in the study include brand awareness, brand association/ image, perceived quality, and brand loyalty.

Against these two key conceptualizations, firm CSR is modelled in this study as the independent variable with CBBE and its four dimensions as the dependent variable. The argument emanating from the framework is that a typical firm can increase or achieve one or more of the four customer-based brand equity dimensions of brand awareness, perceived quality, brand image/association and brand loyalty. The assumption is that for CSR to lead to CBBE, the firm must expose customers to one or more of its six types of CSR initiatives through CSR communications which must be perceived as valuable by customers.

Generally, the framework provided conceptual insights which enabled the study to establish and to explain the relationship between CSR and CBBE dimensions using both quantitative and qualitative research tools. Based on the findings of the study one concludes that: CSR positively correlates with all the dimensions of CBBE. Although the quantitative study generally indicates that CSR is significant in terms of enhancing CBBE, a more detailed qualitative view pointed to the important role of delivering on the brand's core service. CSR is thus not a precondition for achieving CBBE dimensions but enhances the process especially where the brand has met its core service promise or expectations of customers. This position was largely corroborated by the qualitative insight which also explains that, for CSR to lead to CBBE it must be effectively communicated and that such communications or CSR initiatives must be of value to the target audience. In drawing conclusions, there is also the need to reiterate that not only do the findings contribute to the body of knowledge in the marketing discipline, but that it also provides a springboard for future research into CSR and CBBE. Thus, it is expected that the study widens the frontiers of knowledge on the subject

matter in what is certain to be a compelling stream of research with vast implications for both theory and practice.

9.5 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The current study sought the views of mobile phone users (customers) and management of the various mobile telecommunications service providers on the relationship or effect of CSR on CBBE dimensions. The study is useful in terms of its contribution to the marketing literature. However, this study is not without limitations. In this section therefore, the researcher attempts to highlight such issues which may form the basis for future research.

First, the respondents from this study were consumer and management sample who are geographically concentrated in Accra, the capital city of Ghana. It is thus difficult to know the possible impact that respondents outside Accra would have had on the current findings. Given that many CSR initiatives in Ghana are targeted at the rural poor communities it would have been useful to ascertain the views of people in the rural communities of Ghana. Thus, data collected in Accra may be limited in terms of not collecting the views of people who have experienced CSR initiatives or are more closely connected with CSR initiatives of the mobile telecommunications companies in the relatively poor communities of Ghana.

Second, those sampled for the study are more educated than the average population at large. These groups do represent segments of consumers and management who have knowledge of CSR activities of mobile telecommunication service providers and are also able to fully understand and respond adequately to the sets of questionnaires and interviews. Many of the respondents who agreed to self-complete the questionnaire have some tertiary education. In this regard, the study is limited as it indirectly excludes those who may have knowledge of

firm CSR but are unable to self-complete the questionnaire which is in English. Again, seeking the views of the less educated or illiterate mobile phone users on current study may have yielded results that are different from the current study. In particular, researchers may also want to consider the mediating effects of demographic variables on the perceived relationship between CSR and CBBE dimensions. Such a study could seek to find out whether demographic variables like age, gender, and income among others influence customer perception of the relationship between CSR and CBBE dimensions.

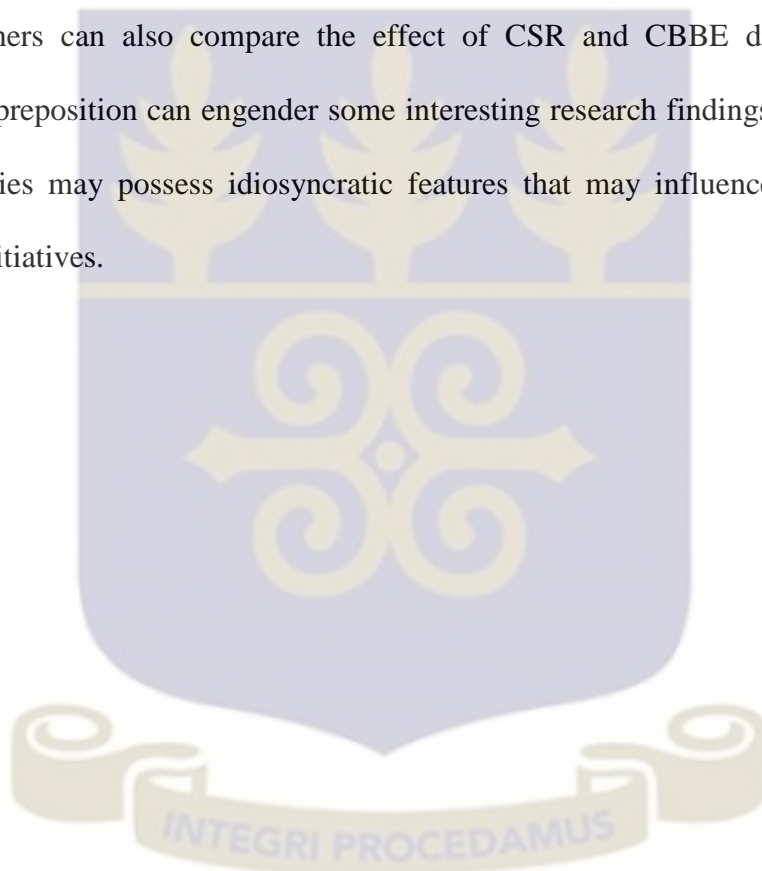
Thirdly, the findings also rely on respondents' self-reported cross-sectional data, rather than longitudinal data. This may not reflect changing environment. The cross sectional data may be affected by the respondents' predisposition of any events that have happened in the past and also by the state of mind at the time of completing the questionnaire or interview.

Fourth, the sample size of the study is also worth considering. The study used a sample size of 500 which is in line with good practices in the literature. For instance Tabachnick and Fidell (1996) have recommended that in statistical analysis, a sample of 200 is considered fair and 300 as good. Similarly, Hair et al. (1998) is of the view that 200 is a 'critical sample size' and that such a figure can lend itself to common statistical estimations and produce results that are valid (Hoelter, 1983). Notwithstanding the adequacy of the sample size per the scholarly prescriptions of Tabachnick and Fidell (1996), together with that of Hair et al. (1998), the sample size used in this study could be a limitation. This is in view of the estimated number of mobile phone users in Ghana which is in excess of 15 million people (www.myjoyonline.com.gh, 2014). This situation therefore poses questions of generalizability without further replication and validation. In this regard, attempts at generalizations of the findings would need to be verified carefully. Although our attempt is

consistent with the directions from the literature and academic experts, the study also acknowledges the lack of true experimental control over the identified factors.

Fifth, while Ghana served as the study context within sub-Saharan Africa, future studies need to compare other sub-Saharan African countries with Ghana. This will enhance generalizability across developing sub-Saharan African economies.

Finally, researchers can also compare the effect of CSR and CBBE dimensions across industries. This proposition can engender some interesting research findings. This is because different industries may possess idiosyncratic features that may influence how customers perceive CSR initiatives.



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APPENDIX



APPENDIX I

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA BUSINESS SCHOOL

CUSTOMER QUESTIONNAIRE:

Survey on the Role of Corporate Social Responsibility in Brand Building in the Mobile Telecommunication Sector

Dear Sir/Madam,

This survey is aimed at ascertaining the relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and brand building in the mobile telecommunication sector. Kindly assist this project by taking some time off your busy schedule to complete our questionnaire. You are expected to indicate your level of disagreement or agreement to all the statements contained in the questionnaire by checking (✓) the appropriate space. It is important to note that, although there are six mobile network providers in Ghana, your answer should relate only to the network you use often or consider as your main mobile network.

Use a scale of 1 to 7, where:

1 = Strongly Disagree;	2 = Disagree;	3 = Somewhat Disagree;	4 = Neither Agree nor Disagree;	5 = Somewhat Agree;	6 = Agree;	7 = Strongly Agree
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SECTION A: Please indicate your level of disagreement or agreement on the various types of CSR initiatives undertaken by your network provider

		1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Somewhat Disagree	4 Neither Agree nor Disagree	5 Somewhat Agree	6 Agree	7 Strongly Agree
A1	Cause Promotion: My network provides funds, in-kind contributions, or other corporate resources to increase awareness and concern about social cause(s). E.g. National Sanitation Day.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A2	Cause-Related Marketing: My network makes commitment to contribute or donate a percentage of revenues to specific cause based on product sales. E.g. A company promises to use 1% of its sales revenue to support sports.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A3	Corporate Social Marketing: My network supports the development and /or implementation of behaviour change campaign intended to improve public health, safety, the environment, or community well-being. E.g. A campaign to get people to stop drunk-driving or over speeding.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A4	Corporate Philanthropy: My network makes a direct contribution to a charity or cause, most often in the form of cash grants, donations and/or in-kind services. E.g. Paying medical bill for the poor.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A5	Community Volunteering: My network supports and encourages employees and distributor partners, to volunteer their time to support local community organizations and causes. E.g. cleaning gutters.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A6	Socially Responsible Business Practices: My network ensures its business practices are socially responsible. E.g. The use of sustainable and environmentally friendly raw material, protection of consumer information, full disclosure of product information, ensures employee well-being and responsible marketing; non-discrimination policy (providing tricycles to physically challenged persons to sell phone cards).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SECTION B: Please indicate the extent to which you perceive value in the various types of CSR initiatives undertaken by your network provider

		1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Somewhat Disagree	4 Neither Agree nor Disagree	5 Somewhat Agree	6 Agree	7 Strongly Agree
B1	Corporate Cause Promotions: I value my network provider's initiatives to increase awareness and concern for social causes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B2	Cause-Related Marketing: I value my network provider's commitment to contribute or donate a percentage of revenues to specific cause(s) based on product sales or usage.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B3	Corporate Social Marketing: I value my network provider's support of behaviour change campaigns to improve public health, safety, the environment, or community well-being.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B4	Corporate Philanthropy: I value my network provider's direct donations or contributions in cash and/ or in kind to charity or cause(s).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B5	Community Volunteering: I value my network provider's support and encouragement of its employees, retailers, or agents to volunteer their time, expertise, talents, ideas, and/ or physical labour to support local community organizations and causes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B6	Socially Responsible Business Practices: I value my network provider's discretionary initiatives such as, the use of sustainable and environmentally friendly raw materials, protection of consumer information, provision of full disclosure of product information, ensuring employee well-being, responsible marketing; provision of increased access for disabled and disadvantaged members of the populations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SECTION C: Please indicate your level of disagreement or agreement on the extent to which the various types of CSR initiatives affect Brand Awareness

(Note: Brand Awareness describes instant recall, top-of-mind recognition of the network/brand name, features and ability to differentiate the brand from competing brands)

		1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Somewhat Disagree	4 Neither Agree nor Disagree	5 Somewhat Agree	6 Agree	7 Strongly Agree
C1	My network provider's corporate cause promotions increases my awareness of its brand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C2	My network provider's cause-related marketing increases my awareness of its brand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C3	My network provider's corporate social marketing increases my awareness of its brand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C4	My network provider's corporate philanthropy increases my awareness of its brand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C5	My network provider's community volunteering increases my awareness of its brand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C6	My network provider's socially responsible business practices increases my awareness of the brand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SECTION D: Please indicate your level of disagreement or agreement on the extent to which the various types of CSR initiatives affect Brand Associations or Image.

*(Note: **Brand Image or Association** describes customer’s perceptions of a given brand in terms of its uniqueness, goodness, strength, positive affinity and attitude towards the brand, care and development-orientation, good corporate citizenship, trustworthiness, and value-for-money to society)*

		1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Somewhat Disagree	4 Neither Agree nor Disagree	5 Somewhat Agree	6 Agree	7 Strongly Agree
D1	My network provider’s corporate cause promotions increases the image I associate with them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D2	My network provider’s cause-related marketing increases the image I associate with them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D3	My network provider’s corporate social marketing increases the image I associate with them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D4	My network provider’s corporate philanthropy increases the image I associate with them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D5	My network provider’s community volunteering increases the image I associate with them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D6	My network provider’s socially responsible business practices increases the image I associate with them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SECTION E: Please indicate your level of disagreement or agreement on the extent to which the various types of CSR initiatives affect Quality Perceptions of brands.

*(Note: **Quality Perceptions** describes brands in terms of excellence, responsiveness, reliability, assurance to deliver, understanding of customer needs, positive perception of facilities, equipment, personnel and communications. Ready acceptability of new products introduced, ability to command higher charges, and customers' willingness to advertise the brand to others)*

		1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Somewhat Disagree	4 Neither Agree nor Disagree	5 Somewhat Agree	6 Agree	7 Strongly Agree
E1	My network provider's corporate cause promotions increases my perceptions of the brand's quality.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E2	My network provider's cause-related marketing increases my perceptions of the brand's quality.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E3	My network provider's corporate social marketing increases my perceptions of the brand's quality.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E4	My network provider's corporate philanthropy increases my perceptions of the brand's quality.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E5	My network provider's community volunteering increases my perceptions of the brand's quality.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E6	My network provider's socially responsible business practices increases my perceptions of the brand's quality.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SECTION F: Please indicate your level of disagreement or agreement on the extent to which the various types of CSR initiatives affect Brand Loyalty among customers.

*(Note: **Brand Loyalty** describes increased customers trust and attachment; commitment to rebuy consistently in the future; choosing the brand over competing brands and recommending the brand to others; willing to pay slightly higher prices; customers ignoring other brand and overlooking certain negative publicity or aspects of the brand)*

		1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Somewhat Disagree	4 Neither Agree nor Disagree	5 Somewhat Agree	6 Agree	7 Strongly Agree
F1	My network provider's corporate cause promotions increases my loyalty towards the brand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
F2	My network provider's cause-related marketing increases my loyalty towards the brand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
F3	My network provider's corporate social marketing increases my loyalty towards the brand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
F4	My network provider's corporate philanthropy increases my loyalty towards the brand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
F5	My network provider's community volunteering increases my loyalty towards the brand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
F6	My network provider's socially responsible business practices increases my loyalty towards the brand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SECTION G: Demographic Information

G1	Number of network(s) subscribed to?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
G2	Which Network is <u>your main</u> network? (choose only one)	<input type="checkbox"/> MTN	<input type="checkbox"/> Vodafone	<input type="checkbox"/> Tigo	<input type="checkbox"/> Espresso	<input type="checkbox"/> Airtel	<input type="checkbox"/> Glo
G3	How long have you been a customer or subscriber of your main network?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2yrs	<input type="checkbox"/> 3-4yrs	<input type="checkbox"/> 5-6yrs	<input type="checkbox"/> 7-8yrs	<input type="checkbox"/> 9-10yrs	<input type="checkbox"/> Above 10yrs
G4	Your Gender?	<input type="checkbox"/> Male		<input type="checkbox"/> Female			
G5	Your Age?	<input type="checkbox"/> 18-30yrs	<input type="checkbox"/> 31-40yrs.	<input type="checkbox"/> 41-40yrs	<input type="checkbox"/> 41-50yrs	<input type="checkbox"/> 51-60yrs	
		<input type="checkbox"/> 61yrs and Above					
G6	Your level of Education?	<input type="checkbox"/> Senior High Secondary School			<input type="checkbox"/> Training College or Post-Secondary Training College		
		<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial or Vocational School Certificate			<input type="checkbox"/> Polytechnic/University Diploma or Degree		
		<input type="checkbox"/> Masters Degree/Post-graduate Diploma			<input type="checkbox"/> Ph.D./MD or Other Post-graduate Qualification		
		<input type="checkbox"/> Others, Please state					

**Thank you very much for your help.
Please kindly return the questionnaire to the Research Assistant.**

APPENDIX II

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA BUSINESS SCHOOL

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR MANAGEMENT:

The Role of Corporate Social Responsibility in Building Customer-Based Brand Equity in the Mobile Telecommunications Sector

Dear Respondent,

This interview is part of a doctoral studies aimed at ascertaining the role of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in building brands in the telecommunication sector. As a manager with knowledge in CSR and Marketing, your views are considered useful in addressing the objectives of the study. Specifically, we would want you to freely express your opinion on some pertinent issues on the subject of CSR and branding. Please note that, in this study, CSR means corporate philanthropy such as philanthropic donations in cash or in-kind service or the use of company resources for the good of the community and its people. We will be grateful if you could spare a few minutes of your time for the interview.

QUESTIONS:

Section A

- i. What is the nature of CSR activities in the mobile telecommunications sector in Ghana?
- ii. How valuable or important is CSR initiatives in the mobile telecommunications sector in Ghana?
- iii. What are the key issues to consider in CSR communication strategy in the mobile telecommunications sector in Ghana?

Section B

- i. How can we explain CSR in terms of creating brand awareness for the mobile telecommunications brand?
- ii. How can we explain CSR in terms of enhancing brand association or image for the mobile telecommunications brand?
- iii. How can we explain CSR in terms of creating quality perceptions among customers of mobile telecommunications brand?
- iv. How can we explain CSR in terms of creating brand loyalty among customers of mobile telecommunications brand?

Note:

We will be grateful if you could also attach your brief profile.

Please address any queries to:

Prince Kodua, Lecturer, Department of Marketing & Entrepreneurship, University of Ghana Business School, Legon. Email: pkodua@ug.edu.gh. Cell: 0244266211

Thank you very much for your help.