

More Than Just Water: The Role of CSR in Building Trust in Short and Long Term Toward AQUA in Surabaya

Tania Monica Potu^{*1}, Yi-Chuan Liao², Hananiel Mennoverdi Gunawan³, Janice Carysa Siahaya⁴

^{1,3,4}Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Pelita Harapan, Surabaya, Indonesia

²Department of Business Administration, National Dong Hwa University, Hualien, Taiwan

*Corresponding author: Tania Monica Potu

Corresponding email: tania.potu@uph.edu

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ABSTRACT

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has evolved from a peripheral activity into a strategic component of sustainable business management, particularly in industries where consumer values are closely tied to ethical and environmental considerations. In Indonesia's bottled water sector, CSR initiatives are increasingly recognized as instruments for building consumer trust and strengthening long-term brand relationships. This study aims to examine how CSR influences short-term and long-term consumer responses—specifically purchase intention and client loyalty—through the mediating role of brand trust. It further seeks to identify which CSR dimensions most effectively drive consumer trust and sustained behavioral engagement. A quantitative research design was employed using purposive sampling among 100 AQUA consumers in Surabaya. Data were collected through structured Likert-scale questionnaires and analyzed using SPSS version 22, including validity, reliability, and regression analyses to test the causal relationships among CSR, brand trust, buying intention, and loyalty. The results reveal that CSR exerts a significant positive impact on brand trust ($\beta = 0.605$), which subsequently influences both short-term purchasing intentions ($\beta = 0.480$) and long-term loyalty ($\beta = 0.855$). While CSR's direct impact on immediate purchasing behavior is moderate, its influence on sustained loyalty is substantial. Theoretically, this research advances CSR literature by distinguishing temporal effects on consumer behavior. Practically, it underscores CSR's strategic potential as a brand differentiation mechanism that fosters trust, loyalty, and emotional connection in competitive markets.

Keywords:

Brand Trust, Buying Intention, Corporate Social Responsibility, Client Loyalty

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1. Introduction

In recent decades, the global business environment has undergone a significant shift in how corporate social responsibility (CSR) is perceived and expected. Companies are no longer judged solely by their financial performance but also by their dedication regarding environmental and social causes (Siskawati et al., 2019). Not only scholars, but also practitioners have increasingly recognized CSR as a core strategic concern (Karwowski & Raulinajtys-Grzybek, 2021). Recently, businesses were recognizing how environmental concerns impact their competitive positions and

the decisions made by their consumers. The business case for CSR suggests that responsible corporate behavior can enhance a firm's value and improve its financial and non-financial performance (Schaltegger et al., 2019). By seeking eco-innovation or CSR, it relates to tactics that help businesses allocate resources efficiently and obtain a competitive edge (Tsai & Liao, 2017). In this view, CSR is not a peripheral initiative but a central element of sustainable business strategy, emphasizing the need for companies to balance profitability with environmental stewardship and social contribution (Samaibekova et al., 2021).

CSR has become a fundamental part of marketing and branding strategies in recent years (Carrera, 2022). The European Commission (2001) defines CSR as the voluntary incorporation of environmental and social issues into a business's operations and relationships with stakeholders. This aligns with the triple bottom line approach, which values people, planet, and profit equally (Lock & Seele, 2015). CSR may manifest in various forms, such as initiatives in education, environmental sustainability, or public health. It goes beyond compliance with regulations and reflects a firm's proactive commitment to ethical values and societal well-being (Mcwilliams, 2016). In practice, CSR can serve both as a moral responsibility and a competitive advantage in building brand image and long-term consumer relationships.

Extensive research has demonstrated that CSR initiatives can strengthen customer perceptions, build brand trust, and positively influence consumer behavior. Studies have shown that customers are more inclined to support companies they believe to be socially conscious, leading to increased satisfaction, trust, loyalty, and purchase intentions (Sharma & Jain, 2019)(Zhang & Ahmad, 2021). However, the majority of existing studies tend to investigate these outcomes in isolation, focusing on either short-term responses (such as buying intention) or long-term outcomes (such as loyalty), without offering an integrated perspective. This study makes a unique addition by looking at how customers perceive CSR's short-term effects (purchasing intention) and long-term effects (client loyalty). Through the differentiation of these temporal impacts, the study offers a more profound comprehension of how CSR drives both immediate transactional behavior and lasting consumer relationships—an area that remains underexplored in current CSR literature.

In today's competitive market, where consumer values increasingly align with ethical and environmental considerations, CSR plays an imperative agenda in shaping brand positioning and consumer loyalty. This is particularly evident in industries closely tied to environmental and public health concerns, such as the bottled drinking water sector. For companies in this sector, CSR is not only a matter of responsibility but also a key differentiator. AQUA, one of Indonesia's most well-known bottled water brands, stands out as a leader in CSR implementation. Since 1993, AQUA has conducted various environmental and community empowerment programs, and since joining Danone Group in 1998, its CSR efforts have become more structured and far-reaching. Campaigns such as #BijakBerplastik and the introduction of AQUA Life—packaged in 100% recycled and recyclable plastic—highlight the company's dedication to environmental sustainability. AQUA's B Corp certification in 2018 further reinforces its role as a responsible corporate citizen (AQUA-DANONE, 2022).

Surabaya, Indonesia's second-largest metropolitan city, provides an ideal context for this study. With its highly diverse and environmentally aware population, Surabaya is home to consumers who are more likely to engage with and respond to CSR initiatives. The city is also a hub for sustainability campaigns and green movements, with active government and community participation in recycling, water conservation, and environmental education (Damayanti & Sagena, 2025)(Kartikasari, 2024). Moreover, AQUA enjoys widespread distribution in Surabaya, making it accessible and recognizable across different demographic groups. These characteristics make Surabaya a relevant and strategic research setting for evaluating the effectiveness of CSR in influencing brand trust, consumer purchase intention, and loyalty. Therefore, This research attempts to investigate how customers' opinions of AQUA's CSR—specifically in the dimensions of environmental concern, legal and ethical responsibility, philanthropy, and consumer orientation—affect brand trust and, in turn, both in the short and long term behavioral responses. This study is expected to contribute to the theoretical discourse on sustainable marketing while offering practical insights for firms to design impactful CSR strategies.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Its Dimensions

CSR creates a balanced environment where everyone benefits, but it is also a prerequisite for achieving corporate sustainability (Bian et al., 2021)(López-Concepción et al., 2022). Based on the statement from Hediger (Hediger, 2010), CSR initiatives where businesses aim to improve stakeholders' well-being in addition to their profitability. CSR means a persistent dedication by companies to act in a proper, equitable, and responsible manner and to support economic growth by enhancing the quality of life for employees and their families, as well as the local community and society at large. Not far from that, Dyck et al., (Dyck et al., 2019) also mentioned that CSR supports the development of long-term, business-friendly opportunities, the transformation of societal demands and expectations, the distribution of resources to address social issues, the moral commitment to socially responsible endeavors, the development of human and intellectual capital, and the maintenance of security and reputation. All in all, they came to the conclusion that corporate social responsibility (CSR) is critical for long-term sustainable growth and a company's competitive advantage based on organizational innovation and social performance.

This research inspired by the study from (Popa et al., 2022), which divided CSR dimensions into the big four integrated activities, including the combinations of Legal and Ethical (LE); Philanthropic and Community Services (PC); Respect for Environment (RE); also Respect for Customer (RC). LE obligation emphasizes adherence to rules and regulation, as well as fairness, morality, and non-harm or other social ethics principles that are applied to many stakeholders, including shareholders, workers, customers, and the society at large, is known as ethical responsibility. AQUA demonstrates its commitment to LE standards through compliance with environmental regulations, transparent sustainability reporting, and achieving B Corp certification. By enhancing people's quality of life, PC obligations demonstrate involvement in charitable endeavours, the advancement of kindness, and giving back to society. Through various PC, AQUA empowers local communities by providing clean water access, entrepreneurship training, and disaster relief. RE illustrates the appropriate environmental management to prevent adverse effects on the community (Hamdani et al., 2022). In terms of environmental responsibility, AQUA promotes plastic waste reduction through its #BijakBerplastik campaign, supports the circular economy by producing fully recyclable packaging like AQUA Life, and collaborates with ZARA to upcycle plastic bottles into children's clothing. Whilst RC depicts the protection of the rights and interests' consumers (Bello et al., 2021). To show respect for customers, AQUA ensures product safety, clear labeling, consumer education, and accessible customer service channels through a toll-free hotline, official email, website contact form, and interactive social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook enabling two-way communication and quick handling of consumer feedback.

Brand Trust (BT)

The definition of BT is the degree to which customers are prepared to have confidence in and depend on the particular brand (Wu & Chen, 2015). Accordingly, BT regards to socially conscious business strategy to demonstrate its ideals, which contribute to the development of trust towards the company and its brands (Popa et al., 2022). Moreover, (Gilal et al., 2020) demonstrated that growth in CSR initiatives positively enhanced BT.

Buying Intention (BI)

Buying Intention (BI) as the inclination to purchase a brand and is typically depending on how well the buying motivation aligns with the qualities or traits of the brand under consideration (Kurniawan et al., 2022)(Singhal et al., 2019). Due to its capacity to subtly encourage cooperative behavior from customers, trust is seen as a key component that makes relationship marketing successful until the BI process.

Client Loyalty (CL)

Client Loyalty (CL) measures how loyal a consumer is to a brand. Customers are said to exhibit great CL if they regularly use products from one brand without ever purchasing goods from other brands, particularly when those products' prices, designs, or materials change (Afiftama & Nasir, 2024). Because they already trust that a brand can satisfy their requirements and expectations,

these loyal consumers will find it difficult to move to another (Purwianti et al., 2023). According to (Gultom, Arif, 2020), consumers who trust in a brand will remain loyal to it and not consider or be interested in other brands that provide comparable items.

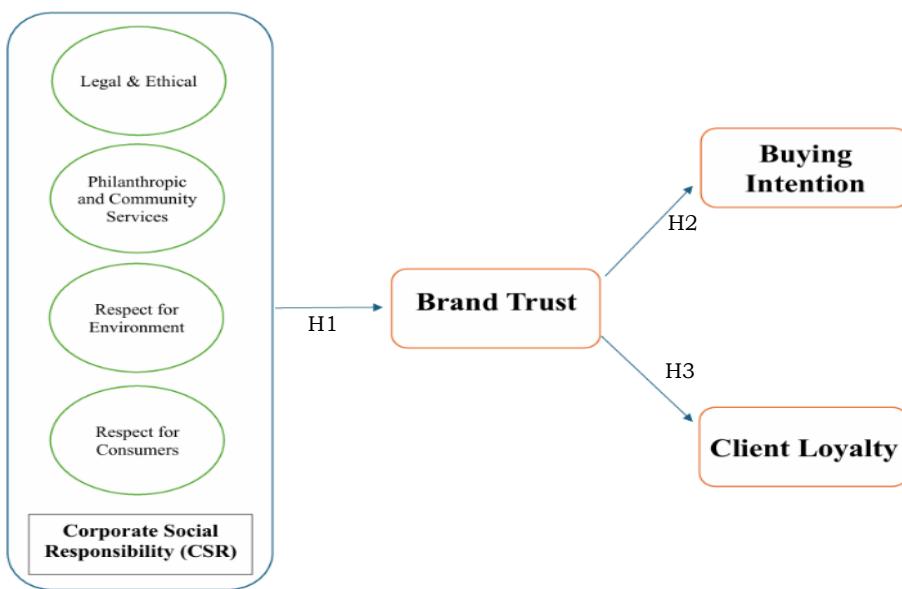


Figure 1. Research framework

H1: Corporate Social Responsibility has a significant effect on Brand Trust

H2: Brand Trust has a significant effect on Buying Intention

H3: Brand Trust has a significant effect on Client Loyalty

2. Methods

This study adopts a quantitative research approach with a causal research design to examine the effect of CSR on consumer behavior, specifically on BT, BI (short-term), and CL (long-term), in the context of AQUA consumers in Surabaya. The objective of this research is to determine the extent to which consumers' perceptions of CSR—across several dimensions— influence their trust in the brand, and how this trust subsequently affects their willingness to purchase and stay loyal to the brand. The study also implicitly hypothesizes that CSR has a significant effect on both short-term and long-term consumer responses, through brand trust.

The target population consists of AQUA consumers living in Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia—specifically those who are aware of or have been exposed to AQUA's CSR campaigns such as #BijakBerplastik, access to clean water, or community empowerment programs. The sampling technique used is non-probability purposive sampling, selecting respondents aged 18 and above who have consumed AQUA products within the last five months continuously and are aware of at least one CSR initiative of the brand. The data collection was conducted through an online questionnaire distributed via WhatsApp groups and social media platforms with the assistance of community-based influencers.

The questionnaire consisted of Likert-scale items measuring perceptions of CSR dimensions, brand trust, buying intention, and client loyalty. The scale uses a 5-point agreement format: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly Agree (5). The collected data will be analyzed using SPSS version 22. Again, this research model enables the evaluation of both immediate behavioral responses (such as intention to purchase) and long-term relational impacts (such as loyalty), providing an integrated understanding of how CSR initiatives build trust and influence consumer commitment. After the survey was finished, researchers got 108 questionnaires, but only 100 people were eligible.

3. Result

Qualified and complete responses from the distributed questionnaires will be used for further analysis, particularly to test regression relationships and the statistical significance of each variable. The analysis aims to provide a deeper understanding of the influence of AQUA's CSR dimensions—namely Legal and Ethical Responsibility, Philanthropic and Community Services, Respect for Environment, and Respect for Customer—on Brand Trust, Buying Intention, and Client Loyalty. Before conducting the main analysis, a validity test was performed to evaluate how well each measurement item represents the intended construct. Using a total of $n = 100$ samples and a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$, the calculated r -table value is 0,1638. All validity test results for each indicator in the questionnaire are summarized in the following table.

Table 1. Validity Test

Variable	Dimension	Item	Pearson Corelation	Marked	
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	Legal and Ethical Responsibility (LE)	LE1	0,667	Valid	
		LE2	0,826	Valid	
		LE3	0,866	Valid	
		LE4	0,880	Valid	
		LE5	0,787	Valid	
	Philanthropic and Community Services (PC)	PC1	0,769	Valid	
		PC2	0,861	Valid	
		PC3	0,856	Valid	
Respect for Environment (RE)	Respect for Environment (RE)	PC4	0,893	Valid	
		PC5	0,545	Valid	
		PC6	0,555	Valid	
		PC7	0,526	Valid	
		PC8	0,687	Valid	
		RE1	0,602	Valid	
		RE2	0,654	Valid	
		RE3	0,648	Valid	
Respect for Customer (RC)	Respect for Customer (RC)	RE4	0,613	Valid	
		RE5	0,593	Valid	
		RE6	0,717	Valid	
		RC1	0,483	Valid	
		RC2	0,843	Valid	
		RC3	0,781	Valid	
		RC4	0,704	Valid	
	Brand Trust (BT)	BT1	0,829	Valid	
Buying Intention (BI)		BT2	0,766	Valid	
		BT3	0,827	Valid	
		BT4	0,761	Valid	
Buying Intention (BI)	BI1	0,857	Valid		
	BI2	0,887	Valid		
	BI3	0,920	Valid		
	CL1	0,708	Valid		
Client Loyalty (CL)	Client Loyalty (CL)	CL2	0,681	Valid	
		CL3	0,662	Valid	
		CL4	0,672	Valid	

Source: Data processed, 2025

Based on the results of the validity test, it is evident that the calculated correlation values for each variable indicator exceed the r -table value of 0,1638 (with $n = 100$). This confirms that all indicators employed in this study are considered valid for measuring the intended constructs. Following the validity test, a reliability test was conducted as the next step. The overall reliability assessment was carried out using the same sample size of 100 respondents. The outcomes of this reliability test for each construct are presented in the table below.

Table 2. Reliability Test

Variable	Dimensions	Cronbach's Alpha	Marked
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	Legal and Ethical Responsibility (LE)	0,865	Reliable
	Philanthropic and Community Services (PC)	0,869	Reliable
	Respect for Environment (RE)	0,708	Reliable
	Respect for Customer (RC)	0,676	Reliable
Brand Trust (BT)		0,800	Reliable
Buying Intention (BI)		0,866	Reliable
Client Loyalty (CL)		0,811	Reliable

Source: Data processed, 2025

All of the variable indicators have Alpha Cronbach values higher than 0,6, according to the reliability table's test findings. Therefore, it can be concluded that every variable indicator used in the study is reliable. For the third test, the author finished the normality exam. The following normality test is based on the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) non-parametric statistical test:

Table 3. Normality Test

Model	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	Marked
CSR *BT	0,200	Normal
BT *BI	0,200	Normal
BT *CL	0,140	Normal

Source: Data processed, 2025

Referring to the statistical results presented in Table 3, the regression model involving Legal and Ethical Responsibility, Philanthropic and Community Services, Respect for Environment, Respect for Customer, Brand Trust, Buying Intention, as well as Client Loyalty demonstrate a normal distribution, as all significance values in the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test exceed the 0.05 threshold.

Table 4. Multicollinearity Test

Item	Tolerance	VIF	Marked
CSR	1,000	1,000	Multi-free
BT	1,000	1,000	Multi-free
BI	1,000	1,000	Multi-free
CL	1,000	1,000	Multi-free

Source: Data processed 2025

Given that the tolerance column of the entire item is more than 0,01 and the VIF column indicates that the value of all variables is less than 10, it is clear from the data in Table 4 that multicollinearity does not exist in this regression model.

Table 5. Heteroscedasticity Test

Item	Gleiser	Standart	Marked
CSR	0,438	0,05	Homogenous
BT	0,855	0,05	Homogenous
BI	0,605	0,05	Homogenous
CL	0,875	0,05	Homogenous

Source: Data processed, 2025

Each item in Table 5's Gleiser column reveals that the data is neutrally larger than 0,05, suggesting that the regression model is heterogeneous. The coefficient of determination test shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Coefficient of Determination, F-test, and Hypothesis test/ t-Test

Model / Variable	R	Adj R²	F_{sig}	Std Coef Beta	t_{sig}	Hypothesis
CSR *BT	0,605	0,359	0,000			
CSR				0,605	0,000	Accepted
BT *BI	0,480	0,222	0,000			
BT				0,480	0,000	Accepted
BT *CL	0,855	0,729	0,000			
BT				0,855	0,000	Accepted

Source: Data processed, 2025

Based on the results presented in Table 6, the regression analysis demonstrates several significant relationships among the research variables. First, the relationship between CSR and Brand Trust shows an R value of 0,605, indicating a moderately strong positive correlation. The adjusted R² of 0,359 suggests that 35,9% of the variance in Brand Trust can be explained by the CSR dimensions measured in this study. With a significance level F_{sig} of 0,000, the model is statistically valid, and the standardized coefficient (Beta = 0,605) further confirms that CSR has a strong and positive impact on building consumer trust in the AQUA brand. This hypothesis is accepted. This result is supported by the initial study examined by (Fatma & Khan, 2023)(Fatma & Rahman, 2017) depict the clear result of brand trust is positively impacted by consumers' perceptions of CSR. The results are in line with earlier research in this area. This demonstrates how crucial CSR initiatives are to fostering brand trust. Similar statements were also made by (Amin & Tarun, 2021)(Tan et al., 2022) customers green purchases have been found to be significantly impacted by green trust, which may also enhance their real purchasing behavior. Purchase intention and perceived brand trust are strongly correlated, according to Karatu & Nik Mat (2015).

Second, the analysis of Brand Trust's effect on Buying Intention (BI) results in an R value of 0,480 and an adjusted R² of 0,222, which indicates that 22,2% of the variation in short-term buying intention can be explained by the level of brand trust. The model is statistically significant F_{sig}= 0,000 and shows a Beta coefficient of 0,480, confirming a moderate positive influence. Therefore, brand trust plays a key role in driving the intention to purchase AQUA products, especially among respondents who are educated, professionally employed, and financially stable. This hypothesis is also accepted.

Lastly, the relationship between Brand Trust and Client Loyalty (CL) reveals the strongest result in the model, with an R value of 0,855 and an adjusted R² of 0,729. This means that 72,9% of the variance in long-term loyalty is explained by brand trust, showing a very high level of influence. The Beta coefficient is 0,855, and the significance value is well below the 0,05 threshold F_{sig} is 0,000, indicating that the model is statistically robust. Thus, the hypothesis that brand trust has a substantial impact on long-term loyalty is strongly supported. This result is in line with the previous study did by (Afiftama & Nasir, 2024) that customer loyalty is greatly influenced by brand trust. In addition to this, according to research by (Aditya & Tjokrosaputro, 2020), brand loyalty is significantly enhanced by brand trust. A customer's brand loyalty increases with their level of brand trust. Thus, it can be said that brand loyalty is significantly impacted by brand trust. As a result, this study also confirms earlier findings that brand loyalty is significantly impacted by brand trust.

The results of the t-test show a hypothesis that states:

1. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) which consists of Legal and Ethical (LE), Philanthropic and Community Services (PC), Respect for Environment (RE), and Respect for Customer (RC) had a significant effect on Brand Trust (BT) received at a sig. level of 0,000 < t sig. 0,05
2. Brand Trust (BT) had a significant effect on Buying Intention was accepted at the sig. level of 0,000 < t sig. 0,05
3. Brand Trust (BT) had a significant effect on Client Loyalty (CL) received at the level of sig. 0,000 < t sig. 0,05

AQUA's CSR activities are strategically important in eliciting both immediate and long-term consumer reactions. Customers are more likely to select AQUA over competing brands in the near

future because of its favorable brand image, which is bolstered by well-known CSR campaigns like #BijakBerplastik, community development, and access to clean water efforts. These initiatives produce perceived additional value and instant emotional resonance, which increases the product's appeal and relevance to consumers who care about social issues.

The study's respondents, who are primarily between the ages of 30 and 35, have postgraduate degrees, and are employed as private-sector professionals earning more than IDR 8 million per month, are especially notable for this. This group of consumers is typically more analytical, skeptical of business ethics, and acutely conscious of social and environmental concerns. For them, brand alignment with their beliefs and desired lifestyle is just as important as price or function when choosing a product. Therefore, this demographic responds well to AQUA's CSR initiatives, which promote immediate purchases based on social relevance and brand trust.

Long-term brand trust is cultivated by regular and open CSR activities, particularly among well-educated and socially conscious consumers like the respondents. AQUA's position as a conscientious and progressive brand is further supported by its longstanding dedication to environmental sustainability, ethical business practices, and public responsibility, which is demonstrated by its sustainability reports, B Corp accreditation, and eco-conscious products like AQUA Life. In addition to the product's practical benefits, this ongoing trust builds consumer-brand ties and encourages loyalty when customers are supporting a business that aligns with their own beliefs rather than just purchasing water. As a result, AQUA's CSR serves as a potent differentiation tactic in a cutthroat market, appealing to both emotional and logical analysis, especially among customers with greater purchasing power, education, and environmental consciousness.

4. Discussion

Based on the results of the study, the first hypothesis that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has a significant effect on Brand Trust (BT) is accepted. The Adjusted R^2 value of 0,359 indicates that CSR explains 35,9% of the variation in Brand Trust, with a standardized beta coefficient of 0,605 and a significance value of 0,000. This finding highlights that CSR initiatives such as LE, PC, RE, and RC have a substantial influence on consumers' trust in AQUA. Given that the majority of respondents are aged 30–35, hold postgraduate degrees, and earn over IDR 8 million per month, their expectations of corporate responsibility are higher. AQUA's consistent and transparent CSR practices (sustainability report of AQUA), doing a myriad of community services including #BijakBerplastik campaign and from 2018 until now AQUA actively received B Corp certification (a designation award for firms that fulfil high requirements of overall social and environmental performance, openness, and responsibility); as well as very concern to customers with the customer care hotline program. Those facts are the great drivers to direct a trust in customers' mind and heart. These types of customers tend to evaluate brands based on ethical values and long-term sustainability.

The second hypothesis, which posits that Brand Trust (BT) has a significant effect on Buying Intention (BI), is also accepted, as shown by a standardized beta coefficient of 0,480 and a significance value of 0,000. However, the Adjusted R^2 value of 0,222 suggests that BT explains only 22,2% of the variation in BI. This means that while brand trust plays a crucial role in influencing consumers' purchase decisions, other factors such as product availability, pricing, and lifestyle compatibility also contribute. For highly educated and professionally active consumers like those in this study, purchasing bottled water is not just a matter of hydration but also of supporting ethical brands aligned with their values.

Furthermore, the third hypothesis that Brand Trust (BT) has a significant effect on Client Loyalty (CL) is strongly supported. The R value of 0,855 and Adjusted R^2 of 0,729 indicate a very strong relationship, meaning that 72,9% of the variation in loyalty can be explained by trust in the brand. This reinforces the idea that trust is a long-term investment, especially for consumers with stable income and critical awareness. AQUA's ability to build and maintain trust through ongoing environmental and social programs fosters loyalty that goes beyond product satisfaction. Consumers in this demographic are likely to remain loyal not just because of product quality, but because of the brand's meaningful contributions to society.

The research found that CSR significantly shapes brand trust, which in turn influences both short-term outcomes like buying intention and long-term outcomes such as client loyalty. However, the strength of the relationship varies. Buying intention is moderately affected, suggesting that while trust is important, consumers still weigh other practical factors, namely lifestyle compatibility,

cost, and product availability. On the other hand, loyalty is deeply rooted in trust, especially among well-educated and socially aware consumers. Therefore, brands like AQUA must maintain and evolve their CSR communication in authentic, measurable, and relatable ways to continuously engage this critical and high-potential consumer segment.

5. Conclusion

This research was conducted to deepen the understanding of how consumers perceive Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives and how these perceptions affect both short-term outcomes—buying intention, and long-term outcomes—client loyalty, through brand trust. Using a quantitative approach, the study focused on Danone-AQUA as one of the most established bottled water brands in Indonesia with a strong CSR presence and examined how its programs—ranging from environmental protection and community empowerment to ethical business conduct—impact consumer behavior in Surabaya.

The findings from regression analysis indicate that CSR significantly affects brand trust, with 35,9% of the variance in brand trust explained by CSR activities. This suggests that consumers, particularly those with high levels of education (postgraduates), stable employment in the private sector, and incomes above IDR 8 million, are highly responsive to ethical and responsible business practices. Moreover, brand trust has a moderate yet significant influence on buying intention, and an even stronger influence on client loyalty, where 72,9% of loyalty is explained by trust in the brand. These findings highlight the critical role of long-term trust-building through transparent and consistent CSR, especially for well-informed consumers who evaluate brands based on more than just product functionality. In the short term, AQUA's CSR campaigns such as #BijakBerplastik, clean water initiatives, and community engagement activities successfully differentiate the brand and generate emotional resonance, driving purchasing behavior among consumers who are increasingly conscious of environmental and social issues. For the long term, initiatives such as the company's B Corp certification, circular economy efforts, and transparent sustainability reporting cement trust and foster brand loyalty among discerning consumers who want to support brands aligned with their personal and ethical values.

This study contributes to the CSR literature by explicitly differentiating between short-term and long-term consumer responses within a single integrated model. The findings reinforce the role of brand trust as a central mediating mechanism through which CSR translates into behavioral outcomes. By showing that trust has a much stronger explanatory power for loyalty than for immediate buying intention, this study advances the understanding of CSR as a long-term relational investment rather than merely a short-term marketing tool. CSR can no longer be treated as a peripheral function. As shown in this study, its impact extends beyond goodwill and brand image—it directly shapes trust, purchasing behavior, and customer loyalty. For AQUA, the ability to consistently deliver transparent, inclusive, and measurable CSR programs will not only preserve its leadership in the bottled water industry but also solidify its reputation as a trusted, value-driven brand in the minds of socially conscious consumers.

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