

The Effect of CSR on Brand Loyalty: The Mediating Role of Brand Trust

Kong Hui Min

Taylor's University, Malaysia

The rapid growth of Malaysia food and grocery retail industries have shown a significant concern for people, planet and earth. As the competitiveness of Malaysia food and grocery retail industries may influence consumer trust and loyalty toward a specific brand of a supermarket (e.g., AEON, Lotus, Village grocer, Mydin, Mercato) due to its price and product comparison. Hence, the study has address corporate social responsibility (CSR) as an important aspect to increase consumer trust and loyalty. In the context of sustainable development goals, the food and grocery retail industries has become more relevant in SDG 15 (life on land), SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production) and SDG 2 (zero hunger). Furthermore, it was found that Malaysia has a critical issue on SDG 10 (reduced inequality) and SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production), as the information regarding the SDG 10 and 12 is unknown. Despite government initiative on solid waste management issues, if the food and grocery retail industries did not provide adequate support on CSR to address social, environmental and economic issues. It may affect its competitive advantage in the fierce market. Thus, social exchange and commitment and trust theories have suggested the food and grocery retail industries contribute significant social and ecological initiatives to support the right to a safe, healthy and clean environment. As consumers would have a lower switching cost toward a company with high CSR and they also feel secure to purchase from a company with a good CSR image. The study would use a quantitative method to examine the effect of CSR on brand loyalty with a mediating role of trust. It would have a positivist paradigm and deductive approach. The survey questionnaire would be distributed in the Klang Valley area due to the high population of food and grocery retail industries. The expected outcome of the current study would hope to found a significant effect of CSR on brand loyalty and brand trust. It also hopes brand trust has a mediating role on CSR and brand loyalty which provide a more conclusive indirect effect on the research. The study is expected to contribute to social exchange and commitment and trust theories to gain insight into CSR aspects. It would also help food and grocery retail industries to implement an effective CSR activity to build capacity for both companies and consumers.

Keywords: *Brand Loyalty, Brand Trust, CSR, Sustainability*