

THE EFFECT OF CUSTOMER PERCEPTION OF CSR INITIATIVE ON CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

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Received: 9 November 2020
Revised: 19 February 2021
Accepted: 1 March 2021
Published: 25 July 2022

Citation:
Simakhajornboon, P. and
Sirichodnisakorn, C. (2022).
The effect of customer
perception of CSR initiative on
customer loyalty in the hotel
industry. *Humanities, Arts and
Social Sciences Studies* 22(2):
384-396.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has become an important aspect of the hotel business, one of the main pillars of the Thai tourism industry. This importance is underpinned by the idea that CSR influences consumer loyalty. For this reason, firms require new variables to respond to customers' needs. This paper presents a model of the influence of customer perception of CSR initiative on hotel customer loyalty simultaneously including perceived service quality, corporate trust, and self-image congruence. Empirical testing was done through a survey of 138 guests who have experience from 65 hotels with 5 stars in 6 regions of Thailand. The sample selection employed a purposive sampling method, with power sampling by G*Power3.0.1.0. The descriptive statistics were analyzed in term of frequency and percentage. Moreover, structural equation model analysis was performed using the partial least square technique. The results confirm most of our hypothesized effects except the effect of corporate trust on customer loyalty, and indirect effect of customer perception of CSR initiative on customer loyalty via perceived service quality and corporate trust. The findings reveal the importance of understanding that creating positive customer perceptions of CSR will both directly and indirectly affect customer loyalty via self-image congruence. The study recommends that to create a loyalty program, elite hotels could create CSR activities together with customers which incorporates and perpetuates a positive and effective and widely acceptable brand identity.

Keywords: CSR; corporate trust; service quality; self-image congruence; customer loyalty

1. INTRODUCTION

Unsurprisingly, studies on the impact of consumer perception of CSR are being increasingly discussed in today's business world as 'competitive advantage' and become the business norm. Therefore, many firms now believe that investing in, and increasing awareness of, strategic CSR activities can benefit the business financially, socially and culturally, if the business understands the wider impact on customer behavior (Carrol, 2015; Poolthong and Mandhachitara, 2009). Consumers tend to pay attention to business CSR activities and monitor how these activities are beneficial to society or the environment. If a business behaves in a direction that conserves the environment or helps society, consumers will be happy to support these socially responsible businesses until they become loyal in the future.

This paper will focus on – but is not limited to – the Thai hotel industry; the authors considered tourism as a suitable reference for study as the hotel business is one of the largest hospitality industries in the world, generating in the US alone some \$7.61 billion in 2016 and providing numerous global employment opportunities (Statista, 2018). The industry is embedded in the quality of service provision – which can be quantified to build reputations.

Thus, operations require the skills of staff to provide services to customers without errors. For this reason, hotel businesses tend to market by focusing on customer relationships. The quality of service, based on impeccable personal behavior and attitudes of employees, will, according to management expectations, influence the customer experience (Brotherton, 1999; Lashley, 2015). These are emotional bonds that are developed and experienced through interaction (Lugosi, 2008; Mody et al., 2017). Such qualities of service can build trust, a positive image for business, and promote customer loyalty (Ehigie, 2006; Newman, 2001; Setiawan and Sayuti, 2017; Szmigin and Carrigan, 2001).

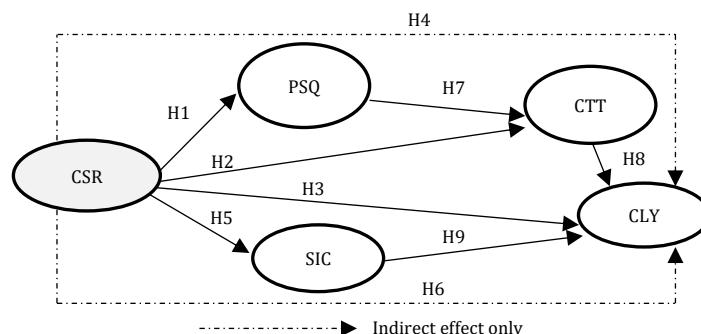
Loyalty is a crucial aspect of CSR as it conveys the intention of continuing to buy repeatedly and to provide customers with business support (Bianchi et al., 2019; Oliver, 1999) a principal objective of the survival and growth of the business. Creating loyalty, however, is not just a marketing tool (Kotler and Keller, 2014; Zephaniah et al., 2020), but also vital to the sustainable competitive advantage of the firm (Dick and Basu, 1994; Gürlek et al., 2017). In addition to trust and corporate image, it is also a demonstration of the organization's distinctive characteristics, which are evaluated and weighted by the complex understanding of its customers towards business operations (Bloemer and de Ruyter, 1998; Heri, 2017). Customers tend to use the service, especially hotels that are trustworthy and have a good image. These factors can affect their loyalty to the business. Can customer perception of CSR initiative affect customer loyalty via perceived service quality, corporate trust, and self-image congruence?

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

As discussed earlier, corporate image is especially important for customer loyalty and the wider public perception of the firm. Each customer encounter impacts on the perception of the company, in particular, its corporate image. (Chung et al., 2015; He and Li, 2011). The corporate image has been described as a bridge connecting consumers and products or services (Achouri and Bouslama, 2010; Zameer et al., 2015). Moreover, corporate images are consistently evaluated by consumers through a variety of interactions with the firm, including CSR activities (Berens et al., 2005; Brown and Dacin, 1997; Lee et al., 2019). Therefore, customer perceptions of CSR initiatives are crucial for business success and progression.

In short, the impact of CSR activities is an exchange relationship: a positive company CSR reinforces positive customer perceptions of the firm (Pirsch et al., 2007; Maden et al., 2012). A more complex consequence of CSR is its qualitative impact on work undertaken within the firm (Yuen and Thai, 2017). This impact has been shown to influence consumers in terms of product evaluations, which can then be used as behavioral resources about product values and characteristics (Brown and Dacin, 1997). In turn, this will benefit the creation of consumer trust in the organization (Aaker, 1997; Bögel, 2019), which has a role in developing and maintaining long-term relationships with consumers (Kollat and Farache, 2017; Swaen and Chumpitaz, 2008).

This study develops two main propositions. First, perceived service quality and corporate trust mediates the effect of customer perception of CSR initiative on customer loyalty. Second, self-image congruence mediates the effect of customer perception of CSR initiative on customer loyalty. Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of this study.



Customer perception of CSR initiative (CSR), Perceived service quality (PSQ),
Self-image congruence (SIC), Corporate trust (CTT), Customer loyalty (CLY)

Figure 1: Proposed Conceptual Model

2.1 Customer perception of CSR initiative (CSR)

CSR comes from the concept of doing business that can respond to the needs of the stakeholder in society. It is the distribution of the ability of the business to create good relationships, to create awareness to the wider society (Liu et al., 2020; Porter and Kramer, 2002). CSR initiatives are designed to respond to a wide range of stakeholders, by enhancing work quality (Yuen and Thai, 2017) and increasing customer willingness to buy products with confidence through evaluation of the overall company performance (Bianchi et al., 2019; Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001).

The perceived service quality of the hotel is the level of guest reviews when considering venue characteristics as criteria for guest satisfaction (Markovic and Raspot, 2010; Supanun and Sornsaruht, 2019). Modern hotel management operations rest on a variety of skills and characteristics: in short, the hotel's social and community identity is closely linked to its CSR. These are important factors in assessing service quality (Blešić et al., 2011; Kim and Kim, 2016) and managers should be aware that CSR impacts not only on quality of service provision but also customer satisfaction. These ideas lead to posit the following hypothesis.

H1: Customer perception of CSR initiative has a positive effect on perceived service quality.

Businesses can increase their trust of stakeholders, especially customers, through transparent, ethical and responsible business practices, all of which contribute to an overall strategic decision-making process (Ferrell et al., 2019; Hosmer, 1994). Recognizing that the company is ethical and responsible, it encourages trusting relationships based on the belief that the actions of the company are more reliable (Park et al., 2017; Swaen and Chumpitaz, 2008). The performance of most social enterprises leads to the creation of consumers' trust quickly (Fatma et al., 2015; Perrini et al., 2010). Consumer trust is a result of shared values between companies and consumers (Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Sharma and Jain, 2019). CSR activities influence consumers in terms of product evaluations, which can be used as behavioral resources about product values and characteristics (Brown and Dacin, 1997; Chernev and Blair, 2015). This will benefit the creation of consumer trust in the organization (Chernev and Blair, 2015), which has a role in developing and maintaining long-term relationships with consumers (Swaen and Chumpitaz, 2008). These ideas lead to posit the following hypothesis.

H2: Customer perception of CSR has a positive effect on corporate trust.

CSR campaigns can build customer loyalty (Arikan and Güner, 2013; Pérez and del Bosque, 2015) as customers believe they are making positive ethical choices for the wider community when supporting CSR companies. It can be seen that the impact of CSR activities is an exchange relationship. Therefore, if the company conducts CSR activities for customers to be recognized as members of society, then it will cause customers to have a positive attitude such as loyalty to the company. With customer loyalty, the company can compete sustainably and potentially have greater market opportunities compared to non-CSR competitors (Aaker, 1996). Therefore, CSR can be used as a tool to build customer loyalty a concept widely understood by the academic community (Liu et al., 2020; Pirsch et al., 2007; Maden et al., 2012). Moreover, word of mouth customer interactions enables the company to acquire new customers with relatively fewer costs and strategies (Gürlek et al., 2017; Maden et al., 2012). These ideas lead to posit the following hypotheses.

H3: Customer perception of CSR initiative has a positive effect on customer loyalty.

H4: Customer perception of CSR initiative has a positive indirect effect on customer loyalty via perceived service quality and corporate trust.

Social Comparison Theory explains how consumers evaluate themselves by comparing what they own with other consumers acquisitions. Importantly, product image has a symbolic meaning to consumer behavior, inherently connected to the consistency in one's image which reflects the concept of consumers' self. If the consumer image and the brand are consistent, it will affect the behavior of the consumer (Sirgy, 1982). The more congruence there is between the consumer's self-image and the brand image, the more consumers evaluate the brand with satisfaction. Therefore, the image is a bridge connecting consumers and products (Achouri and Bouslama, 2010; Song et al., 2019). Within the Thai tourism industry, for example, the image of destination is seen to affect tourist self-image congruence and therefore influences destination selection (Phucharoen et al., 2016). In another example, the consonance of products, employees, media, and customer influences within the automotive industry, have been influenced by self-image congruence (Sirgy et al., 2007). Thus, businesses which project a positive image of CSR attract, maintain and perpetuate a satisfied customer base whose consumer choices are assessed via congruence with their own self-image. These ideas lead to posit the following hypotheses.

H5: Customer perception of CSR initiative has a positive effect on self-image congruence.

H6: Customer perception of CSR initiative has a positive indirect effect on customer loyalty via Self-image congruence.

2.2 Perceived service quality (PSQ)

Perceived Service Quality refers to customer acceptance of the quality of service in line with the quality they expect (Grönroos, 1984; Kant and Jaiswal, 2017; Parasuraman et al., 1988). In response to this assessment, scholars have created many service quality tools (SERVQUAL) (Markovic and Raspor, 2010). For our purposes, evaluating hotel quality require specific applications: thus, the tools of Parasuraman et al. (1988) have been used by Markovic and Raspor (2010) to conclude that measurement tools should consist of four constructs: reliability, empathy and competence of staff, accessibility and tangibles.

Service quality is one of the issues that lead to trust and emerges from a focus on evaluation that reflects customer perception of service components such as quality of interaction, physical environment, and results (Panigrahi et al., 2018). According to the theory of Adaptation Level Theory, consumers often assess the quality of products and services after purchase, looking at efficiency, price, and satisfaction to compare the relational assessment before buying. If consumers find that the performance of service providers is of high quality or exceed expectations, which is a result of the ability of service providers, consumers tend to have confidence in service providers at a higher level and vice versa (Singh and Sirdeshmukh, 2000; Thaichon et al., 2014). Hotel customers interaction, through for example, telephone, email, or via service technology, provides an overview of the quality of the hotel from each encounter and will create overall satisfaction and willingness to use the hotel in the future (Kim and Cha, 2002). Physical, service characteristics and performance are important in building a good quality of service relationship, which creates customer trust (Sundaram and Webster, 2000). These ideas lead to posit the following hypothesis.

H7: Perceived service quality has a positive effect on corporate trust.

2.3 Corporate trust (CTT)

Corporate Trust means the belief of consumer that their business partners will stand by what they say and perform their duties as promised, sincerity, interest in the welfare of employees, and will not engage in unexpected operations that could adversely affect the company (Doney et al., 2007; Utami, 2015). Trust plays an important role in relationships between suppliers, buyers, and partners in terms of trade and marketing (Mpinganjira et al., 2017; Tyler and Stanley, 2007). Trust has been proven to reduce transaction costs (Andaleeb, 1996), a source of competitive advantage (Barney and Hansen, 1994; Bolzern-Konrad and Egger, 2014), and limiting/reducing uncertainty and free-rider (Achrol, 1997).

Trust, therefore, is an important key to creating a loyalty program in the hospitality industry, especially in the hotel industry (Hikkerova, 2011). Relationship marketing theory empirically describes that trust is an important mediating variable between corporate activities, such as customer complaint resolution, and consumer loyalty (Ball et al., 2004; Leninkumar, 2017). In the context of service marketing, companies should build trust before establishing customer loyalty (Leninkumar, 2017; Reichheld and Schechter, 2000). The reason that customers require trust is they must purchase the service before they experience it (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). These ideas lead to posit the following hypothesis.

H8: Corporate trust has a positive effect on customer loyalty.

2.4 Self-Image congruence (SIC)

Self-Image congruence is matching the perfect combination of consumer's self-concept concerning suitability in one's image and the personality of the organization, product or brand (Sirgy, 1982)

The 'personality' of a brand is considered an element of the image, which consists of the characteristics which potential customers can identify with (Aaker, 1997; Mamand and Razmi, 2017). The consistency of the brand image is part of managing the relationship between consumers and the brand (Dumitriu et al., 2019). Importantly, creating a clear and distinctive brand personality may help the company maintain customer loyalty (Mabkhot et al., 2017; Magin et al., 2003). Consumers have their own perceptions of appropriate 'image' and are aware of these images by purchasing different brands to increase self-esteem. In this way, buying a brand with a personality that is consistent with their own ideals will help them feel good about themselves. Selective consumers, for example, interested in purchasing luxury brands, see such products as a way of complementing their own self-image concepts (Fu et al., 2017; Sirgy et al., 2000).

From the perspective of relationship marketing, the values of company promise and trust are promoted and enhanced. This will enable customers to support the products and services of the company and show cooperative behavior that indicates loyalty (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). When customers define their identity with the company, they tend to buy more products and recommend more company products. It is clear that consistency between brand personality and the concept of self-image is a crucial part of overall brand management and development (Achouri and Bouslama, 2010; Chua et al., 2019). In short, customer self-image

and loyalties are closely associated with positive perceptions of hotel reputations, a relationship which has business implications after the purchasing the hotel experience (Back, 2005). These ideas lead to posit the following hypotheses.

H9: Self-image congruence has a positive effect on customer loyalty.

3. METHODOLOGY

Sample of this research are guests from 65 5-star hotels certified for tourism standards by the Thai Hotel Association in 2019, since the 5-star hotel shows luxury and creates higher expectations from customers than others. The sample was chosen based on high customer expectations of elite service and high-end facilities, décor and food (Vine, 1981: 18; Wu and Ko, 2013).

The sampling was done by the power analysis, using G*Power 3.0.10 with the error (α) = 0.05, the test power (1- β) = 0.95, effect size (f^2) = 0.15, and 4 predictive variables. 138 samples were chosen on a random basis, using questionnaires distributed among hotels in north, south, north-eastern, eastern, middle regions of Thailand as well as the Bangkok region.

The questionnaires were developed based on the objective of studies. There are three kinds of questions posed in the questionnaire as a checklist, 5 point of rating scale, and open-ended questions. Checklist questions include the guests' demographic information, consisting of gender, age, education level, and frequency. All items of rating scale questions modify slightly from previously validated measures in the literature, including:

- 1) CSR consists of 4 components: customer centric (CC), green environment (GE), ethics (ET), and philanthropic (PH), 25 items were adopted from Yusof et al. (2015).
- 2) PSQ has 29 items taken from Markovic and Raspors (2010), consisting of 4 components: reliability (RE), empathy and competence of staff (EC), accessibility (AC), tangibles (TA).
- 3) SIC has 12 items taken from Kim and Hyun (2013) consisting of 4 components: actual self-congruence (AS), ideal self-congruence (IS), social self-congruence (SS), and ideal social self-congruence (ID).
- 4) CTT has 12 items, adopted from Gurviez and Korchia (2003). It consists of 3 components: credibility (CR), Integrity (IN), benevolence (BE).
- 5) CLY is based on 16 items that have been improved from Harris and Goode (2004). It consists of 4 components: cognitive loyalty (CG), affective loyalty (AF), conative loyalty (CN), and action loyalty (AT).

The questionnaire was pre-tested to ensure that the wording, format, and sequencing of question were appropriate. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the five-item CSR, PSQ, SIC, CTT, CLY scale were .976, .979, .953, .931, .934. According to responses to questions and concerning variables, the effect of CSR on PSQ, SIC, CTT, and CLY was tested the structural equation modeling by SmartPLS3.0 program and the result are as follows.

4. ANALYSIS

4.1 Demographic profile of the respondents

Table 1 shows the demographic frequency and percentage of the respondents' profile. It shows that 79.0% (109) of the respondents are female and 21.0% (29) are male. Also, the age range, education level, and frequency usage for all respondents have been included.

Table 1: Demographic Profile Respondents

No.	Demographic Item	Categories	Percentage	Frequency
1	Gender	1. Female	78.99	109
		2. Male	21.01	29
2	Age	1. 29 years and below	78.26	108
		2. 30-40 years	10.14	14
		3. 41-50 years	4.35	6
		4. 51 and above	7.25	10
3.	Education	1. Under Bachelor's degree	8.70	12
		2. Bachelor's degree	75.36	104
		3. Above Bachelor degree	15.94	22
4.	Frequency use	1. 2 times/year and below	63.77	88
		2. 3-4 times/year	25.36	35
		3. 5-6 times/year	2.17	3
		4. 7 times/year and more	8.70	12

4.2 Measurement and structural model

For the measurement model, we observe indicator reliability, construct reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity as follows.

According to Henseler et al. (2015), discriminant validity can be approached by correlations' heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) and all correlations of construct which satisfy that condition for PLS except correlation of PSQ and CTT as presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Correlations' Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

CONSTRUCT	CLY	CSR	CTT	PSQ
CSR	0.688			
CTT	0.713	0.801		
PSQ	0.729	0.825	0.895	
SIC	0.718	0.663	0.775	0.691

Table 3 shows that all of constructs' index satisfy the condition for PLS. Indicator reliability reveal by outer loading (λ are > 0.7) (Götz et al., 2010), t -statistic > 1.96 , p-value < 0.05 . Variance inflation factor (VIF) is satisfy with ≤ 5 (Sarstedt et al., 2017) means that these observed variables have no multicollinearity. Construct reliability is shown by composite reliability (or Jöreskog's ρ_h) > 0.60 (Götz et al., 2010). Convergent Validity is explained by average variance extract (AVE) ≥ 0.50 (Götz et al., 2010). Cross-Validated Redundancy (Q^2) > 0 (Sarstedt et al., 2017) means that this model is considered to have a predictive validity.

Table 3: Criteria Test for PLS

Variables	Latent	Observe	λ	<i>t</i> -value	p-value	VIF	CR	AVE	Q^2	R^2
CSR	CC2	0.807	28.257	0.000	3.891	0.960	0.615	-	-	
	CC3	0.823	29.770	0.000	3.945					
	CC4	0.808	24.718	0.000	3.250					
	CC5	0.816	24.286	0.000	3.294					
	CC7	0.764	16.579	0.000	2.828					
	GE1	0.797	22.286	0.000	2.783					
	GE2	0.743	18.056	0.000	3.392					
	GE3	0.785	21.987	0.000	4.193					
	GE5	0.779	17.613	0.000	2.919					
	GE6	0.734	12.260	0.000	3.910					
	GE7	0.774	19.280	0.000	4.560					
	ET1	0.813	28.257	0.000	3.232					
	ET2	0.815	24.667	0.000	3.477					
	ET3	0.790	20.346	0.000	2.877					
PSQ	PH6	0.706	9.758	0.000	2.274					
	PSQ2	0.763	18.942	0.000	2.438					
	PSQ5	0.786	18.807	0.000	2.770					
	PSQ6	0.817	23.784	0.000	2.887					
	PSQ8	0.855	30.752	0.000	3.566					
	PSQ11	0.849	24.702	0.000	3.473					
	PSQ12	0.806	19.993	0.000	2.913		0.962	0.678	0.425	0.639
	PSQ13	0.819	23.458	0.000	3.307					
	PSQ14	0.874	34.126	0.000	4.020					
	PSQ15	0.851	28.920	0.000	4.053					
	PSQ20	0.829	27.064	0.000	3.735					
	PSQ21	0.806	24.283	0.000	2.647					
	PSQ26	0.821	29.522	0.000	2.699					
SIC	AS1	0.866	32.773	0.000	2.201	0.958	0.743	0.308	0.423	
	AS2	0.836	23.272	0.000	2.445					
	ID2	0.883	37.712	0.000	3.918					
	ID3	0.896	40.888	0.000	4.277					
	IS1	0.761	18.220	0.000	2.070					
	IS2	0.884	34.025	0.000	3.851					
	SS2	0.877	23.500	0.000	3.716					
	SS3	0.883	42.429	0.000	4.244					

Table 3: Criteria Test for PLS (continued)

Variables		λ	t-value	p-value	VIF	CR	AVE	Q^2	R^2
Latent	Observe								
CTT	BE1	0.881	35.923	0.000	3.769				
	BE2	0.895	51.192	0.000	4.113				
	CR1	0.872	37.160	0.000	3.934				
	CR2	0.853	37.759	0.000	3.273	0.958	0.767	0.574	0.757
	CR3	0.862	38.786	0.000	3.609				
	IN2	0.890	37.540	0.000	4.408				
CLY	IN3	0.877	40.351	0.000	3.816				
	AF1	0.772	17.094	0.000	2.201				
	AF2	0.773	19.206	0.000	2.445				
	AF3	0.862	30.137	0.000	3.746				
	CG1	0.815	19.168	0.000	3.022				
	CG2	0.827	22.545	0.000	3.100	0.958	0.694	0.380	0.584
	CN3	0.843	31.077	0.000	3.041				
	AT1	0.845	27.085	0.000	4.254				
	AT2	0.868	34.303	0.000	4.803				
	AT3	0.848	24.446	0.000	3.904				
	AT4	0.868	32.296	0.000	4.746				

Table 4 shows the effect size (f^2) of this model which indicates the weak, moderate, and substantial influence of latent exogenous variables on the particular latent endogenous variables as criteria of 0.02, 0.15, 0.35 (Chin, 1998). The substantial influence is the effect of CSR on SIC ($f^2 = 0.732$), and PSQ on CTT ($f^2 = 0.615$), while other effects have moderate and weak influence.

Table 4: Indicator of Structural Model

Constructs	Indicator	CLY	CTT	PSQ	SIC
CSR	f^2	0.067	0.105	1.768	0.732
	Inner VIF	2.634	2.768	1.000	1.000
CTT	f^2	0.038	-	-	-
	Inner VIF	3.340	-	-	-
PSQ	f^2	-	0.615	-	-
	Inner VIF	-	2.768	-	-
SIC	f^2	0.128	-	-	-
	Inner VIF	2.266	-	-	-

Table 5: Direct and Indirect Effect of Structural Model

Hypothesis	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	VAF
H1: CSR -> PSQ	0.799***	-	0.799***	
H2: CSR -> CTT	0.266**	0.514***	0.780***	0.659
H3: CSR -> CLY	0.271**	0.405***	0.676***	
H4: CSR -> PSQ -> CTT -> CLY	-	0.118 ^{ns}	0.118 ^{ns}	
H5: CSR -> SIC	0.650***	-	0.650***	
H6: CSR -> SIC -> CLY	-	0.226**	0.226***	0.454
H7: PSQ -> CTT	0.643***	-	0.643***	
H8: CTT -> CLY	0.229 ^{ns}	-	0.229 ^{ns}	
H9: SIC -> CLY	0.348**	-	0.348**	

^{ns} = not significant, * mean p<.05, t-value < 2.576, ** mean p<.001, t-value ≥ 2.576, *** mean p<.001, t-value ≥ 3.291

Table 5 shows that all of the path coefficient ≥ 0.20 (Chin, 1998). This significantly means that the path coefficient of exogenous variable has a significant influence on endogenous variable. The test results support the hypotheses, except Hypothesis 4 and 8. The VAF (Variance Accounted For) value represents the ratio of the indirect effect to the total effect. The more percentage of VAF, the more total effect of exogenous latent variables onto endogenous latent variables is explained by the indirect effect (Helm et al., 2010).

5. DISCUSSION

The results showed that there is a significant direct influence of CSR on PSQ, CTT, SIC, and CLY, and that CSR also indirectly affected CLY via SIC.

In business world, the need for products and services that meet society's growing expectations and demands is gaining popularity and rapidity (Księzak, 2016; Porter and Kramer, 2011). Activities that demonstrate corporate social responsibility are increasingly important to consumer awareness and acceptance. For these reasons, the hospitality business sector is increasingly attaching greater importance to

social responsibility activities. Thus, by focusing on responses to consumer satisfaction (Musso and Risso, 2006; Pastrana and Sriramesh, 2014) hotels are able to initiate and develop successful marketing strategies which appeal to their most important variable – the customer! (Bondarenko et al., 2019; Maignan and Ferrell, 2004).

Moreover, products and services which respond to the needs and responsibilities of the wider community in terms of quality and security enable both customers and companies to reduce the essential costs associated with stakeholders (Berman et al., 1999). These are the successes that result from the creation of a positive perception of social responsibility activities linked to operational strategies. Customer perceptions of CSR activities can influence customer discernment in evaluating the provision of product and service quality - an increasingly important factor within hospitality as hotel business competitors tend to offer very similar products and services. (Brown and Dacin, 1997; Ye et al., 2020) For this reason, CSR activities could be implemented to differentiate their products or services and strengthen relationships with customers using a variety of possible CSR activities (Kiessling et al., 2016; Swaen and Chumpitaz, 2008).

It has been suggested in this research that customer perceptions of CSR have a direct and strategic effect on Thai hotels as corporate trusts, a development which is mirrored in other multi-national business sectors including Korean companies (Kim et al., 2015), and financial institutions in Delhi (Fatma et al., 2015). This wider and multi-national application of CSR makes explicit the association between effective CSR, company reputations, trust and customer loyalties (Kim, 2019). Interestingly, businesses with effective CSR activities can build trust for customers even if there are errors in customer service activities (Choi and La, 2013). This reflects the notion that stakeholders, especially customers, trust in firms that operate following the ethics and responsibility of the firm's decision-making process (Hosmer, 1994; Park et al., 2017), especially among senior management. Guiso et al. (2015) for example, states that business performance improves exponentially due to consumers' perception of executive credibility and ethics. Customer awareness of CSR also an indirect effect on corporate trust via perceived service quality, suggesting that corporate trust emanate from perceived service quality and customer perception of CSR initiative. AS from the VAF of indirect effect ratio is 65.9% suggesting that the indirect effect of CSR is more than its direct effect. Thus, to create corporate trust, the firm has to speedily implement a positive customer perception of ethical responsibility via perceived service quality.

However, it is perhaps surprising why customer perceptions of CSR initiatives do not have an indirect influence on loyalty through perceived service quality and corporate trust. Corporate trust is not a direct effect on customer loyalty, so, this indirect effect is not taking place. Some possible explanations are that 1) Expectations of hotel customers change and they do not want to use it again, even if satisfied and trust in the quality of elite hotels, for example, customers may require a change of venue to change the atmosphere such as changing the resting place, so do not want to stay in the hotel he or she has stayed (Reid and Bojanic, 2010). 2) Stay in a hotel may result from promotions, discounts, redemption, freebies, or be derived from work-based marketing activities, such as purchasing any amount of products and receiving the free incentive tour which is not relevant to the corporate trust and customer loyalty.

The concept of self-image congruence has the potential to explain and predict consumer behavior (Hosany and Martin, 2012; Kuenzel and Halliday, 2010). Self-image congruence is related to brand personality - which is beneficial for 'symbolic consumption.' Thus, consumers use their identities as an indication of their known preferences and understanding in evaluating symbols from brand personality. Therefore, brand personality was perceived as a set of product symbols – the more matches between the personality of the brand and the concept of the consumer, the more likely consumers have a positive attitude towards the brand. This represents a self-congruity between consumers and products (Achouri and Bouslama, 2010; Roe and Bruwer, 2017), a concept increasingly understood by the Thai hospitality industry. For this reason, businesses with positive and effective CSR strategies motivate customers to assess the consistency with their image. Lee and Lee (2015) found that the crucial dimension of corporate social responsibility, especially at a high level, is based on ethics and charity, which have a direct influence on the wider corporate image. This idealized image can then be passed on and marketed to potential customers to influence consumers' purchasing intentions not only in hospitality but fashion, automotives and other fast moving consumer products.

As discussed, consumers have their own idealized self-image and are aware of product images that are related to themselves by purchasing various brands to help increase self-esteem. In this way, potential customers are attracted to buying brands or services with a 'personality' that is consistent with their ideals (Pradhan et al., 2016; Sirgy et al., 2000). Consumers have an image of themselves that is suitable for a socially responsible firm, often inspired by the purchase of their products to complement their image concepts. Arguably, to create a loyalty program, a firm could create CSR activities together with customers which incorporates and perpetuates a positive and effective and widely acceptable brand identity.

6. CONCLUSION

Customer perceptions of CSR initiatives have a significant part to play within the operation of Thai hotel industry: it has been suggested in this paper that perceived service quality, corporate trust, self-image congruence, and customer loyalty are all affected to a lesser or greater extent by considerations of CSR. To create and develop a socially acceptable corporate trust, hotels, of necessity, must endeavor to construct a viable, strategic and credible customer perception of CSR through sustainable and reputable service quality. To develop a socially acceptable customer loyalty, hotels, of necessity, must endeavor to construct a viable, strategic and credible customer perception of CSR through self-image congruence.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research was supported by fund for Research, Innovation, and creativity, Faculty of Management Science, Silpakorn University.

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