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THE IMPACT OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ON BRAND LOYALTY: EVIDENCE FROM GHANA

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ABSTRACT

Background: Corporate social responsibility has continuously achieved recognition as an active and well-organized marketing strategy in the recent years, but gaps still exist on its understanding and impact on brand loyalty.
Aim: This paper examines the impact of corporate social responsibility on brand loyalty.
Method: The authors applied descriptive statistics to examine the impact of Corporate social responsibility on brand loyalty of telecommunication industry in Ghana. Structured questionnaires were used to collect data from 600 customers of telecommunication companies in Ghana. The field data was analysed according to inferential and descriptive statistics.
Findings: The study found that ethical and philanthropic dimensions of corporate social responsibility have significant impact on brand loyalty of telecommunication industry in Ghana. The findings have implications on telecommunication companies in Ghana and make significant contribution to academia.

KEYWORDS

corporate social responsibility, brand loyalty, telecommunication industry, regression analysis, Ghana

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INTRODUCTION

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has continuously achieved recognition as an active and well-organized marketing strategy in the recent years. This is because consumers require more than just quality services at affordable prices. This is put differently in the literature as customers have a lot of expectations for organisations to uphold social as well as ethical standards. Organisations have therefore recognized that CSR enhances brand perceptions as well as good word-of-mouth which contribute to competitive advantages for the organisations (He & Lai, 2014; Vo et al., 2019). According to Khan and Fatma (2023), CSR enhances positive word-of-mouth from customers in the service industry.

The question remains "how does CSR contribute to brand loyalty in the service industry?" The strategic importance of CSR is well documented in the literature, prior studies have questioned the impact of CSR on brand loyalty(Fatma et al., 2022). Further, the relationship between CSR and brand loyalty is evident (Bello et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2019), but gaps still exist on the understanding of the impact of CSR on brand loyalty (Chu & Chen, 2019). In the context of the telecommunication industry in Ghana, the scope of the extant literature appears narrow as individual telecom firms were used as case studies instead of the industry (Salifu, 2023). Therefore, based on responses from customers of the telecommunication industry in Ghana, we examine the impact of ethics and philanthropic dimensions of CSR on brand loyalty.

Brand loyalty is very important because it measures customers' responses towards service delivery. Further, it is instructive to note that dimensions of brand loyalty include cognitive,

affective, conative, or behavioural intent (Mittal & Kamakura, 2001) and action (repeat purchase behaviour) dimensions. However, Dick and Basu (1994) identify two dimensions of brand loyalty which include behavioural and attitudinal; where attitudinal brand loyalty involves cognitive, affective, and behavioural intent dimensions, whereas behavioural loyalty includes repeat buying behaviour. Therefore Oliver (1999) as well as Dick and Basu (1994) summarise the dimensions of brand loyalty to include a decision to purchase, actual purchase, repeat purchase, advocating a purchase intention to others and avoidances of switching tendencies.

Nevertheless, a review of the extant literature reveals that limited information is known about relationship between customers of the telecommunication industry and switching tendencies of brand loyalty. This implies there is a paucity of information regarding customers and switching tendencies of the telecom sector in Ghana. That notwithstanding, the telecommunication sector in Ghana is doing well in terms of growth and development despite the economic challenges faced the country (Alagidede et al., 2013). The same industry contributes significantly to the Gross Domestics Product of Ghana (Ameyaw, 2015). The major players of the telecommunication industry in Ghana include MTN Ghana, Vodafone Ghana, AirtelTigo and Glo Ghana. It is interesting to note that companies of this industry have embraced CSR differently.

Literally, CSR involves organisation's approach of demonstrating its concern to the community and other stakeholders. McWilliams and Siegel (2001) indicate that CSR involves the activities of organisations that seek to improve upon the social welfare of the people, that goes above the legal requirements and has no immediate or instant benefits to the firm. The CSR initiatives of organisations are meant for creating positive image about the organisation (Widhagdha et al., 2019). In a related argument, organisations do not consider only their financial conditions, but the economic, social and environmental conditions of the communities in which they operate (Haerani, 2017). In a similar but detailed sense, Carroll (1991) outlines the composition of CSR as economic, legal ethical and philanthropic responsibilities of corporate organisations. In this sense, Carroll (1991) argues that in the case of economic responsibilities, organisations ought to be profitable, as it is the foundation on which other responsibilities rest on. For legal responsibilities, organisations ought to obey the laws, which are the societies' codification of the right and wrong. Further, corporate organisations have to be ethical, an obligation to do what is right, fair and avoid harm. Lastly, Carroll (1991)in his dimensions of CSR argues that organisations have to be good corporate citizens. These dimensions of CSR involve organisations taking full responsibility and being accountable to the welfare of the people and environment within which they operate. However, Schwartz and Carroll (2003) presented a clarity to Carroll (1991)responsibilities of corporate organisations, as the arrangement of the dimensions does not mean the responsibility at the top is significant than the domain at the bottom as it is clearly seemed to be.

A brand refers to a name, title, mark, symbol, design, or anything else that has been made to characterise and set apart the products or services of an organisation from others (Aaker, 1991; American Marketing Association, 1960; Kotler & Gertner, 2002). In this case, Ambler and Style (1997) defines brand loyalty as a set of behaviours. The author goes ahead to explain that a satisfied customer with a brand would be loyal to the brand and more likely to buy it again. Brand loyalty has mixed concepts, as traditionally conceptualised as a behavioural

construct associated with repeat purchase, different studies argue that brand loyalty is multidimensional construct which does not involve only purchasing behaviours but has an attitudinal component to it (Šerić & Gil-Saura, 2019a; Zins, 2001).

The behavioural component implies the frequency of purchase of a product or service and use for it thereof (Tanford et al., 2016). However, the attitudinal component has to do with the desire to recommend a product or service to others (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Šerić & Gil-Saura, 2019b). Brand literature postulates that brand loyalty is good for "brand effect" since it contributes to good word-of-mouth, preference for higher prices, and a higher likelihood of repurchase (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Lin, 2017; Wang & Tzeng, 2012). Further, brand loyalty assists corporate organisations to make more money (Aaker, 1991; Lin, 2017).

The social exchange theory posits that when corporate institutions are functional in social welfare, like charitable contributions, environmental preservation, respecting the rules and moral employment practices. In line with standards of fairness, the customer profits from such advantages as a part of the community. Majority of the people respond favourably by spreading good feedbacks about such brands through word-of-mouth. Prior findings suggest that socially conscious activities are important for brand image and it can attract more clients for loyalty (Kim et al., 2019). In a similar submission, the literature states that undertaking CSR activities meaningfully to customers enhances connection with the organization and its brand (García-Sánchez et al., 2018), which subsequently leads brand loyalty of the organisation (Kumar et al., 2022).

According to Fatma and Khan (2023), the perception customer hold about the CSR practices of an organisation raises the brand's reputation and enhances brand loyalty (Fatma et al., 2022). Findings of prior studies reveal that environmental as well as social elements of CSR significantly affect perceived trust and happiness of customers on a business (Li et al., 2022; Martínez et al., 2014; Mellens et al., 1996). Graci and Dodds (2008) in a study on CSR and brand loyalty concluded that adopting environmentally friendly practices increases organization loyalty, assessment, and service standards. According to Carroll (1991) and Viser (2008), economic and philanthropic responsibilities are the first and second most significant concerns respectively, in emerging markets (Planken et al., 2010) and contribute to consumer loyalty (Onlaor & Rotchanakitumnuai, 2010).

The aforementioned suggest that a lot of studies have been carried out on CSR and brand loyalty and concludes that organisations that cater for the social welfare of stakeholders benefit from loyalty for their brands. Based on the arguments above, Yawalkar and Fatima (2023) and Shafiq et al. (2023) hypothesised as CSR (Economic responsibility, Legal responsibility, Ethical responsibility, philanthropic responsibility) has significant impact on brand loyalty.

MTN Ghana undertakes CSR through the MTN Ghana Foundation which was set in 2007. The foundation carries out its CRS activities on health, education and economic empowerment. It is funded by a portion of profit after tax of each operating unit of MTN Ghana. In the case of Vodafone Ghana, it carries out its CSR activities through Vodafone Ghana Foundation, established in 2009. It makes charitable donations to communities, community groups as well as Non-Governmental Organisations in Ghana. It derives funding from Vodafone Ghana as well as Vodafone Group Foundation. Similar, AirtelTigo also known as 'at' contributes towards education, sports and support for charity homes. Lastly, Glo Ghana carries out CSR

initiative in the forms of contributions towards National Football Teams, National Team Supporters Club and International Half Marathon (Abukari & Abdul-Hamid, 2018).

This paper examines the impact of corporate social responsibility on brand loyalty in Ghana. It will contribute to the existing literature by providing further evidence on the relationship between CSR and brand loyalty in Ghana. The researchers suggest the hypotheses below:

1) H1: Ethical dimension of CSR has significant impact on brand loyalty.
2) H2: Philanthropic dimension of CSR has significant impact on brand loyalty.

METHOD

This study applied a quantitative method to test the hypothesis. Structured questionnaires were used to collect data from respondents in selected rural communities in the 3 major northern regions of Ghana. The 2021 Population and Housing Census of Ghana (GSS, 2021) provides the rate of access to mobile phones among rural communities in the 3 northern regions of Ghana as 0.235%, which is equivalent to 80,058 people. Therefore 80,058 constituted the population for the study. A sample of N=800 was used for the study. This is consistent with Osei and Alagidede (2022).

Further, the National Communication Authority's rankings of the telecommunication industry of Ghana indicates that MTN Ghana had the largest market share, followed by Vodafone Ghana alongside AirtelTigo and the least was Glo Ghana. Based on these rankings, the sample size of 800 was allocated as 300 for MTN Ghana, 200 for Vodafone Ghana, 200 for AirtTigo and 100 for Glo Ghana. However, 600 questionnaires were returned for analysis. The study applied a convenient sampling technique of non-probability sampling method to recruit participants for the study. The authors used Multiple regression to analyse data that was gathered from the field as it was the most suitable for our study (Jeon, 2015).

Field data collected from respondents was first processed by checking the appropriateness of answers and completeness of the questionnaires filled by sorting and editing. Special codes were assigned to the questions before entered into the EVIEWS econometric software for computation or generation of quantitative data in the form of percentages and coefficients. Data analytical methods used include descriptive statistics in the form of mean, maximum, minimum, median and standard deviation were calculated for appropriate sections of the questionnaire. Multivariate regression analysis was carried out where the p-values and coefficients of explanatory variables constituted the basis of analysing the impact of ethical and philanthropic responsibilities of CSR on brand loyalty of telecommunication companies in Ghana. these are in line with Salifu (2023).

The researchers applied the Aaker (1996) models of brand loyalty to examine how ethics and philanthropy impact on brand loyalty of Telecommunication Industry in Ghana. Consistent with the literature (Dick & Basu, 1994; Oliver, 1999; Rodriguez, 2017)**,** ethics and philanthropic dimensions of CSR as well as constructs of brand loyalty were examined. The following multiple regression models were formulated for the investigation:

Model 1:

$$BL = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ET_1 + \beta_2 ET_2 + \beta_3 ET_3 + \beta_4 ET_4 + \beta_5 ET_5 + \beta_6 ET_6 + \varepsilon \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots (1)$$

Model 2:

$$BL = \beta_0 + \beta_1 PH_1 + \beta_2 PH_2 + \beta_3 PH_3 + \beta_4 PH_4 + \beta_5 PH_5 + \beta_6 PH_6 + \varepsilon \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots (2)$$

BL stands for brand loyalty, β represents a measure of the impact and association between explanatory and dependent variable, ET means ethical dimension of CSR, PH indicates philanthropic dimension of CSR and ε stands for the error term.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Examining the impact of ethical and philanthropic dimensions of CSR on brand loyalty required the selection of several possible sub-dimensions from the literature. In this section, the summary statistics of the variables around which the study was conducted are presented. Table 1.0 presents the descriptive statistical properties of the variables. Evidence from the table suggest that most of the respondents contacted agreed with the statements relating to the variables. This is evident in the mean values of all the variables which are all equal to approximately 4 or a little above 4. These mean values correspond with the 'agree' position on a scale of 1 to 5 rating.

Further, the results appear to give the impression that the variables were stable. The stability of the variables can be detected by first comparing the mean and the median figures. The closer the mean and the median, the more stable a variable is. Also, stability of the variables can be examined by comparing the standard deviations with the mean values. The accompanying standard deviations are quite low, offering the impression that respondents' opinions about the statements were stable and may be predicted over time. Therefore, it can be argued that the variables exhibited some level of stability and certainty.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Statements/Variables	Mean	Median	Min	Max	Std. Dev	Obs.
Brand loyalty	4.276	4.166	3.666	5.000	0.302	600
Societal Expectations	4.180	4.000	3.000	5.000	0.792	600
Societal moral norms	3.820	4.000	3.000	5.000	0.794	600
Uncompromising ethical norms	4.525	5.000	3.000	5.000	0.565	600
Definite corporate behaviour	4.548	5.000	3.000	5.000	0.738	600
Corporate integrity	4.345	4.000	4.000	5.000	0.475	600
Corporate environmental policies	4.338	4.000	3.000	5.000	0.686	600
Charitable expectations	4.166	4.000	3.000	5.000	0.553	600
Voluntary charitable activities	4.598	5.000	2.000	5.000	0.536	600
Voluntary participation in education	4.166	4.000	3.000	5.000	0.687	600
Voluntary community projects	3.845	4.000	3.000	5.000	0.795	600
Corporate charitable donations	4.338	4.000	3.000	5.000	0.686	600
Corporate sponsorship programs	4.546	5.000	3.000	5.000	0.738	600

Source: Field data, 2023

Correlation Analysis of Variables

Spearman rank order correlation coefficients of variables are at reduced rank, taking up to three decimal places. The correlation coefficients among most of the pairs of the variables are comparatively lower than the threshold of 0.8, but few of the variables have their correlation coefficients exceeding the 0.8 benchmark. It may also be seen that majority of the correlation coefficients are either positive or negative with statistically significant probabilities of 1 percent. For instance, the correlation coefficient prevailing between definite corporate behaviour and societal expectations is negative (-0.254) club and significant at 1 percent.

Similarly, the correlation coefficients generated for charitable expectations and societal moral and ethical norms is positive (0.782), also significant at 1 percent. Also, the correlation coefficients for corporate voluntary charity and societal moral and ethical norms is negative (0.154) and significant at 1 percent. Based on these correlation statistics, it can be concluded that multicolinearity is not entrenched in the dataset.

Table 2. Correlation Analysis

Correlation Probability	**BL**	**ET1**	**ET2**	**ET3**	**ET4**	**ET5**	**ET6**	**PH1**	**PH2**	**PH3**	**PH4**	**PH5**	**PH6**
Brand loyalty (BL)	1.000												

Societal Expectation (ET1)	-0.606	1.000											
	0.000	-----											
Moral/ethical norms (ET2)	0.608	-0.989	1.000										
	0.000	0.000	-----										
Uncompromising ethical norms (ET3)	0.071	0.007	-0.007	1.000									
	0.081	0.849	0.864	-----									
Corporate behaviour(ET4)	0.538	-0.254	0.256	0.494	1.000								
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-----								
Corporate integrity (ET5)	-0.231	-0.150	0.150	0.416	0.175	1.000							
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-----							
Environmental policies (ET6)	-0.357	0.833	-0.823	-0.184	-0.252	-0.322	1.000						
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-----						
Charitable expectations (PH1)	0.759	-0.785	0.782	-0.201	0.226	-0.222	-0.540	1.000					
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-----					
Corporate charity (PH2)	0.409	0.154	-0.154	-0.218	0.087	-0.434	0.260	0.306	1.000				
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.033	0.000	0.000	0.000	-----				
Education programs(PH3)	0.583	-0.617	0.615	-0.196	0.078	-0.186	-0.416	0.440	-0.139	1.000			
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.053	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001	-----			
Community projects (PH4)	0.650	-0.955	0.966	0.014	0.275	0.119	-0.788	0.776	-0.123	0.609	1.000		
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.727	0.000	0.004	0.000	0.000	0.003	0.000	-----		
Corporate donations (PH5)	-0.357	0.833	-0.823	-0.184	-0.252	-0.322	1.000	-0.540	0.260	-0.416	-0.788	1.000	
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	NA	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-----	

Corporate sponsorships (PH6)	0.584	-0.274	0.264	0.508	0.788	0.162	-0.319	0.225	0.076	0.086	0.282	-0.319	1.000
	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.063	0.033	0.000	0.000	-----

Source: Field data, 2023

Normality Analysis of Variables

Jarque-Bera test statistic was used to examine the extent of normal distribution of the field data. The extent to which data set is normally distributed was carried out under a null hypothesis which stipulates that the dataset is normally distributed beside the alternate hypothesis which states that the dataset is not normally distributed. From table 3 below, the probability figures for the Jarque-Bera statistic for each of the variables is below 5 percent. However, 'charitable expectations' was exception with p-value of 0.834. This implies that apart from 'charitable expectations, the null hypothesis for all the variables cannot be accepted, rather the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Further, apart from charitable expectations, Jarque-Bera statistic for all the variables is quite high while the Kurtosis values for most of the variables are below the threshold of +/- 3 for normal distribution. It is interesting to note that association connecting Jarque-Bera, and the probability figures are inverse; that is the higher the test statistic, the lower the probability value and the less normal the distribution is. The conclusion therefore is that the dataset is not normally distributed.

Table 3. Normality Test Results

Variables	Kurtosis	Jarque-Bera	Prob.	Obs.
Brand loyalty	2.575	23.673	0.007	600
Societal expectations	1.664	55.577	0.000	600
Societal moral norms	1.656	56.146	0.000	600
Uncompromising ethical norms	2.436	54.154	0.000	600
Definite corporate behaviour	3.022	162.523	0.000	600
Corporate integrity	1.425	104.521	0.000	600
Corporate environmental policies	2.211	45.956	0.000	600
Charitable expectations	2.950	0.362	0.834	600
Voluntary charitable activities	4.731	198.667	0.000	600
Voluntary participation in education	2.107	25.135	0.003	600
Voluntary community projects	1.636	54.511	0.000	600
Corporate charitable donations	2.211	45.956	0.000	600
Corporate sponsorship programs	3.009	160.918	0.000	600

Source: Field data, 2023

OLS Regression Output

This study estimated the field data using the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression model; and considering the objectives of the study, two separate OLS models were estimated.

OLS1: Ethical dimension of CSR has significant impact on brand loyalty(H1).

The first hypothesis of the study focused on the examination of the impact of ethical dimension of CSR on brand loyalty. The statistical record of the results can be found in Table 4.0 below:

Table 4. OLS Model 1 Results: Dependent Variable is Brand Loyalty

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	3.685151	0.356113	10.34826	0.0000
Societal Expectations	0.183129	0.045675	4.009424	0.0001***
Societal moral norms	0.169880	0.043924	3.867627	0.0001***
Uncompromising ethical norms	0.004103	0.012826	0.319858	0.7492
Definite corporate behaviour	0.174984	0.009298	18.81925	0.0000***
Corporate integrity	0.191837	0.013424	14.29066	0.0000***
Corporate environmental policies	0.176229	0.014995	11.75278	0.0000***
R-squared	0.792460			
Adjusted R-squared	0.790360			
F-statistic	377.3795			
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000000			
Durbin-Watson stat	1.385779			

*Source: Field data, 2023. Notes: *** represents significance at 1%*

Evidence gathered from field data shows that being ethical as a corporate entity is beneficial. This is because all the indicators of ethical dimension of CSR included in the first model have positive significant relationship with brand loyalty. The only indicator that has insignificant coefficient is uncompromising ethical norms. This indicator has a positive coefficient of 0.004130 and a p-value of 0.7492. This means that as telecommunication companies endeavour to accomplish their corporate goals without compromising ethical norms, then customer loyalty may be enhanced, but this is not statistically relevant, meaning that achieving corporate goals through promotion of ethical norms does not in itself contribute to enhancing brand loyalty.

On the other hand, the quantitative coefficients of the rest of the ethical dimension of CSR (variables) have statistically significant impact on customer loyalty. For instance, the variable 'acting in accordance with societal expectations' injected a coefficient of 0.183129 in the regression model and ejected a p-value of 0.0001, significant at 1 percent while 'societal moral and ethical norms' made a coefficient of 0.169880 with accompanying p-value of 0.0001, also statistically significant at 1 percent. Equally, the indicators of having a definite corporate behaviour, corporate integrity and corporate environmental policies have coefficients of 0.174984, 0.191837 and 0.176229 respectively with each having a p-value of 0.0000, significant at 1 percent.

These suggest that the ability of telecommunication companies to be more ethical in their dealings with the community stakeholders, the more likely that they may earn the recognition and admiration of customers and by extension brand loyalty. For instance, if the activities of telecommunication companies have adverse environmental effect on surrounding community

members, and they implement sustainability strategies or mitigation measures to curtail such negative operational externality, then people may see this as being socially responsible and a sign of a good corporate citizen. In the long term, it can be argued that brand loyalty may be enhanced.

OLS2: Philanthropic Dimension of CSR has significant impact on Brand Loyalty (H2)

The OLS regression output in Table 5 is used to present the results of data on the last hypothesis that defined the conceptual scope of this study. The last hypothesis of the study examined the impact of philanthropic dimension of CSR on brand loyalty. The model has an R-squared of 0.729511 and adjusted R-squared of 0.726774 while the F-statistics stood at 266.5538 with a probability of 0.000000. These figures intuitively tell us that about 73 percent of the variation in the dependent variable (brand loyalty) is explained by the combined effect of the independent variables; and that this is statistically significant with the overall model looking well formulated. The Durbin-Watson statistic which stood at 0.192513 indicates that the dataset has issues with serial autocorrelation.

Table 5. OLS Model 2 Results: Dependent Variable is Brand Loyalty

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	4.332083	0.264050	16.40629	0.0000
Charitable expectations	0.547074	0.051874	10.54627	0.0000***
Voluntary charitable activities	0.031761	0.032686	0.971720	0.3316
Voluntary participation in education	0.722940	0.026861	26.91379	0.0000***
Voluntary community projects	0.176306	0.044748	3.939994	0.0001***
Corporate charitable donations	0.096097	0.032244	2.980350	0.0030***
Corporate sponsorship programs	0.269198	0.019865	13.55160	0.0000***
R-squared	0.729511			
Adjusted R-squared	0.726774			
F-statistic	266.5538			
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000000			
Durbin-Watson stat	0.192513			

*Source: Field data, 2019. Notes: *** represents significance at 1%*

The results from the table 5 above indicate that apart from telecommunication companies participating in voluntary charitable activities (a variable whose statistical significance appears quite surprising), all the other philanthropic engagements, including charitable expectations, have positive significant influence on brand loyalty of the companies in the industry. Thus, it can be seen from the regression results that 5 out of 6 philanthropic variables significantly explain changes in customer loyalty to the brands of telecommunication companies in Ghana. These variables are philanthropic and charitable expectations, voluntary participation in the activities of educational institutions, voluntary community projects, corporate charity donations and sponsorship programs.

More specifically, the results indicate that each of the variables of philanthropic and charitable expectations (having a coefficient of 0.547074), voluntary participation in the

activities of educational institutions (with a coefficient of 0.722940), voluntary community projects (with a coefficient of 0.176306), corporate charity donations (0.096097) and corporate sponsorship programs (0.269198) has a positive significant relationship with brand loyalty at 1% statistical level. Among the variables, the coefficient of voluntary participation in the activities of educational institutions stands tall at 0.722940 as compared to that of the other variables. This suggests that corporate voluntary participation in the activities of public and private educational institutions is the most influential or the leading contributor to customer loyalty to telecommunication brands.

These imply that as telecommunication companies engage in these philanthropic activities to the communities within which they operate, the higher the tendency that customers associate with their brands. Implicitly, these results further suggest that corporate voluntarism through investments in community philanthropic initiatives in the areas of health care, education, economic and social projects are worthwhile and can translate into the company's bottom line or affirms the notion of 'doing well by doing good' due to the possibility of improved customer allegiance. Therefore, telecommunication organizations may be rewarded by customers for the social, economic and sponsorship initiatives, and that being a socially responsible corporate citizen may improve customer loyalty if community members can physically associate themselves with such initiatives. In an industry where customers can easily switch from one service provider to the other, pursuing visible philanthropic CSR initiatives may serve as one possible way of attracting and retaining customers, capturing the heart of customers and therefore sustaining their loyalty in the long term.

Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Table 1 provides statistical information about the descriptive statistics of the variables. Examining the impact of ethical and philanthropic dimensions of CSR on brand loyalty required the selection of several possible sub-dimensions from the literature. It is evident that majority of the respondents contacted agreed with the statements relating to the variables. Further, the results indicate that the variables were stable. This can be seen by first comparing the mean and the median figures. Also, it can be identified by comparing the standard deviations with the mean values. It is therefore evident that the variables exhibited some level of stability and certainty.

Correlation Analysis of Variables

Table 2 offers information about the Spearman rank order correlation coefficients of the variables under study. The statistical significance associated with the correlation coefficients are captured by the probabilities shown in parenthesis. The correlation coefficients are at reduced rank, taking up to three decimal places. Guided by the correlation coefficient decision criterion that Donald and Gluaber (2005) advocated, this study detects that the correlation coefficients among majority of the pairs of the variables are relatively lower than the Donald and Gluaber's (2005) benchmark of 0.8. Only few pairs of variables including societal moral/ethical norms and societal expectation; environmental policies and societal expectation; corporate community projects and societal expectations well as voluntary community projects and societal moral and ethical norms have their correlation coefficients exceeding the 0.8 benchmark.

It may also be seen that majority of the correlation coefficients are either positive or negative with statistically significant probabilities of 1 percent. For example, the correlation coefficient prevailing between definite corporate behaviour and societal expectations is negative (-0.254) club and significant at 1 percent. Similarly, the correlation coefficients generated for charitable expectations and societal moral and ethical norms is positive (0.782), also significant at 1 percent. Also, the correlation coefficients for corporate voluntary charity and societal moral and ethical norms is negative (-0.154) and significant at 1 percent. Based on these correlation statistics, it can be concluded that multicolinearity is not entrenched in the dataset.

Normality Analysis of Variables

In this study, the extent to which the field data is normally distributed was examined by implementing the Jarque-Bera test statistic. The test results are displayed in Table 3 The test was conducted under a null hypothesis which states that the dataset is normally distributed against the alternate hypothesis which says that the dataset is not normally distributed. The results disclose that the probability values for the Jarque-Bera test statistic for each of the variables is less than 5 percent. The only exceptional case is the variable 'charitable expectations' whose p-value stood at 0.834. This means that the null hypothesis for all the variables (except charitable expectations) cannot be accepted and that the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Also, it can be observed that the Jarque-Bera test statistic for each of the variables (except charitable expectations) is quite high while the Kurtosis values for majority of the variables are below the threshold of plus or minus 3 for normal distribution. The relationship between the Jarque-Bera and the probability values is always inverse; the higher the test statistic, the lower the probability value and the less normal the distribution is. The conclusion therefore is that the dataset is not normally distributed.

OLS 1: Ethical Dimension of CSR Has Significant Impact on Brand Loyalty (H1)

Evidence gathered from field data shows that being ethical as a corporate entity is beneficial. This is because all the ethical CSR indicators included in model three have positive significant relationship with brand loyalty. The only indicator that has insignificant coefficient is uncompromising ethical norms. Situating the findings within the context of the extant literature, one can observe some level of consistency in the literature. This is because evidence from some past studies suggests that ethical CSR and brand loyalty are directly associated. For example, the findings of this study lend support to that of Clark (2015) who reported that majority of consumers consider CSR as a determinant factor when making purchasing decisions.

According to Story and Hess (2010), literature has revealed that if companies act ethically, their brands improve, arguing that as stakeholders expect more, they also expect the brands to deal with their ethical issues. Also, the findings of this study provide credence to that of Nkanga (2007) which showed that customers consider the ethical activities of firms before making purchasing decisions; and that regardless of higher prices, customers are prepared to patronize the products of firms that have higher ethical considerations. Similarly, Pirsch et al. (2007) found that customers constantly take into account organizational activities and practices,

including ethical operations, in their intensions to buy. This suggests that customer loyalty, as can be measured by purchase decisions, may be affected by consideration for corporate ethical activities.

OLS 2: Philanthropic Dimension of CSR Has Significant Impact on Brand Loyalty

The results from the estimation of model 2 show that apart from telecommunication firms participating in voluntary charitable activities (a variable whose statistical significance appears quite surprising), all the other philanthropic engagements have positive significant influence on brand loyalty of the companies in the industry. These findings agree with that of Lambooy (2010) who found that customers are loyal to brands of organizations which make philanthropic contribution to the save the environment. Other past studies show that it takes charitable and philanthropic endeavours as attitudinal commitments for effective brand loyalty (Foxall, 1994; Jacoby et al., 1978; Mellens et al., 1996; Reichheld, 1996), providing support for this study.

Further comparison can be made from the work of Salmones et al (2005) which reiterated that philanthropic CSR has the propensity to persuade consumers regarding service evaluation which ultimately has a positive effect on customer loyalty. Similarly, the findings of this study are consistent with that of Poelozaand Shang (2011) which indicated that CSR endeavours result in customer loyalty as well as prevents the possibility of occupational risks that could come upon an organization during a harmful era. Sen, et al (2006) indicated that the awareness of CSR activities of a firm account for the readiness of customers to be connected with the firm, suggesting that brand loyalty levels can be enhanced if CSR initiatives of firms are familiar with customers.

Apart from the above studies that share similar findings with that of this study, other studies found contrasting evidence. For example, the findings of Lin and Frenglan (2010) show lack of significant relationship between philanthropic CSR and customer loyalty in the diary market of China. The probable reason for this departure may be attributed to the differences in industrial settings of the two studies; while this study focused on the telecommunication industry Lin and Frenglan (2010) study was on the diary market. Overall, it can be concluded that CSR (as measured by corporate ethics and philanthropy) generates corporate gains (brand equity) in the form of brand awareness and brand loyalty, and that ethical and philanthropic dimensions of CSR are not distinctively separable.

This assertion is consistent with Valasquez (2006) who believe that philanthropy is identical to ethics, advancing the argument that both concepts perform the same roles of care, communication and justice, and that philanthropic gestures are the means for organizations to execute their ethical mandates, and this enhances awareness of brand, attraction and retention of customers. Furthermore, Gan (2006) as well as Madrigal and Boush (2008) opined that philanthropy is a means through which organizations create an ethical and moral mantra inside an organization and this enables internal stakeholders to project the organizational brand across board.

CONCLUSION

The study reveals that ethical and philanthropic responsibilities in the telecommunication industry in Ghana positively impact brand loyalty. It suggests that upholding ethical norms, acting ethically, and implementing environmental policies can enhance loyalty and provide a

competitive advantage. Companies should also take responsibility for environmental issues and be accountable to their communities. Corporate philanthropic gestures, such as charitable donations and community projects, can improve stakeholder perception and brand image. Managers should implement policies to mitigate environmental impacts and integrate philanthropy into their marketing strategies.

Companies should also make their philanthropic initiatives visible to the public through public relations activities and media engagements. However, the study was limited to rural communities and only adopted two dimensions of CSR. The findings have policy implications for telecommunication companies and academia.

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