Supermarkets in Portugal - Corporate Social Responsibility image, attitude towards the brand and purchase intention

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Abstract

Recently, companies developed strategies which may influence their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) image. This paper discusses the image of four different supermarkets with stores in Portugal. The research compares CSR image and brand attitude of the four supermarkets. Empirical evidence shows that different supermarkets belonging to the same company have different CSR image and brand attitude. The research also confirms that there is positive correlation between CSR image and attitude towards the brand. Further, the results offer empirical evidence that CSR image and brand attitude influence purchase intention of supermarket brands. Finally, brand purchase intention is highly influenced by attitude towards the brand than CSR image.

Key-words: social responsibility, brand attitude, purchase intention.

1. INTRODUCTION

The objective of our research is to investigate Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) image and consumer's attitude towards supermarket brands with stores in Portugal.
Several brands develop strategies with impact on their CSR image. Simultaneously, they keep investing on brand and product advertising. Positive attitudes towards the brand and CSR image have positive impact on consumers' behavior (Brown and Dacin, 1997; Mohr, Webb and Harris, 2001). So, we will also research the correlation between CSR image, consumers' attitudes towards the brand and purchase intention. In this research, factors such as advertising investments and advertising recall where considered.

This work begins with a brief relevant literature review. Then, we present the research and methodology used to achieve the research objectives. Following, we present the conclusions and some directions for future research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The study of corporate image, also referred in the literature as corporate branding, has been more popular since the 50s'. According to Maathuis (1999) corporate branding refers to the process of creating and maintaining a companies' favorable reputation through sending signals to the stakeholders, using the corporate brand.

Recently companies have been developing more social responsible activities, which are related to the corporate social responsibility culture. This CSR image influences the corporate image: how it is built, which variables influence it and how does it affect the costumers' (Balmer, 2001).

So we will present the conceptual background which supports this investigation. It focuses on studying and revising the concepts identity and image – brand and corporate - and of CSR– so that we understand the influence of corporate social responsibility (CSR) on the creation of identity and image of companies.

2.2. CORPORATE IMAGE

- **IDENTITY**

Investigations about identity have created, according to Balmer (2001) a different research area – corporate marketing. This author considers that corporate marketing includes concepts related to identity, image, personality, reputation and communication referring to the company as a whole.

Several Identity definitions may be found in the literature. For Christensen and Askegaard (2001) corporate identity refers to all the signs which represent an organization to its stakeholders. With a different perspective Balmer (2001, pp. 280) argues that *"An organization's identity is a summation of those tangible and intangible elements that make any corporate entity distinct. It is shaped by the actions of corporate founders and leaders, by tradition and the environment. At its core is the mix of employees' values which are expressed in terms of their affinities to corporate, professional, national and other identities. It is multidisciplinary in scope and is a melding of strategy, structure, communication and culture. It is manifested through multifarious communications channels encapsulating product and organizational performance, employee communication and behavior, controlled communication and stakeholder and network discourse."*

If we compare previous definitions we notice that there is some ambiguity. Though we can divide them in two types of conceptualizations:
1 – Those researches which look at corporate identity as the way the company represents and shows itself to the public ("communication", "behavior", "symbols") (Margulies, 1977; Abratt, 1989; Olins, 1991; van Riel, 1995; Van Riel and Balmer, 1997; Leuthesser and Kholi, 1997; Markwick and Fill, 1997; Gioia, Schultz and Corley, 2000; Christensen and Askegaard, 2001), and;

2 – Those definitions which consider that the corporate identity is more important such as a group of essential, central and fundamental elements ("values", "mission"). These elements reflect what the company really 'is' and what distinguishes it from other companies. (Reitter and Ramananstoa, 1985; Moingeon and Ramananstoa, 1997; Van Rekom, 1997; Gray and Balmer, 1998; Hawn, 1998; Balmer and Soenen, 1999; Balmer, 2001).

Christensen and Askegaard (2001) on their investigation using a semiotic, analyze this ambiguity. They develop a conceptual model based on semiotics of Peirce (1985). In the organizational context, according to Christensen and Askegaard (2001) the *interpretant* would be the corporate image. So it could be a logo, a slogan, an advertisement, a text, a product, etc. "The total sum of signs that stands for an organization to its various audiences we call the corporate identity" (Christensen and Askegaard, 2001, pp.304). To these authors the sum of signs could either be controlled by the company (corporate communication) or not (including as part of corporate identity non planned elements such as rumors). So they agree with van Riel and Balmer (1997) who call integrated corporate communication to all the elements which express the corporate identity, either controlled or not by the company.

Finally, it is time to analyze the corporate identity as the way the company shows what it is. The *corporate identity mix* is all the means to express identity the company may use and which are part of that identity (Birkigt and Stadler, 1986; van Riel, 1995; Leuthesser and Kholi, 1997; Balmer, 2001; Markwick and Fill, 1997; Melewar and Jenkins, 2002). The identity mix proposed by Birkigt and Stadler (1986) has four elements: personality, behavior, communication and symbolism. Van Riel (1995) believes that a company's self re-presentation by develop around three different ways: the behavior, the communication and the symbolism. This author considers that any action or expression of a company may be classified in one of these three groups.

Corporate identity is defined as the means available to the company express what it is, what is essential and central for it and what make it distinct from other organizations. The use of the several elements of the corporate identity mix sends images to the stakeholders.

- **IMAGE**

Several concepts around the term image are used in the literature, such as corporate image or brand image (Spector, 1961; Bernstein, 1984; Abratt, 1989; van Riel, 1995; Riordan, Gatewood and Bill, 1997; Balmer, 2001), organizational image (Alvesson, 1990; Dutton and Dukerich, 1991) or corporate associations (Brown y Dacin, 1997; Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001; Ahearne, Bhattacharya and Gruen, 2005; Berens and van Riel, 2004; Berens, 2004).

Despite the several image definitions can be found in the literature we can say there is not a big difference between them. Authors refer to the concept of image has a cumulative nature, because it is a 'sum' (Martineau, 1958; Spector, 1961; Topalian, 1984; Barich and Kotler, 1991), or the holistic impression (Alvesson, 1990) of beliefs, attitudes, experiences, feelings, impressions or information that a subject: the consumer

(Martineau, 1958); the stakeholders (Bernstein, 1984); the individuals (Spector, 1961; Brown and Dacin,1997; Balmer, 2001) has about an object, the source where the image comes from.

The definition of corporate image derives from the ones above mentioned, as we can see by the ones from Spector (1961) who says corporate image is the sum of all the characteristics' perceptions and individual has about a company or Balmer (2001) who states that corporate image is the mental perception which an individual or group of individuals have about an organization.

It is common to read about brand image associated with corporate image. Keller (1993) says that the brand image corresponds to all brand perceptions which reflect as existing associations on the consumers' memory. The concepts of brand image and corporate image are even harder to distinguish when the brand structure is monolithic which is when there is only one identity for the company and its products (Rodríguez del bosque, 1995).

Concerning corporate image, investigations conclude that the company has as many images, as many individuals interact with it (Barich and Kotler, 1991; Dowling, 1993; Riordan, Gatewood and Barnes, 1997; Markwick and Fill, 1997). The corporate image is also the sum of all the unit images of the company or the brand (Spector, 1961; van Riel, 1995; Brown and Dacin, 1997). We can understand that the built of the company image is a social and subjective process (Peirce, 1985). To Christensen and Askegaard (2001) the third element which participates on the signification process is the interpretant, the corporate image. The idea that corporate image is multidimensional and not monolithic is not new (Martineau, 1958; Spector, 1961). Individual gather several memories, information and perceptions that associate to the organization and build its image through them.

Additionally, for Brown and Dacin (1997) there are of two types of corporate associations:
• CA (corporate ability): associations related to the expertise of a company to produce and deliver its products and/or services;
• CSR (corporate social responsibility): associations which reflect the status and activities of a company in regard to its perceived social obligations.
The corporate image would be a construction of both types. In this investigation the authors show that, social responsibility associations and consumer processes, influence products' value. Other investigations say that, the image of a company includes both associations towards economic results and social responsibilities (Fombrun and van Riel, 1997; Goldberg, 1998)

In summary, image is a synonym of perception. Corporate image is the term used more often in the literature which refers to the targets' perceptions of the corporate identity. There are two consequences of this concept: 1) the image construction is a social and subjective process, so a company has as many images as the number of people who interact with it; 2) the organization global image in the sum of all the single images, information or perceptions each individual has concerning the company. In the literature, the term corporate associations is used to refer to each information and perception an individual has, which combined create the global image of the company. If several target markets have built the same image and it lasts through time, the

corporate reputation is built. Concerning that we have already understood the terms identity and image, now we must study the relationship between both of them. So, then we will describe that relationship.

- **Identity and Image**

Hatch and Schultz (1997) argue that the relationship between identity and image is built on corporate culture. To these authors "*organizational culture needs to be considered in explanations of the development and maintenance of organizational identity*" and "*the cultural context influences both managerial initiatives to influence image, and everyday interactions between organizational members and external audiences*" (Hatch and Schultz, 1997, pp.360). Therefore, these authors argue that the way the company shows itself (identity) and how the different audiences see those representations (image) depends and is justified by culture.

Furthermore, nowadays, internal and external elements of companies are much closer (Christensen and Askegaard, 2001). So organizations are more influenced by external elements and identity is more influenced by the company's image. According to Hatch and Schultz (1997) identity depends on the company's culture and image is built under the influence of culture of audiences. As external and internal elements close to each other they tend to be the same, the company shows its identity using symbols which represent the image the audiences have of it. This relationship between identity and image is accepted by several authors (Brown and Dacin, 1997; Stuart, 1999; Dacin and Brown, 2002).

Anything a company does and says has an impact on its identity's perception (Cornelissen and Harris , 2001) that is, corporate image. Corporate image is inherently a composite product of company-driven and noncompany driven communication (Cornelissen, 2000) and company controlled communication is more influential than noncompany driven communication in the long run. In Portugal, several supermarkets have been developing several socially responsible programs, included on their communication strategies which are also a part of its corporate identity. The one's which have different brands communicate them differently and promote different cause-related marketing programs, for example. In this research, we aim to understand the relationship of corporate social responsibility image on corporate image and the differences between supermarket brands in Portugal.

For our investigation was important to understand how the corporate image is built. With that goal we use the model proposed by Hatch and Shultz (2002) which considers the influence of culture on image cause by the company's identity. What we aim to understand now is how a corporate social responsibility image is built.

2.3.   CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

During the past years companies' role in society is considered to go beyond economic benefits. Several perspectives have underlined the importance of the social dimension (Steiner, 1972; Davis, 1973; Keim, 1978a; Shaw and Post, 1993). In this context the companies are asked to play an important role on society, being responsible and aware

of its needs. So the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) arises as a company's culture.

- **Concept of Corporate Social Responsibility**

According to Davis (1973, pp.313) what is important is to "*maintain the long-run viability of business as an institution*" and "*if business wishes to retain its present social role and social power, it must respond to society's needs and give society what it wants*" (pp.314). So a company cannot think only of its own benefits, because if it does it it will die (Steiner, 1972). "*This has been stated as the Iron Law of Responsibility, which is that in the long run, those who do not use power in a manner which society considers responsible will tend to lose it*" (Davis, 1973, pp.314). According to these authors the adoption of a social responsible culture is essential to the long term existence of a company.

We can find several definitions of CSR. Davis and Blomstrom (1966) argue that social responsibility is the personal obligation of considering the consequences of decisions and actions in a social system. When others' interests and needs are taken into account, a company is being socially responsible. Bowen (1953) presents the CSR definition and the company's obligation to take decisions and actions which are desirable to society's goals and values. These definitions refer to what is CSR, but not to who is the company socially responsible.

The conceptualization of CSR which has been more accepted in the literature was developed by Carroll (1979 and 1991). Carroll (1979) considers that corporate social responsibility includes the economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic or discretionary responsibilities. Carroll (1991) developed a Pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility and states the company should accomplish those responsibilities simultaneously and not sequentially (Carroll, 1991). The author assumes that the main responsibility of the company is the economic one. According to Carroll (1979), economic responsibilities are to be productive, profitable and to grow. Legal responsibilities ensure that economic responsibilities are fulfilled within the confines of law, so they refer to the obligation to "*comply with the laws and regulations comply with the laws and regulations promulgated by federal, state, and local governments as the ground rules under which business must operate.*" (pp.41). Ethical responsibilities reflect unwritten codes, norms and values implicitly derived from society, leading to the right, proper and just behavior needed, in order to respect the rights of others. This is volunteer behavior but the society expects it. Philanthropic responsibilities are the voluntary and discretionary dimension of corporate responsibility directed towards the betterment of the broader community well being. They refer to all the social activities the companies perform because they want to. Philanthropic responsibilities, opposite to ethical responsibilities, are not expected by society.

It can also be found in the literature two other concepts: corporate citizenship and strategic philanthropy. Corporate citizenship definition (Maignan and Ferrel, 2001) is similar to the CSR definition suggested by Carroll (1999) (Matten, Craen and Chapple, 2003). Strategic Philanthropy is the "*synergistic use of organizational core competencies and resources to address key stakeholders' interests and to achieve both organizational and social benefits*" (McAlister and Ferrell, 2002, pp.690). From this definition it can be seen that philanthropic actions may give companies something back.

So, the company may obtain gains from areas where it didn't before (Polonsky and Wood, 2001). Mullen (1997) establishes strategic philanthropy as the philanthropy based in results.

An increasing number of corporations are adopting a variety of voluntary initiatives associated with education, environment, health, safety, arts and culture as well as other community development projects. The benefits of these philanthropic activities for the corporations include greater employee morale, strengthened employee commitment and productivity, enhanced corporate image and reputation, increased sales and profitability, and customer loyalty (McAlister and Ferrell, 2002; Sanchez, 2000; Simon, 1995; Wulfson, 2001).

There has been criticism in the literature about corporate philanthropy, particularly regarding its use as a tool to increase profits and/or enhance corporate image (Bock et al. 1984). Porter and Kramer (2002) reported that philanthropy is increasingly used as a form of public relations or advertising, promoting a company's image or brand through cause related marketing or other high profile sponsorships. Despite the above-mentioned criticism, corporate social responsibility is still considered an initiative that assumes responsibility for the interest and the well-being of the larger society and continues to be used as a strategic tool by various corporations, including supermarkets. Through the past years, several supermarkets have been developing cause-related marketing initiatives and other philanthropic sponsorships programs. Others have abandoned the use of plastic bags arguing that their goal is to benefit the natural environment. Concerning that previous investigations point out that these philanthropic strategies increase corporate image and may also improve shopping intention (Currás-Pérez, et al., 2009), our research focuses on supermarket brands in Portugal. In this context, there is lack of research of corporate social responsibility image and attitude towards Portuguese companies, and in particular, supermarket brands. In this paper the term 'brand' equals 'company' as proposed by McEnally and de Chernatony (1999) for the fifth stage of brand evolution.

- **CSR image and Consumers**

Research in the area of CSR has produced significant evidence supporting the argument that companies investing in socially responsible initiatives enjoy favorable consumer attitudes and rewards. Brown and Dacin (1997) argue that a positive consumer attitude towards an organization ("corporate evaluation") contributes significantly to reward behavior via favorable purchase intent.

Identification research has explored the reasons and motivations which encourage individuals to relate to brands and companies. SIT (Tajfel and Turner, 1979) and its conceptual development by SCT (Turner et al., 1990) are the main theoretical basis for identification research in management and marketing areas. These theories were initially applied in the organizational context to analyze group and individual behaviors of organizational formal members; in different degrees, individuals derive part of their identity from organizations and work groups they formally belong to, or to which they are closely linked (Bergami and Bagozzi, 2000; Hogg and Terry, 2000; Scott and Lane, 2000); this occurs through cognitive categorization, where an individual positions him/herself as a member of an organization by accentuating similarities with other members and differences with non-members. Awareness of belonging and connection to

an organization is a way for individuals to achieve a positive social identity (Brewer, 1991; Kreiner and Ashforth, 2004) and as a result of this sense of connection, the organization is psychologically accepted as part of that personal identity (Scott and Lane, 2000).

Mohr, Webb and Harris (2001) conclude that the brand's CSR image influences buying behavior of costumers. The authors suggest typology of consumers concerning the relevance of CSR information, when taking their shopping decisions. The level of social responsibility of a company has positive impact on the level of support towards the brand (Menon and Kahn, 2003).

Following we present the research.

3. RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY

This research focuses on the relationship between corporate social responsibility image, brand attitude and shopping intention. We have also research the difference between brand attitude and CSR image of different companies.

3.1. BRANDS' CHOICE

We have chosen to investigate 4 supermarket brands with business in Portugal. Two of them belonging to the same company: *Hipermercados Continente* and *Supermercados Modelo* which belong to Modelo Continente, S.A.. The others are *Supermercados Pingo Doce* (also a Portuguese brand) and finally *Hipermercados Jumbo* belonging to *Auchan*, an international company.

Concerning ranking of advertising memory of Portuguese consumers, *Continente* and *Pingo Doce* are on the 4 top of mind brands of 2009[1]. Although, *Pingo Doce* only represents 4,1% of the SOV (share of voice), which is the 12th place, and Modelo Continente, S.A. was the company with the highest investment in advertising[2], according to the Marktest Media Monitor (SOV 12,4%). *Continente* as well as *Jumbo* have the larger stores; they are nowadays the only hypermarket brands in Portugal. *Pingo Doce* and *Modelo* are supermarkets, so their stores are smaller than the other two brands.

Belonging to the same company, *Continente* and *Modelo* have been developing similar corporate social responsible strategies. *Leopoldina* promoted by *Continente* and *Popota* promoted by *Modelo* are both cause-related marketing programs. Although each program is associated to a different supermarket brand, both products can be found on every *Continente* and *Modelo* stores. They are also involved in other philanthropic strategies such the one *Arrendondar pela Madeira*. The goal of this strategy is to raise money to help Madeira, after the destruction caused by the bad weather on February 2010. When paying the bill, costumers may pay a little bit more and that money goes to the recovery of the destructed areas from the island. To attract costumers both brands use discounts along the year.

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[1] in www.marktest.pt/produtos_servicos/Publivaga/default.asp, consulted in 5th of February of 2010.
[2] in www.marktest.com/wap/a/n/id~149d.aspx, consulted in 5th February 2010.

Pingo Doce positions itself has having low prices all over the year, not using discounts. A few years ago they decide to charge for the use of plastic bags, arguing they are concerned with the natural environment. They don't promote philanthropic activities they may develop. The same thing happens with *Jumbo/Auchan*.

3.2. RESEARCH PROPOSITIONS

The corporate image is the sum of all the unit images of the company or the brand (Spector, 1961; van Riel, 1995; Brown and Dacin, 1997). Anything a company does and says has an impact on its identity's perception (Cornelissen and Harris , 2001) that is, brand image and the built of the company image is a social and subjective process (Peirce, 1985). So, we expect that:

P1: The attitude towards the brand *Continente*, *Modelo, Pingo Doce* and *Jumbo* are different.

P2: The corporate social responsibility image of *Continente* and *Modelo* are more positive that the CSR image of *Pingo Doce* and *Jumbo*.

P3: Brand attitude of *Continente* and *Pingo Doce* is more positive than brand attitude of *Modelo* and *Jumbo*.

According to Bergami and Bagozzi (2000) when a person identifies with a company he/she develops as emotional attitude towards it. Previous investigations show that CSR image influences consumer-company identification and through that purchase intention (Currás-Pérez et al., 2009). Also, CSR image influences shopping behavior and brand support (Menon and Kahn, 2003;Mohr, Webb and Harris, 2001). So it is expected that:

P4: Corporate social responsibility image is positively correlated with brand attitude.

P5: Corporate social responsibility image is positively correlated with purchase intention.

P6: Brand attitude is positively correlated with purchase intention.

3.3. METHODOLOGY

- **Sample and Procedure**

A quantitative study was designed in the form of personal questionnaire. The study population was Portuguese consumers over the age of 18. Definitive sample size was 132. 67% of the respondents were female. The average respondent's age was 34 years. The majority of the subjects had university qualification.

The survey was web-developed and distributed on-line. The questionnaire was sent by e-mail so the answers were obtained from a convenience sample. Despite this, the questionnaire was confidential. In the beginning of the questionnaire, people were informed of its confidentiality.

- **Measures**

We present all items used in the survey in Table 1. CSR image was measured using six items, seven-point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree), from the studies of Dean (2002); Menon and Kahn (2003); Lichtenstein *et al.* (2004); Van Herpen *et al.*, (2003). To measure brand attitude we used a four-item, seven-point Likert scale as proposed by Mackenzie and Lutz's (1989). We used the change proposed by Currás-Péres *et al.* (2009) changing 'I like it/I don't like it' to 'positive/negative'. Finally, purchase intention has been measured using the probability of the consumer to buy a product of that brand in the futures (Bigné and Sánchez, 2001). So purchase intention was measured using the three-item scale proposed by Putrevu and Lord's (1994).

TABLE 1

Measurement Scales
CSR image
CSR1   [X] is aware of environmental issues
CSR2   [X] fulfils its social responsabilities
CSR3   [X] gives back to society
CSR4   I believe [X] acts keeping societies' interest in mind
CSR5   [X] act is a socially responsible way
CSR6   [X] includes phylantropic contributions - not looking for profits - on its business activities
Brand attitude
BrAtt1   Bad–good
BrAtt2   Negative–positive
BrAtt3   Unpleasant–pleasant
BrAtt4   Unfavorauble–favourable
Purchase intention
PurInt1 The next time I need to buy a product, I will buy [X]
PurInt2 It is very likely that in the future I will buy a product of [X]
PurInt3 I will definitely buy a product of [X]

3.4. DISCUSSION

We used Kruskal Wallis test (Table 2) to analyze if there is a significant difference between CSR image, Brand attitude and Purchase intention from each of the four brands and concluded that there is, for a significant level of 95%. So, as expected in Proposition 1, *Modelo* and *Continente,* despite belonging to the same company, have different attitude towards the brand. This is consistent with previous investigations which argue that brand image corresponds to all brand perceptions (Keller, 1993) and reflects the association's consumer' make. Being managed differently these brands assume different images, so consumers' brand attitude is also different. However, this conclusion goes against the assumption that it is hard to distinguish the brand and the corporate image (Rodríguez del bosque, 1995). Accordingly to our expectations brand attitude of *Pingo Doce* and *Jumbo* are also different.

TABLE 2

Test Statistics[a,b]

	CSR Image	Brand Attitude	Purchase Intention
Chi-Square	7,676	12,239	39,030
Df	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	,022	,002	,000

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Supermarket Brand

Contrary to our expectations (Proposition 2) the CSR image of Pingo Doce is more positive then the CSR of the other brands. *Continente* and *Modelo* develop several philanthropic activities, including several cause-related marketing activities involving consumers in it. Despite *Pingo Doce* don't positions itself as a socially concerned brand (with the exception of environmentally concerned) is has the highest rates, according to our sample.

Brands use advertising to improve brand knowledge and also brand image. According to our investigation, despite investing lower amounts in advertising than Modelo Continente, S.A., consumers show a more positive brand attitude regarding *Pingo Doce.* The lowest rates of brand attitude, in our sample, have been given to *Jumbo*. So, our expectation suggested in Proposition 3 has been confirmed. The attitude towards the brands with highest investments in advertising and highest advertising recall, is more positive. So, several aspects are determinant of brand attitude and everything a company does influence its image (Cornelissen and Harris, 2001). One of the aspects that we have questioned which might be relevant was store size. But as attitude towards' *Continente* is higher than *Modelo,* our expectations weren't confirmed.

To investigate Propositions 4, 5 and 6 we used Spearman's correlation coefficient, which is more adequate to ordinal variables (see Table 3). Every proposition was confirmed, at a level of significance of 0,01. Concerning supermarket brands in Portugal the conclusion goes towards Brown and Dacin (1997) who argue that purchase intent is higher when consumers' attitude towards the brand is more positive. This is also consistent with the analysis about proposition 2 and 3. We concluded that *Pingo Doce* has the highest rates of CSR image and Brand attitude, meaning that brand attitude is also influenced by this CSR image. Through data analysis we may conclude that the correlation between Brand attitude and purchase intention is higher (Correlation Coefficient 0,719), than the relationship between CSR image and purchase intention (Correlation coefficient 0,593). So, CSR image has also impact on purchase intent (Mohr, Webb and Harris, 2001). We have also found that in the case of our investigation, CSR image correlation with Brand attitude is higher that the correlations between CSR image and purchase intention. So, the aspects which influence brand attitude are more likely to have positive impact on purchase intention than strategies which may influence CSR image.

TABLE 3

Correlations

			CSR image	Brand Attitude	Purchase Intention
Spearman's rho	CSR image	Correlation Coefficient	1,000	,593**	,544**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	,000	,000
		N	452	451	450
	Brand Attitude	Correlation Coefficient	,593**	1,000	,719**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	.	,000
		N	451	451	450
	Purchase Intention	Correlation Coefficient	,544**	,719**	1,000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	.
		N	450	450	450

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4. CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

We focused on CSR image and Brand attitude of supermarkets brands with stores in Portugal. We have found that the brands with higher investments in advertising and higher advertising recall consumers' have more positive attitude towards the brand. The research also shows that even brands which belong to the same company have different CSR image and Brand attitude rates. Further, brands which don't develop programs with impact on CSR image, such as cause-related marketing programs, may have better CSR image than brands which do. Concerning the correlation between the variables, in the case of supermarkets in Portugal we concluded that CSR image is positively correlated with Brand attitude, that Brand Attitude in positively correlated with purchase intention and CSR image is also positively correlated with purchase intention. Further, we have found that the influence of Brand attitude in purchase intention is higher than the influence of CSR image on purchase intention.

The research was based on select brands. Future research may try to include all the supermarket brands with stores in Portugal in order to understand consumers' attitude towards different competitors. It would also be interesting to understand the other motives which contribute to the differences of brand attitude and CSR image of brands belonging to the same company. Future research may also focus on determining the other variables which influence brand attitude and the importance of CSR image and those other variables on determining consumers' attitude towards the brand. Other influences on purchase intention might also be researched and related to these variables. Finally, we believe that it would also be interesting to research other brands on other businesses.

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