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Evaluating the Impact of a Corporate Social Responsibility Program on Member Trust and Loyalty in a Tennis Club: A Pre- and Post-Intervention Study

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Abstract: This study examined the effect of a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) environmental intervention program on members' perceptions of economic, social, and environmental responsibility, as well as trust and loyalty, in a tennis club. It further explored whether membership duration influenced these perceptions, with a focus on environmental initiatives. A three-month intervention focusing on environmental initiatives was carried out, involving 250 tennis club members who completed a questionnaire on social, environmental, and economic dimensions before and after the intervention. Data were analyzed using non-parametric tests and repeated measures ANOVA. The findings indicated a significant improvement in perceptions of environmental responsibility, highlighting the effectiveness of targeted CSR environmental intervention. However, perceptions of economic and social responsibility, as well as trust, remained unchanged. Loyalty was negatively affected. Contrary to the literature, membership duration did not significantly influence CSR perceptions. These results emphasized the importance of designing and effectively communicating CSR initiatives that resonate with member priorities. Sports organizations can leverage such environmental intervention programs to improve their image and align with societal values. However, to foster trust and loyalty, CSR efforts across multiple dimensions are necessary. This study contributes to the literature on CSR in participatory sports by demonstrating the measurable impact of environmental interventions and providing a framework for future CSR program development and evaluation in similar settings.

Keywords: corporate social responsibility; environmental intervention program; members' perceptions; participatory sports

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1. Introduction

The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has been a focal point in the domain of sport management literature in recent decades, as it is recognized as a pivotal instrument through which organizations can contribute to sustainable development and social well-being [1] through three dimensions: social, economic, and environmental. This research seeks to highlight the implementation of an intervention program as a key mechanism for moving from theory to practice in CSR contexts. The effectiveness of a CSR intervention can be analyzed through two theoretical frameworks: the Social Exchange Theory [2] and the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) theory [3]. These theoretical frameworks were

selected because of their complementary roles in evaluating CSR in sports organizations. Social Exchange Theory [4] was used because it provides insight into how individuals' perceptions and outcomes—particularly in terms of trust and loyalty—are influenced by the personal benefits they receive from CSR initiatives and their interactions with the organization. This theoretical approach is well suited for examining how members respond to CSR efforts from both an interpersonal and relational perspective. At the same time, the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) framework was included due to its comprehensive address on CSR's economic, social, and environmental pillars, which aligns directly with the multidimensional nature of the CSR intervention examined in this study. Together, these two frameworks provide insights into individual member responses while also touching on broader organizational and societal impacts, allowing for a thorough understanding of intervention effectiveness.

While corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a broad and evolving concept encompassing various theoretical perspectives, this study adopts a commonly accepted view that organizations have moral and ethical obligations to society beyond economic productivity. These include ethical governance, equality, social inclusion, environmental stewardship, philanthropy, and community engagement [5–7]. In the sports sector, CSR is particularly relevant as sports have an inherent social influence and promote social values such as cooperation, responsibility, and awareness of social issues [8].

The environmental dimension of CSR in sports is gaining increasing attention, as environmental sustainability has become a critical issue for organizations aiming to enhance their corporate image and align with global sustainability goals [9,10]. According to McCullough and colleagues [9], environmental initiatives in sports not only contribute to environmental conservation but also enhance public perception and fan engagement. As noted by Casper et al. [10], sports organizations that integrate environmental responsibility into their CSR strategies can use their platform to promote environmentally responsible behavior among athletes and fans, ultimately strengthening their brand reputation and stakeholder trust. This phenomenon can be attributed to the high visibility of environmental CSR initiatives, which makes them a highly effective means of shaping public perception. Stakeholders are more likely to notice and value organizations that actively engage in sustainable practices [11].

The implementation of CSR strategies has the potential to benefit sports organizations by enhancing their reputation, promoting customer loyalty and contributing to their sustainable development while also acting as a factor of competitive advantage [12,13]. However, despite the significant research in professional sports, the study of CSR in non-profit and participatory sports clubs remains limited [14,15]. The research gap becomes even more apparent when examining how club members perceive CSR actions and how these affect their relationship with the organization. Recent studies have begun to examine the level of engagement of members in non-profit sports clubs by Behnam and colleagues [16] and the perceptions of CSR held by employees from Hazza and collaborators [17], thereby contributing to the extant literature on the subject. Nevertheless, non-profit clubs, despite their frequent operation with a social orientation, have not been the subject of sufficient study in terms of the implementation and evaluation of CSR programs and their impact on members.

CSR initiatives, when meticulously designed, have the potential to augment the social responsibility of the organizations concerned [11,18]. Participatory sports, such as tennis, have been shown to have considerable potential in promoting social interaction, teamwork, and leadership skills while contributing to the promotion of physical activity and health [19,20]. Tennis, with a participation rate exceeding 87 million individuals across diverse age demographics, is recognized as one of the most globally popular sports [21].

Notwithstanding its extensive appeal and societal benefits [22], the scope of CSR initiatives within the tennis domain remains constrained, particularly at the level of participatory sports, both on an international scale and within the Greek context.

The existing literature indicates a positive influence of CSR actions on stakeholder consumption behavior [23,24]. Research by Oshimi and colleagues [25] demonstrates that investment in CSR actions by sports clubs can yield favorable outcomes on both a social and economic level. Statz, Bogina, and Schmult [26] posit that the implementation of CSR programs can influence fans' perceptions and enhance the relationship of trust with the organization. Concurrently, Tavares and collaborators [27] emphasize that fans and members of sports clubs positively evaluate CSR initiatives, thereby enhancing loyalty and support towards the organization. However, a significant proportion of extant literature focuses on theoretical approaches or assessing stakeholder expectations and attitudes prior to the implementation of CSR activities [28], while empirical studies investigating the actual impact of these programs remain limited [29]. For instance, studies on environmental actions have shown that participants in sustainable development interventions in university halls of residence consumed less energy [30]. In sport, Avourdiadou and Theodorakis [31] found that interventions aimed at improving service quality have led to increased customer satisfaction and trust. Despite the existence of positive evidence on the effectiveness of such actions, environmental CSR initiatives in sports remain understudied, particularly in terms of measuring pre- and post-intervention programs. Concurrently, the duration of membership in the club may also influence how members perceive CSR initiatives, as longer involvement might shape their level of engagement and responsiveness to such programs.

This study aimed to evaluate the impact of an environmental CSR intervention program in a tennis club on participants' perceptions of economic, social, and environmental responsibility, as well as their level of trust and loyalty to the club. Additionally, the investigation sought to ascertain whether the duration of participation in the club influences CSR outcomes, as this would assist in determining participants' attitudes and perceptions towards relevant initiatives. The study wishes to provide practical suggestions for the design of CSR programs in participatory sports clubs. Specifically, this study endeavors to clarify the following questions:

- Does a CSR environmental intervention program affect the perceptions of the members of a tennis club regarding the social, economic, and environmental responsibility of the club?
- Does the CSR environmental intervention program affect the trust of tennis club members?
- Will members' loyalty remain unchanged following the CSR environmental intervention program?
- Does the duration of membership affect participants' perceptions of the CSR program's impact?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Corporate Social Responsibility in the Field of Sports

The implementation of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the domain of sports has been recognized as a significant mechanism for enhancing the social, economic, and environmental responsibility of sports organizations, as reported by McCullough and Trail [32]. In particular, CSR has been shown to play a pivotal role in strengthening the relationship between sports clubs and their fans while reinforcing their perceived contribution to societal value and long-term sustainability [33]. Nevertheless, many studies have analyzed stakeholders' and fans' perceptions of CSR; the majority of these studies are based on

theoretical evaluations [29,34], without examining the actual impact of intervention-based CSR programs.

In the context of economic responsibility, the concept of CSR in sports organizations encompasses the equitable distribution of resources and the provision of support for community initiatives through sponsorships and donations [29]. A notable illustration of this is the contributions made by sports clubs to sponsored social programs, which contribute to enhancing the club's image as a financially responsible entity [34]. Nevertheless, the existing literature mainly focuses on stakeholder expectations, without examining the measurable impact of such actions through structured intervention programs. The present study aims to address this research gap by examining whether the implementation of an environmental CSR intervention program can influence members' perceptions of the organization's economic responsibility, even though it does not involve direct economic actions.

In terms of social responsibility, CSR encompasses initiatives such as social inclusion, equality, and community empowerment programs [8]. Inoue and Kent [11] found that when fans perceive that sports organizations operate in a socially responsible manner, they develop stronger emotional ties with them, increasing their commitment. Similarly, research by Statz et al. [26] found that both members and fans evaluate CSR initiatives positively. Although these studies confirm the importance of CSR as a social initiative, most of them focus on the theoretical assessments rather than evaluating the pre- and post-intervention impact of CSR programs.

Environmental responsibility has emerged as a core component of CSR in sports, with sports clubs increasingly implementing initiatives to reduce their ecological footprint and raise awareness among members [35]. As highlighted in prior work by Casper et al. [10], the environmental actions of sports clubs positively influence members' attitudes and improve the club's image. Studies have shown that the high visibility of such initiatives enhances stakeholder acceptance and support, leading to greater commitment and participation [9]. Although these studies suggest that environmental actions can influence stakeholder perceptions, their actual impact has rarely been evaluated through an intervention program.

The present study aims to address this research gap by investigating whether a targeted environmental CSR intervention program can influence tennis club members' perceptions of the organization's social, economic, and environmental responsibility.

H1. *An environmental CSR intervention program will significantly affect the social, economic, and environmental responsibility perceptions of the tennis club's members, measured by pre- and post-intervention assessment.*

2.2. Corporate Social Responsibility and Customer Trust

Trust is a crucial element in the relationship between members and a sports organization. The literature suggests that CSR strategies can enhance trust when perceived as authentic and aligned with the organization's core values [36]. Consumers have been shown to place more trust in an organization that acts in socially responsible ways, perceiving CSR initiatives as evidence of a commitment to the public good beyond its financial benefits [37].

Similarly, Lagoudaki et al. [18] emphasized the importance of investigating the relationship between CSR and consumer trust, particularly in the context of participatory sports. Their findings indicated that CSR initiatives have a significant impact on enhancing participants' trust in the sports club, thereby increasing the club's credibility.

The aforementioned studies underscore the significance of CSR as a strategic instrument for enhancing consumer trust across diverse market segments. However, previous research has predominantly focused on measuring trust at the initial stage, neglecting to assess the impact of CSR interventions on trust levels. Moreover, research shows that

trust is not easily influenced by isolated actions but rather requires long-term commitment and consistency [17]. In the aviation sector, Park [38] found that airline passengers rated environmental initiatives as more impactful than social or economic ones, particularly in shaping trust. Similarly, in the sports industry, UEFA has increasingly promoted environmental sustainability as a key component of its CSR strategy. One notable instance is the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar [39], which also extensively highlighted its environmental initiatives, indicating that beyond social and economic contributions, environmental CSR can serve as a critical factor in enhancing stakeholder trust. Earlier studies suggest [11] that the environmental actions of sports teams have a positive impact on fans' perception of the team's credibility. Furthermore, Casper and colleagues [10] reported that environmental initiatives within college athletic programs increased student trust and support. This study examines whether the implementation of the CSR environmental intervention program can have a direct and positive effect on member trust.

H2. *CSR environmental intervention program will significantly affect the trust of members of the tennis sports club.*

2.3. Corporate Social Responsibility and Customer Loyalty

Member loyalty is a pivotal factor in the maintenance and development of a sports organization, as it is associated with long-term participation, support, and sustainability [40]. CSR strategies have been shown to enhance member loyalty by strengthening their identification with the club and fostering emotional ties [41]. However, recent studies have highlighted that member loyalty is not solely influenced by individual CSR programs but is shaped in the context of an overall culture of social responsibility within the organization [41]. This suggests that, despite the positive impact of CSR, developing loyalty requires long-term commitment and consistency in responsible practices. Nevertheless, the association between CSR and loyalty has been documented in various sporting contexts. For instance, Sadeghi and collaborators [42] emphasized the positive influence of fans' perceptions of CSR actions on their loyalty towards professional football teams. Likewise, McCullough and Trail [32] demonstrated that environmental CSR initiatives may play a significant role in shaping fan loyalty, as they reinforce perceptions of ethical responsibility and sustainable management within sports organizations. Furthermore, Son and colleagues [43] highlighted that CSR programs promoting environmental sustainability in professional baseball positively influenced fans' identification with the team, leading to increased commitment and loyalty. Notwithstanding the extant literature suggesting a strong relationship between CSR and loyalty, the impact of targeted CSR intervention programs on members of a tennis club has not been adequately investigated. Therefore, this study's third research question is formed as follows:

H3. *The tennis club's members' loyalty will improve following the CSR environmental intervention program's implementation.*

2.4. The Role of Membership Duration in CSR Perceptions

Membership duration has been identified as a significant factor shaping consumer perception within organizations. Furthermore, the duration of membership in the club may also influence their perception of the impact of CSR programs. The literature suggests that the period of association with an organization can influence how members respond to new interventions [44]. In the field of sports, the duration of membership can determine both participation in club activities and willingness to change [31]. Research by Mansouri et al. [45] found that sports clubs incorporating CSR strategies into their governance models enjoy greater credibility and stronger reputations among members and stakeholders. Moreover,

long-term members are more likely to actively engage in CSR initiatives [25,33]. Bialkova and Te Paske [46] also reported that consistent participation enhances both engagement and commitment to CSR initiatives. A recent study by Lagoudaki et al. [47] indicated that membership duration within an organization enhances trust and positive perceptions of environmental responsibility, though it does not appear to significantly influence loyalty.

H4. *The duration of club membership will significantly affect participants' perceptions of the CSR environmental intervention program's impact.*

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Intervention Program

The present research was implemented using an interventional methodology in order to evaluate the impact of the tennis club's CSR initiatives, especially on environmental actions. The intervention program was designed to last three months, from March to May 2024, and included a set of CSR-focused activities with an emphasis on environment. The three-month duration of the intervention was carefully chosen to ensure that the defined objectives of the program were achieved. This period was considered sufficient to fully implement the actions focused on CSR, as well as to ensure the necessary awareness and participation of members. More specifically, the environmental protection initiatives chosen were (a) all tennis balls were replaced by new ones made from recyclable materials (Wilson Trinity); (b) recycling (placement of recycling bins in the club premises); (c) the club had significantly reduced paper consumption through the application of digital systems, where updates to members and tournament registrations were made exclusively online; and (d) battery recycling bins (Afis) were placed in central points of the installation. To ensure maximum awareness and participation, these initiatives were communicated through sites such as Tennis24 and Tennisnews.gr and also posted on tennis club's Facebook and Twitter, broadcasting on local radio, airing TV spots and placing visible informational posters around the club premises and other spots at the club. Throughout the intervention program, these messages were communicated with high frequency, with updates shared two to three times daily. This ensured that members were consistently informed about the progress and importance of the initiatives. Building on the findings of Du, Bhattacharya, and Sen [48], effective communication of CSR initiatives through various channels is vital for maximizing consumer perception. Consumers can not evaluate or participate in CSR initiatives if they are not fully informed, as confirmed by Kyriakidou et al. [49] in a study conducted among participants involved in exercise and recreation programs. This highlights the importance of effective communication and public relations strategies to properly present and promote such initiatives to ensure full awareness and acceptance by the public. All respondents were asked to fill in a questionnaire assessing CSR, trust, and loyalty before the implementation of the intervention program (March 2024) and after its implementation (May 2024).

3.2. Sample

Participants were selected through convenience sampling strategy [50], a widely used non-probability method that facilitates efficient data collection. This method was chosen due to its practicality, allowing us to access and survey members of the tennis club by targeting individuals who were readily available and willing to participate. It should be noted that the same sample was used in both measurements. This decision was guided by the study's longitudinal design, which aimed to examine within-subject changes over time. Retaining consistent participants across the measurements enhances the study's capacity to discern individual-level variations in responses to CSR activities,

thereby augmenting the internal validity of the findings. While individual participants were not explicitly tracked between the initial and final measurements to maintain anonymity and adhere to ethical guidelines, the club's stable membership structure strongly suggests that the same individuals took part in both measures. The absence of significant changes in the club's composition during the study period, along with the consistency in the sample's demographic characteristics, justifies the use of a paired-sample analysis, ensuring the reliability of the comparison of the results [51]. Nevertheless, we acknowledge as a limitation that the lack of explicit identification introduces a minor degree of uncertainty, which should be considered when interpreting the results.

There was a total of 250 club members, predominantly male and aged 15 years old and above. Participants were selected regardless of their level of experience, having been involved with the club for at least six months. This research received ethics approval from Democritus University of Thrace, ensuring that the study adheres to ethical guidelines and safeguards the rights and well-being of participants. More information about the sample's demographics appear in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic information on the sample (n = 250).

Gender (%)	Membership Duration (%)
Male (59.6%)	Less than 1 year (20%)
	1–2 years (38.4%)
Female (37.2%)	3–4 years (27.6%)
	5 years and more (14.4%)

3.3. Measurement Tools

Corporate social responsibility was assessed through nine variables and three dimensions: (a) economic initiatives (with 3 variables, e.g., *efforts to create new jobs*), (b) environmental initiatives (with 3 variables, e.g., *participation in environmental campaigns*), and (c) social initiatives (with 3 variables, e.g., *efforts to raise funds for social purposes*) developed by Park and colleagues [52]. This questionnaire was translated and adapted to a Greek population of sports club participants by Lagoudaki et al., [18]. Its structural validity and internal reliability have been tested, and it seems to be a very useful tool for sports marketing researchers and managers.

Customer trust was assessed through four variables formulated by Chaudhuri & Holbrook [53] (e.g., *I trust the club*). This scale has been utilized and adapted to a Greek population of fitness clubs' members by Filo et al., [54].

Finally, the loyalty of tennis club members was assessed through Oliver's [55] questionnaire through four variables (e.g., *do you make positive comments about the club to friends?*). This questionnaire has been repeatedly used in a Greek population of practitioners [56]. A 5-point Likert scale (where 5 = strongly agree, 1 = strongly disagree) was used for all scales.

For transparency and reproducibility, the constructs and items used in this study to measure CSR, trust, and loyalty are provided in the appendix (Appendix A).

3.4. Data Analysis

The analysis of the data was performed through the Jamovi project [57] statistical model (Version 2.6, an open-source software for statistical analysis providing access to a wide variety of statistical tests, including the Paired Samples *t*-test and Wilcoxon test). The Shapiro–Wilk test showed that all measures deviated from normality ($p < 0.001$), establishing reliability and validity of the sample. Thus, non-parametric tests were chosen for the comparison of pre- and post-results. The changes in each parameter over time were

assessed using Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test [51], Repeated Measures ANOVA Analyses [58], and post hoc comparison [59].

4. Results

4.1. Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test

The non-parametric Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test was applied to compare the measurements before and after the CSR intervention to investigate the impact of a corporate social responsibility (CSR) program on the economic responsibility, social and environmental responsibility and trust and loyalty of individuals from tennis sports clubs between the initial and final measurements.

Hypothesis 1 posited that the CSR intervention program would significantly affect the economic, social, and environmental responsibility perceptions of members of a tennis club as measured by the pre- and post-intervention programs (H1). Regarding economic responsibility, the analysis revealed that the corporate social responsibility (CSR) program had a statistically significant impact (W245 = 20,739, $p < 0.001$, r = −0.691). However, participants' perceptions decreased from the initial measurement (M = 3.28, SD = 1.23) to the final measurement (M = 2.25, SD = 0.83) following the CSR program. The 95% confidence interval for the difference ranged from 1 to 1.5. Thus, although the result was statistically significant, the CSR program negatively affects the economic responsibility of individuals from tennis sports clubs. Therefore, the hypothesis for economic responsibility was not supported. For social responsibility, the analysis revealed that the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program did not significantly impact the social responsibility of individuals from tennis sports clubs (W249 = 11,934, $p = 0.364$, r = −0.0695). Participants did not improve their social responsibility from the initial measurement (M = 3.28, SD = 1.195) to the final measurement (M = 3.39, SD = 0.455) following the CSR program. The 95% confidence interval for the difference ranged from −0.333 to 9.90×10^{-6}. Therefore, the CSR program did not affect the social responsibility of individuals from tennis sports clubs; as a result, the hypothesis for social responsibility was also not supported. In contrast, the analysis for environmental responsibility revealed that the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program had a statistically significant impact (W246 = 997, $p < 0.001$, r = −0.926). Participants did improve their environmental responsibility from the initial measurement (M = 3.22, SD = 1.14) to the final measurement (M = 4.62, SD = 0.33) following the CSR program. The 95% confidence interval for the difference ranged from −1.667 to −1.333. Therefore, the CSR program positively affects the environmental responsibility of individuals from tennis sports clubs, and the hypothesis was supported. Overall, H1 was only partially supported, as the intervention program positively influenced environmental responsibility but had no positive effect on economic and social responsibility perceptions. The table provides detailed information on the mean (M), standard deviation (SD), the W value with the significance level of the Shapiro–Wilk test, and the W value with the corresponding significance level of the Wilcoxon test (Table 2).

Table 2. A comparison of CSR initiatives across time.

CSR	Measure	Mean	SD	Shapiro–Wilk	*p*	Wilcoxon	*p*
Economic Responsibility	1st measure	3.28	1.231	0.978	<0.001	20,739	<0.001
	2nd measure	2.25	0.831				
Social Responsibility	1st measure	3.28	1.195	0.974	<0.001	11,934	0.364
	2nd measure	3.39	0.455				
Environmental Responsibility	1st measure	3.22	1.140	0.978	<0.001	997	<0.001
	2nd measure	4.62	0.333				

In regard to trust, the analysis aimed to examine whether the CSR environmental intervention program would significantly affect the trust of members of tennis sports clubs (H2). The analysis revealed that trust did not have a statistically significant impact on the trust of individuals from tennis sports clubs (W249 = 7700, p = 1.000, r = 0.000). Participants' trust remained virtually unchanged from the initial measurement (M = 4.33, SD = 0.60) to the final measurement (M = 4.34, SD = 0.44). The 95% confidence interval for the difference ranged from −0.125 to 0.125. Therefore, H2 was not supported, as the CSR intervention program did not significantly affect the trust of members of the tennis club. The table provides detailed information on the mean (M), standard deviation (SD), the W value with the significance level of the Shapiro–Wilk test, and the W value with the corresponding significance level of the Wilcoxon test (Table 3).

Table 3. A comparison of trust across time.

Trust	Mean	SD	Shapiro–Wilk	*p*	Wilcoxon	*p*
1st measure	4.33	0.603	0.932	<0.001	7700	1.000
2nd measure	4.34	4.47				

It was further hypothesized that the CSR environmental intervention program would lead to an improvement in tennis club members' loyalty (H3). However, the results revealed a statistically significant difference between the two measurements (W = 8495, $p < 0.001$, r = 0.286), with loyalty scores decreasing from the initial measurement (M = 4.57, SD = 0.51) to the final measurement (M = 4.44, SD = 0.47). Therefore, although the difference was statistically significant, it indicated a decline rather than an improvement in loyalty, and thus H3 was not supported. Participants did not improve their loyalty from the initial measurement (M = 4.57, SD = 0.51) to the final measurement (M = 4.44, SD = 0.47). The 95% confidence interval for the difference ranged from 3.64×10^{-5} to 0.375. Therefore, loyalty negatively affects the individuals from tennis sports clubs. The table provides detailed information on the mean (M), standard deviation (SD), the W value with the significance level of the Shapiro–Wilk test, and the W value with the corresponding significance level of the Wilcoxon test (Table 4).

Table 4. A comparison of loyalty across time.

Loyalty	Mean	SD	Shapiro–Wilk	*p*	Wilcoxon	*p*
1st measure	4.57	0.511	0.891	<0.001	8495	<0.001
2nd measure	4.44	0.476				

4.2. Repeated Measures ANOVA Analysis

To evaluate the effects of "measurement time" (first vs. second measurement) and "membership duration" on participants' perceptions of CSR (social, environmental, economic), trust, and loyalty (H4), a repeated measures ANOVA [56] was conducted with two factors. The within-subjects factor was "measurement" (pre-intervention and post-intervention), and the between-subjects factor was "membership duration" with four levels (less than one year, 1–2 years, 3–4 years, and 5 years or more). Prior to conducting the analysis, the repeated measures assumptions were tested. While initial Shapiro–Wilk tests on raw scores revealed some non-normality, the investigation of the ANOVA's residuals indicated approximate normality, justifying the use of the parametric test. Moreover, homogeneity was checked and met using Levene's test.

The results of the repeated measures ANOVA analysis showed a significant main effect of the measurement time factor on participants' perceptions ($F_{(1, 242)} = 97.20$, $p < 0.001$,

η^2p = 0.287), indicating that the intervention program produced a substantial change between pre- and post-measurements. In contrast, the factor Membership Category (duration of club membership) had no significant effect ($F_{(3, 242)}$ = 0.433, p = 0.729), with a very small effect size (η^2p = 0.005), suggesting no impact of membership duration on participants perceptions. This means that the duration of club participation did not affect participants' perceptions. Also, the analysis showed no significant interaction between the "Measurement time" and "Membership duration" ($F_{(3, 242)}$ = 1.89, p = 0.133, η^2p = 0.023), suggesting that the impact of CSR intervention was consistent across membership categories (Table 5).

Table 5. Repeated measures analyses.

Effects	F	Df1	Df2	P	Partial η^2
Time	97.20	1	242	<0.001	0.287
Years of Membership	0.433	3	242	0.729	0.005
Interaction Time*years	1.89	3	242	0.139	0.023

The results of comparisons between measurements were analyzed by post-hoc comparisons via Bonferroni correction [59], also using Jamovi [57] to evaluate statistical values, p-values, and effect sizes (η^2p). In post-hoc comparisons, there was a significant difference between the "pre-intervention" and "post-intervention" conditions ($p < 0.05$), indicating that performance was significantly higher after the intervention. However, no significant differences were found across membership categories ($p > 0.05$), suggesting that the CSR program's effect on perceptions was unaffected by the duration of club membership; as a result, H4 was not supported (Table 6).

Table 6. Post hoc comparison via Bonferroni correction.

Comparison	Mean	SE	df	t	p (Bonferroni)
1st vs. 2nd Measure	0.988	0.100	242	9.86	<0.001
Membership (<1 yr vs. 1–2 yrs)	0.0644	0.129	242	0.501	1.000
Membership (<1 yr vs. 3–4 yrs)	0.1523	0.136	242	1.118	1.000
Membership (<1 yr vs. 3–4 yrs)	0.0888	0.162	242	0.548	1.000

5. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the impact of an environmental CSR intervention program on how tennis club members interpreted the organization's economic, social, and environmental responsibility, as well as participants' trust and loyalty to a specific tennis club. Additionally, the study assessed whether the duration of membership influenced participants' responses to these responsibility dimensions before and after the intervention.

The findings provide empirical support for the Social Exchange Theory [2], which suggests that individuals evaluate their relationship with an organization based on the perceived benefits of engagement. Specifically, the results indicate that the tennis club members responded positively to the CSR intervention in terms of environmental responsibility, while their views of social and economic dimensions showed no significant change. This aligns with the Triple Bottom Line [3], which highlights the interconnectedness of economic, social, and environmental sustainability. The stronger response to environmental actions suggests that participants placed greater emphasis on sustainability concerns, reinforcing the notion that environmental CSR initiatives resonate with societal trends and expectations [9,10].

The study's findings are consistent with prior research demonstrating that targeted environmental initiatives can significantly enhance stakeholders' perceptions of an organization's sustainability efforts [9]. The increased recognition of environmental responsibility observed in the study suggests that members were both receptive to the intervention and acknowledged the club's commitment to sustainability.

However, no significant changes were observed in members' perceptions of economic and social responsibility, which is in line with previous findings [45]. This may be attributed to the narrow scope of the intervention, which exclusively focused on environmental aspects of CSR. According to the Triple Bottom Line [3], CSR efforts should ideally integrate all three dimensions to create a comprehensive perception of responsibility. The absence of economic and social CSR initiatives may have led members to perceive a lack of comprehensive commitment despite being aware of environmental actions.

Furthermore, the study did not find a statistically significant effect of CSR intervention on members' trust in the club, a finding that contradicts previous CSR studies by other researchers [17,18,42]. Trust in an organization is built through consistent and sustained engagement [34]. By contrast, a statistically significant change was observed in customer loyalty, which decreased from the first to the second measurement. This contrasts with findings from professional sports contexts, such as Sadeghi and collaborators [42], where loyalty is enhanced when members perceive a firm and enduring commitment of the organizations to social responsibility rather than simply isolated or equivalent CSR initiatives.

One possible explanation for the stronger impact of the environmental dimension lies in the immediacy and visibility of such actions. Initiatives, such as energy conservation practices, recycling, and waste reduction, often yield tangible and measurable outcomes. From the perspective of social exchange theory, these benefits may be perceived by sports club members as a more direct "return", reinforcing a sense of fair and positive exchange between the club and members. In contrast, the social and economic dimensions of CSR did not provide an immediate and visible effect in this context, resulting in a weaker perceived impact.

Although the environmental CSR efforts were perceived as authentic, they may not be sufficient to foster trust and loyalty, which are complex and multidimensional constructs. Previous research has shown that CSR actions need to be perceived as authentic and embedded within the organizational culture in order to bring about meaningful change [15,25]. From this perspective, the lack of social and economic CSR initiatives may have led members to perceive the tennis club's approach to CSR as fragmented and nonstrategic rather than value-driven. These are conditions under which trust and loyalty are less likely to be nurtured and grown.

This partial success tests the assumptions of the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) theory in practice. TBL posits that the environmental, social, and economic dimensions must be balanced and integrated to enhance organizational sustainability and stakeholder relationships. The study's findings suggest that strong performance in only one pillar, no matter how impactful, may be insufficient to build deeper relational outcomes such as trust and loyalty. Future research should examine how a holistic, consistent CSR strategy across all TBL dimensions may be required to realize its full potential in trust-based relationships.

Contrary to expectation, the study found that the duration of membership did not significantly affect how participants perceived CSR. This is at odds with a finding that the longer the engagement with an organization, the stronger the members' identification with CSR initiatives [18]. A possible explanation is that all members, regardless of membership duration, were exposed to the same intervention and thus experienced similar shifts in perception. Additionally, the club's existing CSR practices may have already shaped members' attitudes toward responsibility, reducing the potential for variation across membership

duration [47]. This finding suggests that repeated exposure to CSR initiatives over time may be more critical than membership duration in shaping perceptions. Future research should explore whether long-term, multidimensional CSR programs lead to differentiated effects based on membership duration.

6. Conclusions

This study's findings indicate that perceptions related to environmental responsibility improve [9,18], while those regarding social and economic responsibility remain unchanged. This is consistent with the existing literature and suggests that economic responsibility perceptions may require more targeted or long-term approaches to be meaningfully influenced [26]. One potential explanation for the limited impact is that the intervention was exclusively focused on environmental responsibility, providing no substantial content related to economic and social domains.

The intervention program did not have a significant impact on trust. Although it did affect loyalty, it did not increase member loyalty from the first to the second measurement, suggesting the need for a long-term strategy and consistent commitment in order to achieve positive changes in these dimensions [18].

Furthermore, the findings emphasize the significance of ongoing dialogue and feedback mechanisms within the context of CSR initiatives [49]. To a certain extent, a dialogue between members regarding their perceptions and expectations of the CSR can yield data that can be utilized by an organization to refine its CSR strategy. In light of the dynamic nature of CSR, it is evident that organizations that prioritize meaningful engagement with their members will be better positioned to succeed in the long term.

The present study's outcome is of great importance since it is capable of presenting recommendations that are beneficial to CSR practices within the sports industry, among others. Specifically, it emphasizes the necessity to align CSR actions with members' values and priorities, enhancing both organizational relevance and impact. It further underscores the potential of environmental CSR initiatives, as highlighted in this research, to attract the attention of members and enhance the positive image of the organization.

It is important that CSR activities are communicated in an effective manner to ensure their efficacy and maximum impact. In this regard, it is imperative for businesses to employ efficacious communications strategies, including social media, public relations campaigns, training, and awareness events. These channels ensure that members are informed about the purpose and outcomes of CSR initiatives, thereby fostering high levels of engagement and trust. It is evident that the greater the visibility of an organization's specific CSR actions, the greater the level of active participation and trust in the organization.

Furthermore, the research illuminates the efficacy of an intervention program in modifying stakeholders' views on key CSR issues. The implementation of such a program can generate measurable outcomes that enhance member confidence and foster organizational loyalty. Consequently, this research, which employs an intervention as a foundation, can serve as a paradigm for the establishment of analogous systems to assess the perceptions of members.

In summary, we would like to highlight some of the theoretical and practical implications of our research. Firstly, this study contributes to the theoretical discussion on CSR, especially in the context of non-profits and sports organizations. It reinforces the theoretical view that CSR is a multidimensional construct in which dimensions—economic, social, and environmental—may respond differently to different interventions [3,18,38,52]. The finding that only perceptions of environmental responsibility were significantly improved suggests that the effectiveness of CSR initiatives depends on their thematic focus. This

is a concept that has been suggested in previous literature [23,32,35] but has not been empirically investigated in the context of short-term interventions.

Secondly, the findings support the theoretical position that trust and loyalty are complex constructs that develop over time and through ongoing engagement [42,43]. The lack of significant positive change in these areas despite an intervention suggests that short-term or unidimensional CSR strategies may be insufficient to promote relational outcomes, thus contributing to stakeholder theory and relationship marketing frameworks.

In addition, this research provides a rare example of a quasi-experimental CSR intervention in the sports sector, offering methodological and theoretical insights into how such programs can be structured and evaluated. The integration of pre- and post-assessment, combined with the analysis of membership duration, adds a new dimension to CSR theory development, particularly in terms of how participant characteristics mediate CSR perceptions.

In sum, the study strengthens the theoretical understanding of how CSR works in service-based, community-oriented contexts such as sports clubs and highlights the need for future research to clearly distinguish between changes in perception and the development of attitudinal or behavioral commitment.

7. Study's Limitations and Future Research

The total sample was relatively limited to members of a specific tennis club in Greece, which may narrow the generalizability of the results to other categories of organizations or countries. In addition, this study lacked a control group, which could have offered a better structure of how to assess the effects of the intervention. A second element that should be emphasized is related to the search method. The absence of data collection from other clubs with similar characteristics limits the generalization of findings, raising the possibility of sampling bias that may influence the results.

The study was based on pre- and post-intervention measurements and only assessed the environmental responsibility of the tennis club without a long-term follow-up of the participants. It remains unclear whether positive shifts in CSR perceptions are maintained over the long term. Furthermore, the study concentrated primarily on the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of CSR, leaving space for other factors to be investigated. For example, it is possible that the reason why participants' levels of trust and loyalty did not increase was due to other factors like service quality that were ignored by this study.

Future research might extend the scope of research subjects to a larger sample size across various regions and sports. Incorporating a control group would enhance the scientific method of the investigation and could improve the external validity of the findings. In addition, qualitative techniques such as interviews or focus group discussions could provide deeper insights into participants' emotions, motivations, and perceptions during the intervention process. Furthermore, it would be possible to assess other dimensions, such as ethical responsibility or the interplay between CSR initiatives and other critical factors such as service quality, in order to explain the relation to trust and loyalty among members. Lastly, it is suggested that in the future, involving longitudinal design, the same research be carried out in order to examine the effects of CSR practices and how long such views last. Longitudinal studies can also help to answer the question of whether the organizations' initiatives lead to positive change that is sustained over time or whether they tend to fade after a while as members get used to the initiatives. Knowing such trends will help organizations adjust their CSR strategies and how they can be utilized in enhancing members' trust and loyalty. In summary, the paper contributes to the increasing knowledge base on corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs within the sporting industry.

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Appendix A

Constructs and Items Used in the Survey

The following table includes constructs and items used in the survey that have already been tested and presented in Lagoudaki et al. (2024) [18].

Constructs	Items
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	The tennis club I am member of . . .. .strives to raise funds for social causes . . .encourages its employees/partners to participate in voluntary activities in local communities . . .supports sports and cultural events . . .endeavors to participate in environmental campaigns . . .attempts to reduce waste and use environmentally friendly products . . .tries to reduce the consumption of energy and natural resources . . .attempts to create new jobs . . .tries to contribute to society and the economy by investing and creating profit . . .tries to help the economic development of the country by adding some value
Loyalty	How likely do you think it is to. . . . . .continue to come to training at this club . . .make positive comments about the club to friends . . .recommend the club when people ask for your opinion . . .encourage friends and family to join the club
Trust	How likely do you think it is to. . .. . . .trust the club . . .rely on the club . . .consider the club healthy . . .feel a sense of security in the club

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