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Benefits of Corporate Social Responsibility

Marketers have emphasized how their product benefits consumers beyond its functionality. One method of doing this is through corporate social responsibility (CSR), which is acts that benefit society beyond the legal requirement (McWilliams and Siegel, 2001). This strategy has led companies to fully integrate their positioning strategy around CSR, as evident in the claim by Blake Mycoskie of TOMS Shoes that he is not a CEO of a company but CEO of a movement to improve the lives of children (Mustafa, 2007). Marketing around a brand's societal benefits has paid off, with 55% of consumers willing to pay more for products and services from socially responsible companies (Nielsen, 2014).

What consumers gain from their purchases has been examined in several contexts, such as pet ownership, online shopping, and catalogs (Mathwick et al., 2001, Holbrook and Woodside, 2008). However, it is unclear what consumers gain from CSR. There is strong conceptual and qualitative evidence, but no clear quantitative proof (Gallarza et al., 2011). CSR's success depends strongly on its spiritual benefits, which are not apparent in other marketing contexts, such as pet ownership, online shopping, and catalogs (Gallarza et al., 2011). Thus, there is a clear need to examine the benefits derived from CSR and to understand how those benefits compare to spiritual benefits.

Spiritual benefit refers to the feeling of ecstasy and sacredness that a consumer can derive from a particular purchase (Holbrook, 1994). Understanding how CSR relates to spiritual benefits is critical because consumers are willing to pay a higher price when the benefits of the purchase are substantial (Monroe, 2003). Without empirical evidence of the benefits derived from CSR and the impact of these benefits on consumers' outcomes, however, researchers and

managers lack the information they need to understand why consumers are willing (or not willing) to pay a higher price in the context of CSR.

This research looks into how spiritual benefits compare to other types of benefits. CSR influences spiritual, aesthetic, efficiency, and status benefits. However, spiritual benefits are more valuable in predicting consumer attitude and personal satisfaction than other benefits. Furthermore, unlike spiritual benefits and aesthetic perception, benefits such as perception of efficiency and status are not significant predictors of all the dependent variables tested. Status derived from CSR does not influence attitude, and perceived efficiency of a CSR product does not influence personal satisfaction.

CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

A full review of the literature on the benefits derived from purchases is beyond the scope of this paper. Interested readers may wish to look at Sánchez-Fernández and Iniesta-Bonillo (2007) and Gallarza et al. (2011) for a fuller perspective. The focus of this review is on papers related to understanding differences in the conceptualization of benefits among scholars and providing an understanding of Holbrook's categories of benefits and their relevance to this study.

Conceptualization of Benefits

The literature on benefits examines “a customer's perceived preference for and evaluation of those product attributes, attribute performances, and consequences arising from use that facilitate (or block) achieving the customer's goals and purposes in use situations” (Woodruff, 1997, p. 142). The benefits of an object or service are better understood through a multi-dimensional concept instead of a single concept such as perception of quality because it provides a more holistic view of the benefit construct and allows researchers to match predictors

to outcomes better (Sánchez-Fernández and Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007, Gallarza et al., 2011). Sheth, Newman and Gross's (1991) theory of consumption values and Holbrook's (1994, 1999) typology of values are the most common multi-dimensional conceptualizations of benefits utilized by researchers (Sánchez-Fernández and Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007).

Sheth et al.'s (1991) theory of consumption values consists of three propositions: (a) consumer choice is a function of multiple benefits, (b) benefits make differential contributions in any given choice situation, and (c) benefits are independent. A review of the empirical evidence for the consumption theory has demonstrated that benefits are not independent as presumed by Sheth et al. (1991) (Sánchez-Fernández and Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007). Sánchez-Fernández and Iniesta-Bonillo (2007) evaluated various forms of multi-dimensional benefits and concluded that Holbrook's framework is a better conceptualization because it encompasses a more holistic view of benefits.

Holbrook

Holbrook (1994, 1999) challenges the major assumption of consumption value theory that benefits are independent of each other. His original typology (1994, 1999) classifies consumer benefits into three dimensions: whether a consumer's motive is intrinsic or extrinsic, self-oriented or other-oriented, and active or reactive. A purchase has an intrinsic value when it is valued for its own sake. For example, riding a roller coaster is enjoyable because of the experience in itself. A purchase has extrinsic value when the purchase is used as a means to a goal. For example, the purchase of a hammer is useful because it is a tool used to hang a painting. A self-oriented value is derived when the benefit is for oneself, for example buying a coat because of the warmth it provides for oneself. An other-oriented value requires another person, such as when one buys an expensive coat in anticipation of the compliments that one

receives from others. An active value is derived because the offering affects oneself, such as watching a play where a service is acting on the consumer, without the need for the consumer to manipulate the play. Reactive values come from manipulation of the offering, such as self-serve ice cream shops where the customers have to create the mixture of ice cream to enjoy it.

The interaction of these dimensions leads to eight different types of consumer benefits. The extrinsic dimension has four benefits: efficiency, excellence, status, and esteem. *Efficiency* is a self-oriented, active, and extrinsic benefit and applies to any product that offers convenience such as pre-packaged food, consumer credit, or a car wash. In other words, it refers to the difference between the output (pre-packaged food) and input (money and time). *Excellence* is a “reactive appreciation of some object’s or experience’s potential ability to serve as an extrinsic means to some personal self-oriented end” (Holbrook 1999, p. 14) such as a product’s quality. As described by Holbrook (1999) *status* is an “active manipulation of one’s own consumption behavior as an extrinsic means toward the other-oriented end of achieving a favorable response from someone else” (p. 15). Status involves success and impression management such that consumers interested in fulfilling this benefit might purchase cause-related products as a visible sign of their allegiance to a particular cause. Holbrook himself suggests the difficulty in differentiating between the consumer benefits of status and esteem (1999) but suggests that esteem is a reactive counterpart to status because it results from ownership of possessions intended to build one’s reputation with others.

In the intrinsic dimension are the benefits of play, aesthetic, ethics, and spirituality. *Play* is a self-oriented benefit that is active and enjoyed for its own sake, an intrinsic enjoyment that comes from engaging in an activity, such as having fun and enjoying leisure. *Aesthetic* refers to an appreciation of beauty and is self-oriented and reactive in nature. Beauty is experienced for its

own sake and is therefore intrinsically motivated. Examples include fashion or technology products appreciated for their product design. *Ethics* is an other-oriented, active benefit that is inherently motivated; it drives the pursuit of justice, morality, and virtue of helping others. *Spirituality* is a reactive counterpart to ethics and includes the feeling of faith, ecstasy, and sacredness that a consumer can derive from a particular purchase (Holbrook, 1994).

This study focuses on Holbrook's spiritual, status, aesthetic, and efficiency benefits as demonstrated in Table 1.

Table 1 about here

These benefits are chosen based on their generalizability to various CSR types and support in the literature indicating the types of benefits derived from CSR. The CSR types are cause promotion, corporate social marketing, corporate philanthropy, community volunteering, socially responsible business practice, and cause-related marketing (Kotler and Lee 2005). The purpose of this study is not to test every possible benefit derived from CSR. Instead, we examine a range of benefits. For example, we do not choose both excellence and efficiency because they are often combined due to their similarity (Peloza and Shang, 2011, Holbrook, 2006, Holbrook and Woodside, 2008).

For similar reasons, we are following in the footsteps of Peloza and Shang (2011) by combining the constructs of spiritual and ethics. Helping others creates a feeling of warm glow (Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibañez, 2012), and we argue that helping others through CSR provides a sense of sacredness. Combining the two constructs in the CSR context is appropriate for spiritual and ethical benefits given the literature support and the generalizability of the combination to the CSR context.

We have also chosen status over esteem because the qualitative findings are more indicative of status being a reason for liking CSR, not esteem. For example, Green and Peloza (2011) found that consumers enjoy a CSR purchase because it can signal to others about one's identity and gain admiration from others. Furthermore, we have chosen efficiency over excellence. Excellence is not applicable to all types of CSR because it requires a reactive appreciation of an object (Holbrook, 1999). Efficiency requires an evaluation of output and input (Holbrook, 1999). The output of all CSR types is a benefit to society. The input is the individual's assessment of whether he or she feels the financial support to the company or the brand is worth the CSR output. For example, a consumer can assess that Target provides a better output than Walmart because Target is known to be a good corporate citizen. As a result, a consumer would not mind spending more input in the form of money to support the output.

Similar to the argument related to efficiency and excellence, aesthetic is more applicable to various CSR contexts than play. Play requires an active enjoyment of an experience or product (Holbrook, 1999), which is not present in all CSR contexts. On the other hand, the interpretation of the beauty of CSR can come from several places, such as the evaluation of the wording or image related to the CSR message. Aesthetic can be evaluated through the output of the CSR action, such as the beauty of nature related to environmental efforts.

Mediation Hypothesis

This section establishes the rationale behind CSR's influence on Holbrook's benefits, the choice of consumer outcome constructs, and why consumer benefits would lead to consumer outcomes.

Efficiency benefits are derived from the difference between the output and input (Holbrook, 1999). CSR provides the additional output of helping society, which would improve

the efficiency benefit of CSR. Green and Peloza (2011) found that consumers favored the functional benefit of CSR more than the emotional and social benefits, though this may be due to study taking place during a recession and its small sample size. The ability of CSR to influence perceptions of efficiency has also been demonstrated conceptually, qualitatively, and quantitatively (Green and Peloza, 2011, Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012, Papista and Krystallis, 2013). To test whether this finding is generalizable to other contexts, we look to replicate their findings.

Consumers purchase a CSR-associated product because of the social signal it sends to others and oneself about obtaining a desirable attribute, or in other words, the benefit of status (Bennett and Chakravarti, 2009). Several current practices of CSR include associating a socially-responsible purchase with a cause-associated color to communicate consumers' public support for a cause. One prominent example is Gap's inspi(red) shirt that benefits the fight against AIDS. These visible cause-related objects signify to others the wearer's support for the given cause. Thus, CSR reflects consumers' status benefit by providing the opportunity to show others their generous nature. In addition, purchasing a brand that is known for its CSR activities can signal to others that the consumer has participated in altruistic actions which can in turn reflect status motives (Griskevicius et al., 2010).

Aesthetic refers to the visual attractiveness of the object. Research has demonstrated that a positive perception of the functionality or efficiency of an object is due to the perception of aesthetic appeal (Sonderegger and Sauer, 2010). Thus, if CSR influences perceptions of efficiency it should also affect the aesthetic consumption value. Furthermore, CSR influences product evaluation without examination of the actual product (Brown and Dacin, 1997). In other

words, consumers utilize CSR as an external cue to judge the appearance and performance of a product.

The examination of antecedents to spiritual benefits is rare in the literature (Peloza and Shang, 2011, Gallarza et al., 2011). Past research has emphasized being an altruistic consumer and wanting to help others as explanations for why CSR is successful (Robinson et al., 2012, Koschate-Fischer et al., 2012). The motive of wanting to obtain the feeling of “warm glow” has also been suggested as an important reason for why CSR is successful (Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012, Koschate-Fischer et al., 2012). Given that helping other provides a feeling of warm glow (Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012), we suggest that this feeling will translate to a spiritual benefit that consumers can derive from CSR. For example, knowing that buying yogurt would provide funds for cancer patients can enhance a person’s spiritual benefits through the warm glow feeling.

Although there are several consumer outcomes we can choose from, we focused on three outcome variables to reduce potential biases from considering only one consumer outcome: attitude, personal satisfaction, and purchase intent. These outcome variables encompass a range of consumer outcomes and build on the CSR and benefits literature. CSR has been shown to influence a consumer’s attitude both positively (Sen et al., 2006) and negatively (Mohr et al., 2001, Webb and Mohr, 1998). Similarly, some have found that CSR influences purchase intent (Brown and Dacin, 1997, Mohr and Webb, 2005, Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001), but others have found that CSR is not a criterion for purchases (Mohr et al., 2001, Trudel and Cotte, 2009). Thus, attitude and purchase intent are chosen to determine whether the perception of the benefits of CSR lead to a more holistic understanding of CSR. A better understanding of why there are mixed findings in the CSR literature could be due to the evaluation of the particular benefit that

CSR provides, not CSR itself. The construct of personal satisfaction has been shown to be a factor in how consumers react to the perceived benefit of a purchase (Xiao and Kim, 2009). Understanding the effects of the chosen benefits introduced in this paper on personal satisfaction can allow researchers to compare its performance to other benefits tested in the literature. Thus, we propose:

H1: The perceived benefits of spiritual, status, efficiency, and aesthetic mediate the relationship between CSR and consumer outcome of (a) attitude, (b) personal satisfaction, and (c) purchase intent.

Spiritual Benefits

The very foundation of CSR as an altruistic strategy for both corporations and consumers suggests that spiritual benefits are top of mind for both parties. Pelozo and Shang (2011) indicate that spiritual benefits provide “an underlying assumption of how CSR activities can create stakeholder value” (p. 119). To test Pelozo and Shang’s (2011) assertion that ethical and spiritual benefits are an *underlying* assumption for CSR, we hypothesize:

H2: Spiritual benefit is a stronger outcome of CSR than status, efficiency, and aesthetic benefits.

What consumers demand from companies stems from how consumers see themselves (Sirgy, 1982). Spiritual benefit consists of a sense of sacredness, which is a source of emotional attachment that can define an individual’s identity (Belk et al., 1989), in other words an emotional benefit that consists of a feeling of “warm glow.” Spiritual benefit is a stronger influence on consumer behavior than other benefits because it relates to how consumers see themselves. Consequently, previous research has shown that experiencing emotional benefits such as warm glow and positive emotions have a higher impact on consumer outcomes than

other benefits (Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012, Heussler et al., 2009). In line with past research linking emotional benefits to a stronger impact on consumer outcomes, we predict that spiritual benefits will have a stronger effect on consumer outcomes than status, efficiency, and aesthetic benefits.

H3: Spiritual benefit is a stronger antecedent of consumer outcome than status, efficiency, and aesthetic benefits.

METHODOLOGY

The quantitative study executed for this research begins by identifying reliable measures for the spiritual, status, aesthetic, and efficiency benefits. An experiment implementing the presence and absence of CSR is conducted to determine how CSR relates to the various benefits. The benefit constructs are examined as mediators between CSR and consumer outcomes. Finally, we compare spiritual benefit to the other benefits to determine the magnitude of its effect on an outcome of CSR and as an antecedent to consumer outcomes.

Scales Pretest

A survey created in Qualtrics was conducted to pretest the benefit items. The survey asked respondents to select the categories of items they had bought in the last three months among electronics; entertainment; sports, fitness, or outdoor; apparel; and home. Individuals were then asked to specify the item purchased in the selected category. Students in two undergraduate-level management classes completed the survey in exchange for extra credit. The students could also recruit two individuals over the age of 19 to complete the survey. One hundred forty-one participants completed the survey, but six surveys were deleted due to incomplete responses, leaving a final sample size of 135.

After naming the item bought, the participants responded to scales that measured the various types of benefits (spiritual, status, efficiency, and aesthetic). The name of the item was piped into each scale item. The process of developing the items included reviewing the literature for potential items, creating items from definitions of the type of benefits, and examining qualitative research related to CSR and benefits. After pooling the items, two researchers examined each one to determine its relevance to the definition of each benefit type, leading to a total of 66 items for the pretest.

A series of exploratory factor analyses (EFA), confirmatory factor analyses (CFA), and examinations of discriminant validity through the square root of average variance extracted (AVE) determined the items retained for the main study. Three to four of the best-loading items were retained for each construct, and the square root of the AVE was assessed for the scale to ensure discriminant validity. The reduction of items helps ensure that the length of the survey is reasonable to avoid common method variance issues (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

All items were measured on a 7-point scale anchored from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” unless otherwise indicated. The spiritual and status scales each consisted of three items developed by the authors. The bipolar aesthetic scale developed by Bell et al. (1991) had one item of the original scale removed to reduce the length of the survey and to reduce common method variance, leaving four items for the final scale. Sweeney and Soutar’s (2001) scale of four items was used to measure efficiency, a benefit derived from getting the best value for the money.

Table 2 shows the means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and the items utilized in the main study.

Table 2 about here

Scenario Pretest

Students were randomly assigned to a potential t-shirt purchase scenario that included the presence or absence of a cause-related marketing scenario benefiting education (CSR/No CSR). The scenario without CSR included a description of a department store that sells a brand of t-shirts called XYZ. The fictitious brand XYZ was used in the scenario due to concern that perceptions of a real brand can dilute how consumers perceive CSR acts and to increase internal validity (Alhouti et al., 2016, Thakor, 1996). Participants read that the XYZ t-shirt is priced at \$15.00 and comes in a range of colors and sizes. An image of a gray t-shirt with no identifying features was presented as an example of an XYZ t-shirt. The CSR scenario included the same information as well as a message that 10% of the sales of the t-shirt would be given to support education. The appendix includes a description of the scenarios.

Cause-related marketing is a common CSR tactic that involves the sponsoring firm giving a donation in the form of a percentage of profits or sales each time a consumer purchases the cause-related item (Olsen et al., 2003). One of the major differences between cause-related marketing and other forms of CSR is that it requires the customer to engage in a revenue-providing exchange (Varadarajan and Menon, 1988). Consumers are more involved in the process of helping a cause with cause-related marketing, which will impact how they value a CSR initiative. Furthermore, this type of cause-related marketing isolates the CSR component in a purchase.

The choice to support education was based on previous studies that have used educational causes in their CSR manipulations (La Ferle et al., 2013, Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001). Giving to

religious causes is the most common cause for Americans (Giving USA, 2016), but given the possibility that giving to religious causes may alienate some participants, we chose to focus our research on studying the second-most common cause, education. To avoid any biases in the results due to the importance of the cause, we measured and controlled for how important contributing to education is to the participants.

A pretest to determine the effectiveness of the CSR manipulation was developed through Qualtrics and data were collected through snowball sampling with marketing students at a major university in the southeastern United States. Students were presented with one of two scenarios (CSR/No CSR) and then responded to three items created for the study and described in Table 3. Responses to these three items were averaged and an analysis of variance (ANOVA) confirmed that this manipulation was successful ($F(1,125) = 6.68, p < .05, M_{CSR} = 5.57, M_{no\ CSR} = 4.95$). The scenarios were utilized for the main study.

Participants and Design

An online survey was developed using Qualtrics and distributed through Survey Sample International. The sample consists of 406 individuals with an average respondent age of 41 and 53% female. The experiment utilized a between-subjects design. Participants responded to the pre-tested scenario and were randomly assigned to either the CSR or No CSR condition.

Measures

All measures are listed in Table 2. The CSR measurement scale consists of three items developed by the authors that are the manipulation check items for the scenarios. The benefits measures are those described in the scales pretest section. Attitude is measured using four bipolar items developed by Becker-Olsen (2003). Personal satisfaction is measured using Serpa's (2006)

scale, with one item removed because it correlated highly with some of the consumption value scale items. Finally, purchase intent is measured using two items from Rodgers (2004) and one additional item created by the authors that is more relevant to the context of the study.

Importance of the cause is measured and used in the analysis as a control variable because it plays a significant role in impacting consumers' perception of CSR campaigns (Lafferty, 1997, Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001). The scale consists of six items developed by the authors.

Individual's age is also included as a control variable in the model.

To ensure discriminant validity, a CFA was conducted using Mplus. The model has an acceptable measurement model fit ($\chi^2/df = 2.08$; RMSEA = 0.05; CFI = 0.96). All item loadings were positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), indicating unidimensionality and convergent validity. A correlation table between study variables includes the square roots of the AVEs on the diagonal as shown in Table 3. The square roots of the AVEs are greater than the corresponding latent variable correlations in the same row and column, indicating discriminant validity.

Table 3 about here

RESULTS

The hypothesized paths in the model were tested in MPlus 7 using structural equation modeling with 5000 bootstraps. Fit indexes ($\chi^2 = 1582.27$; $\chi^2/df = 3$; RMSEA = .07; CFI = .92) indicate that the model has an acceptable fit.

The model includes the importance of the cause to the participant and the participant's age as control variables. The independent variable is CSR, the four types of benefits (spiritual,

status, efficiency, and aesthetic) are mediators, and the consumer outcomes are the dependent variables (attitude, personal satisfaction, and purchase intent).

The control variable of importance of the cause has a significant impact on spiritual (t -value = 4.37, $p < .001$, path estimate = .28), status (t -value = 5.56, $p < .001$, path estimate = .36), efficiency (t -value = 5.04, $p < .001$, path estimate = .51), and aesthetic benefits (t -value = 3.73, $p < .001$, path estimate = .47) as well as personal satisfaction (t -value = 3.38, $p < .001$, path estimate = .16), but no effect on attitude (t -value = -.88, ns , path estimate = -.05) and purchase intent (t -value = -.89, ns , path estimate = -.05). This suggests that the more important the cause the company sponsors is to the consumer, the more likely the consumer is to associate aesthetic, efficiency, spiritual, and status benefits and personal satisfaction with a potential purchase. The degree of importance of the cause to the consumer does not influence the consumers' attitude and purchase intent toward the product.

The control variable of age has a significant impact on spiritual (t -value = 3.48, $p < .001$, path estimate = .17) and status (t -value = 2.33, $p < .05$, path estimate = .12) benefits and on attitude (t -value = -1.85, $p < .05$, path estimate = -.07). However, age does not impact perception of aesthetic (t -value = -.76, ns , path estimate = -.04) and efficiency benefits (t -value = 1.47, ns , path estimate = .07), personal satisfaction (t -value = .59, ns , path estimate = .02), and purchase intent (t -value = .09, ns , path estimate = 0). Younger consumers are more likely to perceive spiritual and status benefits from a CSR-associated purchase. Older consumers are more likely to have a more positive attitude toward a CSR-associated purchase.

The results of the structural equation modeling demonstrate that CSR positively influences spiritual (t -value = 7.18, $p < .001$, path estimate = .45), status (t -value = 4.62, $p < .001$, path estimate = .31), efficiency (t -value = 4.78, $p < .001$, path estimate = .32), and aesthetic

benefits (t -value = 6.55, $p < .001$, path estimate = .42). This means that the presence of CSR increases the perceived spiritual, status, efficiency, and aesthetic benefits of a potential purchase. Hypothesis 1 predicts a mediating relationship of consumer benefits on the relationship of CSR and consumer outcomes. The finding of a significant relationship between CSR and the benefits of a purchase provides supportive evidence to continue to test a mediating relationship by conducting a follow-up test of the relationship of benefits to consumer outcomes and the indirect effect of CSR on consumer outcomes.

A follow-up test determined whether the effect of CSR on spiritual benefit is more impactful than the effect of CSR on status, efficiency, and aesthetic benefits. The results of chi-square difference tests are insignificant, indicating that CSR equally influences the four benefit constructs ($\Delta\chi^2_{\text{efficiency}} = 1.37$, $\Delta\chi^2_{\text{aesthetic}} = 0.03$, $\Delta\chi^2_{\text{status}} = -0.03$, $df = 1$, *n.s.*). Therefore, we do not find support for Hypothesis 2.

Tests of the effect of the benefits on consumer outcomes have mixed findings. Attitude is influenced by spiritual (t -value = 3.90, $p < .001$, path estimate = .32), efficiency (t -value = 2.31, $p < .05$, path estimate = .13), and aesthetic benefits (t -value = 8.19, $p < .001$, path estimate = .53), but is not influenced by status benefit (t -value = .03, *ns*, path estimate = 0). Spiritual, efficiency, and aesthetic benefits lead to a more positive attitude toward a potential purchase. The presence of a status benefit does not impact consumers' perceived attitude toward the product. As a result, spiritual, efficiency, and aesthetic benefits are still potential mediators of the relationship between CSR and attitude. However, status benefits do not mediate the relationship between CSR and attitude, which does not support Hypothesis 1a.

Given the significant effect of spiritual benefit on attitude, we conducted a follow-up test to determine whether the spiritual benefit is a stronger predictor of attitude than the effect of

status, efficiency, and aesthetic benefits. The results of chi-square difference tests indicate that spiritual benefit contributes more than efficiency ($\Delta\chi^2 = 4.98$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.05$) and status benefits ($\Delta\chi^2 = 7.32$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.01$), but spiritual benefit and perception of aesthetic equally influence consumer's attitude toward the product ($\Delta\chi^2 = 3.27$, $df = 1$, *n.s.*). Thus, we find partial support for Hypothesis 3 because spiritual benefit is a stronger antecedent of attitude than status and efficiency benefits, but contrary to the prediction, spiritual benefit does not influence attitude more than aesthetic benefit.

Personal satisfaction is influenced by spiritual (t -value = 6.62, $p < .001$, path estimate = .48), status (t -value = 2.84, $p < .001$, path estimate = .13), and aesthetic benefits (t -value = 6.02, $p < .001$, path estimate = .30), but is not influenced by perception of efficiency (t -value = 1.86, *ns*, path estimate = .1). Spiritual, status, and aesthetic benefits lead to higher personal satisfaction of a potential purchase. The presence of efficiency benefit does not impact consumers' perceived personal satisfaction. As a result, spiritual, status, and aesthetic benefits are still potential mediators of the relationship between CSR and personal satisfaction. However, efficiency benefit does not mediate the relationship between CSR and personal satisfaction, which does not support Hypothesis 1b.

Given the significant effect of spiritual benefit on personal satisfaction, we conducted a follow-up test to determine whether the spiritual benefit is a stronger predictor of personal satisfaction than status, efficiency, and aesthetic benefits. The results of chi-square difference tests indicate that spiritual benefit influences personal satisfaction more than efficiency benefit ($\Delta\chi^2 = 27.56$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.001$), status benefit ($\Delta\chi^2 = 11.53$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.01$), and aesthetic benefit ($\Delta\chi^2 = 7.62$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.001$). Thus, Hypothesis 3 is supported in the case of personal

satisfaction because spiritual benefit is a stronger antecedent of personal satisfaction than status, efficiency, and aesthetic benefits.

Purchase intent is influenced by spiritual (t -value = 3.18, $p < .01$, path estimate = .25), status (t -value = 2.69, $p < .01$, path estimate = .21), aesthetic (t -value = 6.07, $p < .001$, path estimate = .37), and efficiency benefits (t -value = 6.61, $p < .001$, path estimate = .37). Spiritual, status, aesthetic, and efficiency benefits lead to higher purchase intent.

Given the significant effect of spiritual benefit on purchase intent, we conducted a follow-up test to determine whether spiritual benefit is a stronger predictor of purchase intent than the effect of status, efficiency, and aesthetic benefits. The results of chi-square difference tests are insignificant, indicating that the influence of spiritual benefits on purchase intent is not different from the effect of efficiency, status, and aesthetic benefits ($\Delta\chi^2_{\text{efficiency}} = 0.69$, $\Delta\chi^2_{\text{aesthetic}} = 0.89$, $\Delta\chi^2_{\text{status}} = 0.32$, $df = 1$, $n.s.$). Thus, in the case of purchase intent, Hypothesis 3 is not supported because spiritual benefit is not a stronger antecedent of purchase intent than status, efficiency, and aesthetic benefits.

James, Mulaik, and Brett (2006) demonstrated that a significant indirect effect proves mediation. The indirect effects in this study were examined using MPlus effects decomposition statistics. The indirect effects of CSR on attitude are significant through spiritual (t -value = 3.49, $p < .001$, path estimate = .14), efficiency (t -value = 1.92, $p < .05$, path estimate = .04), and aesthetic benefits (t -value = 5.61, $p < .001$, path estimate = .22), but not status benefit (t -value = .03, ns , path estimate = 0). The relationship between CSR and attitude is fully mediated by spiritual, efficiency, and aesthetic benefits, supporting Hypothesis 1a. In other words, CSR influences attitude because of the perceived spiritual, efficiency, and aesthetic benefits. Status

benefit does not mediate the relationship between CSR and attitude because the relationship of status benefit to attitude is not significant, which is contrary to Hypothesis 1a's prediction.

The indirect effects of CSR on personal satisfaction are significant through spiritual (t -value = 5.02, $p < .001$, path estimate = .22), status (t -value = 2.26, $p < .05$, path estimate = .06), and aesthetic benefits (t -value = 4.34, $p < .001$, path estimate = .13), but not efficiency perceptions (t -value = 1.60, ns , path estimate = .03). The relationship between CSR and personal satisfaction is fully mediated by spiritual, status, and aesthetic benefits, supporting Hypothesis 1b. In other words, CSR influences personal satisfaction because of the perceived spiritual, status, and aesthetic benefits. Efficiency does not mediate the relationship between CSR and personal satisfaction because the relationship of efficiency to personal satisfaction is not significant, which does not support Hypothesis 1b.

The indirect effects of CSR on purchase intent are significant through spiritual (t -value = 2.92, $p < .01$, path estimate = .11), status (t -value = 2.32, $p < .05$, path estimate = .07), aesthetic (t -value = 4.76, $p < .001$, path estimate = .16), and efficiency benefits (t -value = 4.76, $p < .001$, path estimate = .12). The relationship between CSR and purchase intent is fully mediated by spiritual, status, aesthetic, and efficiency benefits. In other words, CSR influences purchase intent because of the perceived benefits derived from the purchase. Hypothesis 1c is supported. The direct and indirect standardized effects are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4 about here

DISCUSSION

The examination of antecedents to spiritual benefit is rare in the literature (Peloza and Shang, 2011, Gallarza et al., 2011). By examining how spiritual benefits are affected by CSR, this study not only fills this gap but also demonstrates the importance of spiritual benefits in predicting consumer outcomes. Furthermore, it has been shown qualitatively and conceptually that CSR impacts benefits (Green and Peloza, 2011, Peloza and Shang, 2011); the findings of this research prove this relationship by demonstrating that CSR does have an effect on spiritual benefits and comparing that effect on spiritual benefits to other types of benefits.

This research adds to the literature by demonstrating that CSR influences spiritual, status, efficiency, and aesthetic benefits equally. These findings also help resolve some of the contradictions present in the literature. For example, Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáñez (2012) found that CSR does not provide self-expressive benefits, but Bennett and Chakravarti (2009) and Griskevicius et al. (2010) demonstrate that it does. This study resolves these conflicting findings by showing that CSR influences a self-expressive benefit of perceived status.

The finding that functional benefits of CSR would be more impactful than other types of benefits (Green and Peloza, 2011) is not replicated in our research, which corrects misconceptions regarding CSR. In fact, this study finds that in most cases spiritual benefit is more likely to lead to a stronger consumer outcome than other benefits. However, we also conclude that the various types of benefits are influenced equally by CSR. Thus, although Green and Peloza argue that in a time of a recession, focusing on functional benefits is optimal, our research finds that emphasizing spiritual benefits is more rewarding for a company. This finding also encourages researchers to examine spiritual benefits as another form of emotional benefits that can lead to better consumer outcomes (Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012, Heussler et al., 2009).

Purchase intent has been shown to be impacted by social, functional, and emotional benefits (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001, Xiao and Kim, 2009, Mishra, 2016). Holbrook's benefits examined in the experiential value context (benefits derived from playfulness, aesthetic, return on investment, and service excellence) have been shown to impact preference for a retail store (Mathwick et al., 2001). Nevertheless, to the author's knowledge, Holbrook's status and spiritual benefits have not been examined regarding their impact on attitude, personal satisfaction, and purchase intent. Although we find similar effects of CSR on benefits, this does not apply to consumer outcomes. Spiritual benefits are better than efficiency and status benefits in predicting attitude and better than status, efficiency, and aesthetic benefits in predicting personal satisfaction. Furthermore, status is not a good predictor of attitude and efficiency is not a good indicator of personal satisfaction. This finding builds a better understanding of how the benefits differ from one another. By knowing that CSR enhances spiritual, aesthetic, efficiency, and status benefits, researchers and managers can now focus on altering their CSR message or promotional offering in a way that further enhances the perception of these benefits.

Managerial Implications

This study encourages managers to examine the spiritual benefits of their CSR efforts and emphasize these benefits in marketing communications. Managers can incorporate spiritual benefits in their marketing messages by emphasizing the moral obligation associated with the purchase, the spiritual growth it can provide consumers, and its symbolic spiritual meaning. For example, companies like Starbucks that emphasize their mission "to inspire and nurture the human spirit" benefit from being able to position their CSR effort as communicating spiritual benefits.

Managers could incorporate aesthetic benefits in their marketing messages by showing how beauty is achieved in a socially responsible fashion. For example, Dove is a personal care brand working to incorporate beauty into their CSR messaging (Bahadur, 2014). The company produces messages that illustrate how the product can help consumers meet their aesthetic goals. Dove integrates social responsibility with aesthetics by redefining beauty standards from the unrealistic definition present in the beauty industry to society's norms by raising awareness of how the beauty industry influences young girls' self-esteem through marketing messages. Other non-personal care companies may want to promote attractiveness or a superior design into their CSR-related messaging.

Limitations and Future Research

This study utilized one measurement and conceptualization of benefits (Holbrook's typology) to determine how consumers derive benefits from CSR. Future researchers could examine different conceptualizations and measurements of benefits as a consequence of CSR promotions such as transactional or acquisitional benefits. This study did not find a direct effect of status on attitude, but this might not be the case with a different measurement or conceptualization of status. Future researchers could develop a scale for Holbrook's benefits to determine whether his eight constructs of benefits are better predictors than the four benefits developed and tested in this research.

Holbrook's typology has not been examined extensively in the literature (Sánchez-Fernández and Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007), but further exploration of it is promising given that this study demonstrated that status and spiritual benefits create favorable consumer response. Future researchers could further explore antecedents to status and spiritual benefits. Products that are consumed in public or are luxurious would heighten status benefits, while products that are

consumed in private would influence consumers' spiritual benefits. Consumers' personality traits can also be examined as antecedents to their ability to find spiritual and status benefits from a purchase. Specific personality traits worth investigating are emotional stability and openness to experience.

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Appendix

Control Scenario

You walk into a department store that sells a variety of goods, including clothes, accessories, furniture, and electronics. The department store sells a brand of t-shirts called XYZ. The XYZ t-shirt is priced at \$15.00. It comes in a range of colors and sizes. The following image is indicative of what you would see:

CSR Scenario

XYZ is giving a percentage of the proceeds from the sales of the t-shirts back to the community. 10% of the sales of these t-shirts will be donated to supporting education.

Table 1
Holbrook's Framework

		Extrinsic	Intrinsic
Self-Oriented	Active	Efficiency	Play
	Reactive	Excellence	Aesthetic
Other-Oriented	Active	Status	Ethics
	Reactive	Esteem	Spirituality

Table 2
Items, Mean, Standard Deviation, and Reliability

Items	
<i>CSR</i> $M = 4.85$ $SD = 1.46$ $\alpha = 0.92$	XYZ promotes donating to education with the profits made from the sale of their product. XYZ is asking customers to purchase their product in return for the company making a donation to support education. For every t-shirt purchased, XYZ donates a percentage of its profit.
<i>Spiritual</i> $M = 2.80$ $SD = 1.61$ $\alpha = 0.88$	The purchase of the t-shirt would be a way for me to pursue virtue. Buying the t-shirt is the morally right thing to do. The t-shirt would provide me with spiritual meaning.
<i>Status</i> $M = 3.33$ $SD = 1.74$ $\alpha = 0.91$	This t-shirt would help me express who I am. When I wear the t-shirt others would see me the way I want to see them. The XYZ t-shirt would be part of how I express my personality.
<i>Efficiency</i> $M = 3.66$ $SD = 1.71$ $\alpha = 0.96$	The t-shirt is reasonably priced. The t-shirt offers value for the money. The t-shirt is a good buy for the price. The t-shirt is a good economic value.
<i>Aesthetic</i> $M = 4.25$ $SD = 1.64$ $\alpha = 0.96$	Poor-looking / Nice-looking Displeasing / Pleasing Unattractive / Attractive Bad appearance / Good appearance
<i>Attitude</i> $M = 4.30$ $SD = 1.72$ $\alpha = 0.96$	Good / Bad Favorable / Unfavorable Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory Negative / Positive Dislike / Like
<i>Personal Satisfaction</i> $M = 3.77$ $SD = 1.76$ $\alpha = 0.94$	If I buy the product, I will feel good about myself. Buying the product from the store would make me feel that I would be doing the right thing. If I buy the product, I will be benefiting myself. Buying the product would make me feel personally satisfied.
<i>Purchase Intent</i> $M = 3.82$ $SD = 1.76$ $\alpha = 0.88$	How likely would you be to buy the t-shirt. ^a I am likely to make a purchase from XYZ. / I'm unlikely to make a purchase from XYZ. ^b I am interested in XYZ. / I am not interested in XYZ. ^b
<i>Importance of the Cause</i> $M = 5.14$ $SD = 1.32$	I am genuinely concerned about financing educational causes. Providing education opportunities is a worthwhile cause. It is important to fund educational programs. If I had the means, I would personally fund educational programs.

$\alpha = 0.90$

Sponsoring educational programs is a necessary act.
I admire the funding of educational programs.

^a Anchored from highly unlikely to highly likely

^b Reverse-coded

Table 3
Correlations

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. CSR	<i>0.89</i>							
2. Spiritual	0.39	<i>0.84</i>						
3. Status	0.31	0.77	<i>0.88</i>					
4. Efficiency	0.32	0.58	0.62	<i>0.93</i>				
5. Aesthetic	0.39	0.54	0.60	0.60	<i>0.94</i>			
6. Attitude	0.43	0.56	0.55	0.55	0.69	<i>0.92</i>		
7. Personal Satisfaction	0.50	0.75	0.73	0.64	0.68	0.66	<i>0.93</i>	
8. Purchase Intent	0.41	0.64	0.66	0.69	0.68	0.81	0.74	<i>0.89</i>

All correlations are significant at $p < .001$ (two-tailed test).

Square root of average variance extracted in italics.

$N = 406$ Listwise deletion

Table 4
Standardized Path Loadings of Direct and Indirect Effects

Path	Loading
<i>Direct Effects</i>	
CSR → Spiritual benefit	0.45***
CSR → Status benefit	0.31***
CSR → Efficiency benefit	0.32***
CSR → Aesthetic benefit	0.42***
Spiritual benefit → Attitude	0.32***
Status benefit → Attitude	<i>ns</i>
Efficiency benefit → Attitude	0.13*
Aesthetic benefit → Attitude	0.53***
Spiritual benefit → Personal satisfaction	0.48***
Status benefit → Personal satisfaction	0.13***
Efficiency benefit → Personal satisfaction	<i>ns</i>
Aesthetic benefit → Personal satisfaction	0.30***
Spiritual benefit → Purchase intent	0.25**
Status benefit → Purchase intent	0.21**
Efficiency benefit → Purchase intent	0.37***
Aesthetic benefit → Purchase intent	0.37***
<i>Indirect Effects</i>	
CSR → Attitude (through spiritual benefit)	0.14***
CSR → Attitude (through status benefit)	<i>ns</i>
CSR → Attitude (through efficiency benefit)	0.04*
CSR → Attitude (through aesthetic benefit)	0.22**
CSR → Personal satisfaction (through spiritual benefit)	0.22***
CSR → Personal satisfaction (through status benefit)	0.06*
CSR → Personal satisfaction (through efficiency benefit)	<i>ns</i>
CSR → Personal satisfaction (through aesthetic benefit)	0.13***
CSR → Purchase intent (through spiritual benefit)	0.11**
CSR → Purchase intent (through status benefit)	0.07*
CSR → Purchase intent (through efficiency benefit)	0.12***
CSR → Purchase intent (through aesthetic benefit)	0.16***

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$, (one-tailed test)