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Would Corporate Social Responsibility Affect Consumers' Attitudes towards Brand and Purchase Behavior? Buyer-seller Guanxi as the Moderator

Tung-Ju WU¹, Hsien-Tang TSAI², Yu-Nan TAI³

Abstract

Corporate social responsibility is a critical strategy for enterprises proceeding marketing planning on either brand promotion or image building. Nevertheless, the past research on corporate social responsibility rarely mentioned about the effect on purchase intention. Attitudes towards brand, brand image, and consumers' purchase intention are integrated in this study to construct the major research model, and a scale is developed from the special perspective of Chinese culture to measure the buyer-seller guanxi between enterprises and customers. Aiming at the coffee shop chain of Starbucks, the consumers are proceeded the questionnaire survey, and total 673 valid copies of questionnaire are retrieved. The SEM analysis results show significantly positive relations between corporate social responsibility and purchase intention, partially mediating effects of attitudes towards brand and brand image on the relations between corporate social responsibility and purchase intention, and moderating effects of buyer-seller guanxi on the relations between corporate social responsibility and purchase intention. Corporate social responsibility should not simply stress on the external activities of an enterprise, but should also pay attention to internal employees' working environment and training. It is suggested that an enterprise exchanging consumers with emotional appeal to have consumers understand that they do not simply acquire favorable products or services from the enterprise, but also realize the mission and goals of the enterprise.

Keywords: corporate social responsibility, attitudes towards brand, brand image, buyer-seller guanxi, purchase intention.

¹ College of Business Administration, Huaqiao University, Quanzhou; East Business Management Research Center, Huaqiao University, Quanzhou, CHINA. E-mail: n_bear007@yahoo.com.tw

² Department of Business Management, National Sun Yat-sen University, Kaohsiung, TAIWAN. E-mail: htt@mail.nsysu.edu.tw

³ Department of Tourism, I-Shou University, Kaohsiung, TAIWAN. E-mail: dennistai1217@gmail.com (Corresponding author)

Introduction

Corporate social responsibility involves broadly in environmental problems, social welfare, education, and global warming and could be classified into sponsorship, cause-related marketing, and corporate philanthropy (Polonsky & Speed, 2001). A lot of multinational corporations promote global businesses and civil activities to practice corporate social responsibility that corporate social responsibility has been regarded as an important and essential part of business activities (Oberseder, Schlegelmilch & Gruber, 2011; Green & Peloza, 2014). In regard to the marketing or brand building of an enterprise, corporate social responsibility has gradually become a primary consideration for marketing, where sponsorship and environmental awareness are more emphasized in corporate social responsibility (Waagstein, 2011; Oberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy & Gruber, 2014). The engagement in corporate social responsibility activities would result in great benefits for an enterprise, such as image promotion, brand exposure, sales increase, image establishment, reputation formation, and consumers' attitude change, that enterprises have to start to engage in corporate social responsibility (Lai *et al.*, 2010; Groza, Pronschinske & Walker, 2011). Nonetheless, corporate social responsibility requires long-term engagement and might affect short-term profits of a company. Asian enterprises therefore pay more attention to corporate social responsibility than engagement. Academically, research on corporate social responsibility has changed from "why to do so" to "what corporate social responsibility is" and then "how to proceed corporate social responsibility", i.e. paying attention to having companies and societies realize benefit maximization through engaging in corporate social responsibility (Basu & Palazzo, 2008).

Storbacka, Strandvik and Gronroos (1994) discovered that establishing the relationship strength between enterprises and customers was the preparation for long-term and profitable relationship between enterprises and customers. The so-called relationship strength was composed of customers' word-of-mouth, complaint behavior, and loyalty. The society is now entering the experience economy era; an enterprise should not simply focus on the functionality of products, but should stress on the interaction with customers and allow customers experiencing and enjoying the process of creating common value, as the marketing strategies (Bendapudi & Leone, 2003; del Bosque & San Martin, 2008). Pine and Gilmore (1998) pointed out a thoroughly enjoyable and valuable experience required for consumers. Past enterprise- or product-centered production activities could no longer satisfy consumers; while the higher value could merely be created by enterprises and customers commonly creating unique experiences (Sawhney, Verona & Prandelli, 2005). As the link of *guanxi* is particularly emphasized in Chinese societies in Asia (Xin & Preace, 1996; Wu, Tsai & Yeh, 2014), enterprises should focus more on the interaction with customers, as the marketing strategy, in Asian markets. Customers' interactive relationship in Asian markets stresses more

on trust and emotions that the marketing strategies of giving little gifts to customers, sending greeting cards to customers on holidays, and offering promotion information are often used.

Past research on corporate social responsibility emphasized the effects on education, health, natural disaster rescue, and financial performance (Renouard, 2011; Oberseder *et al.*, 2014), but little on the discussion of emotions, especially the effects on attitudes towards brand and brand image. The emotional dimension is often covered in intangible brand value (Lynch & de Chernatony, 2004), showing that the brand with emotional characteristics could even create more sustainable competitiveness. Accordingly, intangible emotional characteristics in brand assets might be the primary source of continuously competitive advantage of products. In this case, this study, from emotional characteristics, attempts to understand the effect of corporate social responsibility on attitudes towards brand and consumers' purchase intention. It is regarded as a motivation of this study. Furthermore, past literatures proved the effect of customers' consumption emotions on the product or service evaluation and emotions (Mano & Oliver, 1993; Leonidou, Kvasova, Leonidou & Chari, 2013) to further influence the purchase intention (Storbacka *et al.*, 1994). Nevertheless, enterprises, on one hand, promote corporate social responsibility in Asian markets and, on the other hand, maintain favorable interactive relationship with customers. When such interactive relationship is based on the profit maximization and the condition of reciprocity between buyers and sellers, would the purchase intention be eventually enhanced? Such a viewpoint has not been proved in existing literatures. This study therefore aims to deeply discuss the logic relationship between the two as well as test and analyze it with empirical data.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Corporate social responsibility and purchase intention

Corporate social responsibility is an idea of sustainable development, involving in various levels in the society, from environmental problems to social welfare, education, and global warming (McWilliams, Siegel, & Wright, 2006; Lai *et al.*, 2010). Corporate social responsibility could specifically cover sponsorship, cause-related marketing, charity events, and employees' voluntary activities (Polonsky & Speed, 2001; Lichtenstein, Drumwright & Braig 2004) as well as other innovative activities. Corporate social responsibility is an important strategy for enterprises proceeding marketing planning. However, past research on corporate social responsibility rarely mentioned the effect on purchase intention. Purchase intention is defined as a kind of measurable consumer attitudes (Voss, Spangenberg & Grohmann, 2003). Bian and Moutinho (2011) pointed out purchase intention as individual efforts consciously made for purchasing certain brand. In

other words, purchase intention was the action adopted by consumers who consciously planned to purchase specific brand (Dodds, Monroe & Grewal, 1991).

In addition to consumers, enterprises start to emphasize the responsibility for other shareholders and so on. Shareholders and the correspondent corporate responsibility described in most literatures contain the following (Brunk, 2010).

1. Customer orientation: Offering customers with high-quality services to prove the commitment to consumers, including complete product information, responses to customer complaints, and continuous improvement of products and services to enhance customer satisfaction.
2. Employee orientation: Fair employee recruitment, promotion, salary and reward systems, supporting employees' education and development, and helping employees balance work and family.
3. Environment orientation: Developing environmental protection goals, measuring environmental protection outcomes, and actually supporting environmental protection activities to integrate the sustainable survival of environment into corporate operation.
4. Economy orientation: Enterprises producing products and labor conforming to social needs and selling with fair and reasonable prices for proper profits in order to survive, development, and return investors with profits.
5. Community orientation: Donating and supporting local charities, sponsoring culture, exercise, and education activities to prove the commitment to improving the quality of life in communities.

Companies generally believe that the execution of social responsibility would be assured by the public. Companies could create competitive advantage (Porter & Kramer, 2006) and create reputation and enhance employees' active attitudes and behavior (McWilliams & Siegel, 2001) by taking the non-economic element of social responsibility. An enterprise would promote the brand image, present differentiation from competitors, and establish good image and reputation by taking social responsibility (Oberseder *et al.*, 2011). For this reason, corporate social responsibility could achieve win-win for an organization and the peripheral communities. On the other hand, when corporate social responsibility presents high reputation and reliability, Chinese consumers would transfer such positive image to the link with the enterprise, products, and purchase intention (Lichtenstein *et al.*, 2004; Tian, Wang & Yang, 2011). Corporate social responsibility therefore could reach broad goals, such as promoting company image, enhancing brand exposure and sales, and establishing image. Moreover, Carrillat *et al.* (2005) indicated that corporate social responsibility could facilitate more consumers' purchase intention when consumers appeared lower brand familiarity. Consequently, it is considered in this study that H1: Corporate social responsibility activities would remarkably and positively affect consumers purchase intention.

Mediating effects of attitudes towards brand and brand image

Brand shows certain influence on the assurance of product quality for consumers, and the attitudes towards brand formed by such influence would affect consumers' purchase decision (Dodds *et al.*, 1991; Burton, Lichtenstein, Ne-temeyer & Garretson, 1998). Lichtenstein *et al.* (2004) proposed that corporate social responsibility behavior would affect consumer attitudes towards an enterprise through consumer assurance, which would change with perceived corporate social responsibility to change consumer attitudes and further influence the purchase behavior. Keller (1993) defined brand image of an enterprise as the concepts, feeling, and attitudes of consumers holding for a brand. Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000) considered that a good brand image would enhance customer preference for purchasing products and reinforce consumers' perceived quality of products. Under the same service quality, a consumer with higher brand image would have higher evaluation to further induce the purchase behavior. In this case, when consumers perceive that the purchase behavior might have the chance to do good things, they would tend to support the enterprise. Neal (2000) indicated that consumers would maximize the profit of product attributes when making purchase decisions and refer the purchase to the preference for a brand. As a result, consumer attitudes towards a brand would affect the purchase decision-making. Kotler and Armstrong (2010) also mentioned that consumers would present lower perceived risks on products with better brand image; the lower perceived risks would have the consumers appear higher trust in the brand and reveal positive attitudes towards the brand. As a consequence, consumers would reduce the perceived risks and present assurance on the brand when perceiving the better brand image of an enterprise. Such positive attitudes towards brand would have consumers trust the brand more and consider the lower uncertainties of the purchased brand products to further enhance the future purchase intention.

Maignan and Ferrell (2001) indicated that enterprises practicing social responsibility did not simply provide information related to product attributes or entire quality, but establish a reference for consumers proceeding evaluation. Since corporate social responsibility could provide important clues of companies for consumers to explain the brand image and enhance consumer intention to actively discuss such a brand (Carroll & Shabana, 2010), it would eventually affect the purchase behavior. Corporate social responsibility would generate external effects on brand image and further establish the positive image of corporate brand (Lai *et al.*, 2010; Oberseder *et al.*, 2014). For this reason, it is considered in this study that an enterprise could promote the corporate image and establish the attitudes towards brand as well as enhance consumers' purchase intention by planning a series of corporate social responsibility plans to further achieve the goal of sustainable management. It is therefore proposed that H2: Attitudes towards brand present mediating effects on the relations between

corporate social responsibility activities and consumers' purchase intention and H3: Brand image shows mediating effects on the relations between corporate social responsibility activities and consumers' purchase intention.

Moderating effects of buyer-seller guanxi

Storbacka *et al.* (1994) indicated that consumers would present the loyalty with repeated purchase behavior or express the approval and support of the enterprise through word-of-mouth in the communication behavior. Jones, Mothersbaugh and Beatty (2000) considered that three dimensions of the proportion of a customer's purchase quantity of an enterprise to the total purchase quantity of the customer, the intention to continuously purchase the products or services of an enterprise in the future, and the intention to recommend the enterprise to others could be used for measuring the consumer's assurance of the enterprise. Such consumer behavior occurred merely when the consumer revealed high assurance on the enterprise, and such assurance came from the emotions and trust built between the consumer and the enterprise. Patterson and Smith (2003) explained consumer preference for an enterprise and the willingness of giving word-of-mouth, with relationship commitment. Kevork and Vrechopoulos (2009) mentioned that consumers would present the assurance of enterprises with cognitive, affective, conative, and behavioral loyalty. Acquiring consumers' assurance is a primary and essential condition to generate the purchase behavior. In other words, it is necessary to have consumers assure enterprises before have them appear purchase behavior.

In Chinese societies, the link between people is called guanxi (Hwang, 1987; Yang, 1994; Wu *et al.*, 2014). Chinese guanxi culture is a special transactional relationship between partners, who acquire profits by mutually exchanging preferences, where renqing and xinren are good media (Lee & Dawes, 2005; Zhuang, Xi & Tsang, 2010; Wu *et al.*, 2014). Based on emotions and instrument, Hwang (2012) divided guanxi into emotional, mixed, and instrumental guanxi styles. The guanxi between salespeople and customers and among strangers was to acquire personal material goals through benefit exchange that it was regarded as instrumental guanxi. In terms of product sales tactic, salespeople often stimulate consumers' potential purchasing psychology through foretaste or samples in order to achieve the actual sales objective. On the other hand, consumers could acquire free opportunities through the promotion. It is called buyer-seller guanxi in this study. Such guanxi is built based on the benefit exchange of both buyers and sellers (Ou, Pavlou & Davison, 2014). Experiential marketing and interactive marketing are often used as marketing strategies. An enterprise (brand) shortens the distance from customers through the product interaction and further establishes friendship to eventually achieve the sales purpose. It is called "after dinner comes the reckoning". Such a mutually beneficial behavior would enhance consumers'

purchase intention because of enterprises' engagement in social responsibility. Accordingly, this study proposes that H4: Buyer-seller guanxi shows moderating effects on the relations between corporate social responsibility activities and consumers' purchase intention.

Methodology

Research subjects

The first draft of the questionnaire is designed according to abovementioned theories and literatures in order to understand consumer perception of corporate social responsibility. The globally famous coffee brand, Starbucks, is the research subject in this study. Starbucks has long-term engaged in environmental protection, assisted the countries from the third world in solving economic problems, and provided the employees with favorable working environments, which are regarded as the corporate social responsibility performance. In-depth interviews are first applied to collect the opinions of consumers who have consumed Starbucks products before so as to understand the opinions about corporate social responsibility and the consumer behavior model. The entity questionnaire is then used for surveying the opinions about Starbucks and attitudes towards the brand.

Aiming at Starbucks shops in Taiwan, total 800 copies of questionnaire are distributed, and 673 valid copies are collected in this study. Most (486) respondents are females, about 72.2%, and most (231) respondents are aged 21-30, about 34.3%. Most (592) respondents show the education attainment of university (college), about 88%, and most (338) respondents consume in Starbucks for average 1-3 times per week, about 50.2%. Most (375) respondents averagely spend 200-500 NT dollars each time, about 55.7%, and 624 respondents (about 92.7%) are aware of Starbucks actually practicing corporate social responsibility.

Measurement of variable

The research scale is referred to the measurement proposed by past researchers on authoritative journals and made some adjustment according to different market environments. Corporate social responsibility could be regarded as corporate commitment to the sustainable development of economy and the economic development between enterprises and employees, families, communities, or local communities. Enterprises could devote to production, employment, and investment while promoting life quality and maintaining environment quality so as to improve all non-profit activities which aim at employment, work quality, and labor relationship. Corporate ethics scale proposed by Brunk (2010) is utilized for the measurement, in which 21 questions and 5 dimensions are included, and the

Cronbach α is 0.93. Attitudes towards brand refer to purchase decision-makers' preference for brands after evaluating the characteristics. Brand Attitude scale proposed by Burton *et al.* (1998) is applied to the measurement, in which 5 questions are contained, and the Cronbach α appears 0.91. Brand image is the assembly of consumers' concepts, perception, and attitudes towards a brand. The scale proposed by Keller (1993), in which 10 questions are covered, is used in this study, and the Cronbach α is 0.89. Purchase intention is the behavior composed of a consumer's product evaluation or attitudes towards brand induced by external factors. The scale proposed by Dodds *et al.* (1991), in which 3 questions are included, is applied to this study, and the Cronbach α appears 0.92. Buyer-seller guanxi refers to the emotions and trust built by buyers and sellers in the transaction, under benefit exchange conditions. Referring to the ideas proposed by Storbacka *et al.* (1994) and Ou *et al.* (2014), the scale is self-designed in this study, where 7 questions are covered, and the Cronbach α is 0.88. Above scales are measured with Likert 7-point scale.

Results

Pearson's simple correlation coefficients among variables in this study are shown in *Table 1*. Positive correlations appear between variables, where corporate social responsibility reveals significantly positive correlations with other variables, conforming to the hypotheses. Moreover, all variables present remarkably positive correlations with purchase intention, conforming to the research results in literatures. The mediating effect of other variables on attitudes towards brand and brand image and the moderating effect of buyer-seller guanxi on corporate social responsibility and purchase intention are tested with Path Analysis in Structural Equation Model (SEM).

Table 1. *Correlation Analysis*

	M	SD.	1	2	3	4	5
1. Corporate social responsibility	6.64	0.45	1				
2. Attitudes towards brand	6.47	0.55	.23**	1			
3. Brand image	6.28	0.49	.26**	.34**	1		
4. Purchase intention	6.13	0.47	.21**	.27**	.29**	1	
5. Buyer-seller guanxi	5.84	0.67	.22**	.28**	.31**	.33**	1

$n=673$; * $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$

The SEM analysis results show $\chi^2/DF=1.721$ and RMSEA=0.0783, smaller than 0.08, GFI=0.9892, AGFI=0.9823, NFI=0.9932, and CFI=0.9684, larger than 0.95, and PGFI=0.6245, larger than 0.5. Above numbers reveal favorable goodness-of-fit of this model. It explains that favorable goodness-of-fit between modified model and samples could reasonably and effectively reflect the causal relationship among latent variables in this study that could be used for testing the hypotheses in this study. The result is shown in *Figure 1*.

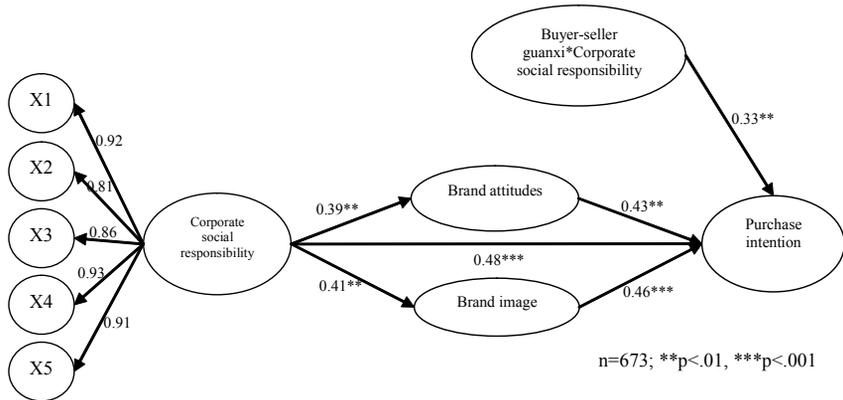


Figure 1. *Path Analysis diagram*

Furthermore, *Figure 1* shows the test results of hypotheses in this study. Corporate social responsibility presents positive relations ($\beta = .48$, $P < .001$) with purchase intention that H1 is supported. Regarding the test of the mediating effects of attitudes towards brand and brand image, *Figure 1*, corporate social responsibility still shows notably positive relations with purchase intention after adding the mediators, but the standardized coefficients become smaller, revealing partially mediating effects of attitudes towards brand ($\beta = .43$, $P < .01$) and brand image ($\beta = .46$, $P < .001$) on the relations between corporate social responsibility and purchase intention. Finally, the interaction of buyer-seller guanxi and corporate social responsibility achieves significant effects on purchase intention ($\beta = .33$, $P < .01$), *Figure 1*, that buyer-seller guanxi presents moderating effects on the relations between corporate social responsibility and purchase intention.

Discussion

Taking the consumers of Starbucks as the research subject to discuss the effect of Starbucks' corporate social responsibility on the purchase intention and the attitudes towards brand and image among enterprises, the research results reveal that the four hypotheses in this study are supported. The major conclusion

contains: (1) the remarkably positive relations between corporate social responsibility and purchase intention; (2) partially mediating effects of attitudes towards brand and brand image on the relations between corporate social responsibility and purchase intention, and (3) the moderating effect of buyer-seller guanxi on the relations between corporate social responsibility and purchase intention. Based on above research results, the following theoretical implications, suggestions for future research, and the implication of management practice are proposed in this study.

Management implication

The total effect between corporate social responsibility and purchase intention is extremely significant ($\beta = .48, P < .001$). Such finding supports the importance of corporate social responsibility for the establishment of long-term customer relationship which is emphasized by several researchers. According to the hypothesis test results in this study, corporate social responsibility apparently reinforces consumers' attitudes towards brand, brand image, and purchase intention, regardless of the respondents being aware of the practice of corporate social responsibility of Starbucks. Enterprises reinforce consumers' emotional cognition and purchase intention of the brand through the implementation of corporate social responsibility to become the biggest beneficiary. Lai *et al.* (2010) indicated that the future corporate marketing trend would move towards consumers' emotions and experiences, and more enterprises would create successfully corporate social responsibility to deepen the connection with customers and further build the public interest of "taken from society and give back to society". Large enterprises like Starbucks, Facebook, and Apple are successful examples. As a result, enterprises are suggested to regard the implementation of corporate social responsibility as a strategic marketing instrument and a part of corporate marketing.

Furthermore, traditional marketing stressing on product or service functions would gradually lose the effectiveness to remain customers because of the changing consumer environment. The relationship with customers can merely be created and connected by the marketing tactic of emotional appeal. McWilliams and Siegel (2001) argued that products could simply satisfy consumers' material needs; therefore, purchase behavior was to satisfy customers' immediate needs and was limited to prices and convenience. Marketing with emotional appeal, on the other hand, was to implement the inner desire and aroused consumers mind to help others so as to enhance the purchase desire. Accordingly, it is a common business for consumers spending money on life experiences; however, it becomes a key factor in receiving material benefits from such behavior.

The hypothesis test results in this study show partial mediating effects of attitudes towards brand and brand image on the relations between corporate social responsibility activities and consumers' purchase intention, revealing that

corporate social responsibility is an important marketing strategy to persuade consumers trying certain brand. It would largely enhance customers' imagination and cognition of the brand, and such a brand experience would promote the purchase intention. Groza *et al.* (2011) mentioned that enterprises should timely deliver the information about corporate social responsibility in order to reinforce consumers' association and purchase intention. Abundant marketing activities have currently become the noise in the market that it could easily confuse or annoy consumers. For this reason, the practice of corporate social responsibility with emotional appeal could enhance consumers' brand preference to further appear strong attachment to the brand. The strategy to practice of corporate social responsibility therefore allows enterprises and brands winning consumer assurance and generate differential cognition in the highly homogeneous market so as to reinforce the resistance to other competitive brands. It is therefore suggested that enterprises should timely offer product and service information with consumers and maintain good interactive relationship with consumers through daily operation in order to continuously remain and reinforce consumers' attitudes towards brand and brand image.

Buyer-seller guanxi presents moderating effect on the relations between corporate social responsibility and customers purchase behavior. Based on the "probability of making profit with relationship" model proposed by Storbacka *et al.* (1994) and combined with the specific guanxi culture in Chinese societies, the idea of buyer-seller guanxi is proposed in this study. Guanxi stresses on the benefit link between people (Yang, 1994; Wu *et al.*, 2014) so that sellers would release some "goodwill" before the transaction. Such goodwill contains the establishment of emotions and trust or has buyers perceive the gain of petty advantage. Such seller behavior undoubtedly expects to smoothly complete the transaction between buyers and sellers and to eventually satisfy both parties. That is, enterprises should continuously establish the interaction and guanxi with customers after satisfying customers (Storbacka *et al.*, 1994). For instance, experiential marketing and giving cards and small gifts are the ways to build long-term relationship with customers.

Starbucks coffee shops are selected for this study. Coffee shops are a kind of catering service industry and stress on the exchange with people. Coffee shop customers have to proceed buying behavior in the service sites or participate in the service activities. In the service participation process, customers would interact with service personnel or other customers to appear distinct perception. As Starbucks has long-term purchase coffee beans from countries in the third world, most of the supplies in the shops are recycled products, and the employees are offered safe and comfortable working environments. Such behavior is an important target to practice corporate social responsibility. Delivering such information to consumers through buying and selling behavior to enhance the interaction between both parties and allow consumers realizing more about that they could spend money on

desired products as well as emotionally satisfy the mind to do good things and protect the earth. Such interactive behavior could more easily enhance consumers' purchase behavior.

Conclusions

First, the empirical results in this study support many researchers' opinions; that is, corporate social responsibility could positively affect attitudes towards brand and brand image and further promote consumers' purchase intention. Corporate social responsibility could effectively promote consumers' purchase intention that it is a primary marketing strategy for enterprises (Porter & Kramer, 2006; Brunk, 2010; Oberseder *et al.*, 2014). The Structural Equation Model analysis results show that this study contributes to the customer, employee, environment, economy, and community dimensions of corporate social responsibility and presents directly positive correlations with consumers' purchase intention. Such results reveal that the past corporate social responsibility, which focused more on environment and economy, is no longer the sole. Current corporate social responsibility has moved towards diversified development, including treating consumers with integrity, employees' service attitudes, and working environment. Besides, it is proven in this study that such dimensions could affect consumers' purchase behavior.

Second, the mediating effects of attitudes towards brand and brand image are also proven in this study, and the practice of corporate social responsibility could enhance personal brand image. It supports the opinion of Dodds (1991) that enterprises should think, from macro aspects, of the implication of brand promotion. Kotler and Armstrong (2010) indicated that enterprises, when promoting marketing strategies, should not be restricted to reducing costs, but should satisfy customers' psychological needs of being an important role in the service production and delivery process, e.g. combining consumption with doing good things and understanding enterprises' efforts on customers (Carroll & Shabana, 2010). It is therefore strongly suggested that enterprises and organizations should make it public of the production and what they do. When customers understand more of an enterprise, they would be more proud of the enterprise and perceive that they are doing the same thing as the enterprise do; in this case, they would emphasize more on the enterprise and actively enhance the consumption intention.

Finally, customer perception of buying and selling behavior is measured for buyer-seller guanxi, including emotions, trust, and mutual benefits. According to Storbacka *et al.* (1994), relationship strength could extend the relationship longevity with customers to further enhance the profitability on the customer relationship. Furthermore, Wu *et al.* (2014) discovered in the research on Chinese societies that renqing and xinren were the common exchange tactics in Chinese

societies. Buyer-seller guanxi therefore is used for moderating corporate social responsibility and purchase intention in this study. The results show that Starbucks presents great buyer-seller guanxi by frequently using soft promotion of foretaste and chatting and carefully calling out customers' surnames for the considerate feeling. Such emotional appeal is regarded as the most successful and the most popular marketing strategy nowadays. Customers, while acquiring products or services, could emotionally exchange with sellers to promote the added value of products. Lynch and de Chernatony (2004) pointed out the effects of consumers inner emotions and moods on the cognition of brand image to further affect the purchase decision. For this reason, marketers should realize the stimulation to induce consumers' emotions and moods. Correct stimulations could have consumers link the brand with positive emotions and joy to further appear strong association with the brand (Leonidou *et al.*, 2013). Customers' positive emotions and moods could enhance the purchase intention as well as stimulate the impulse shopping behavior. Consequently, providing positive buyer-seller guanxi could help promote and expand customers' positive consumption experiences to become the deep and sustained memory. Besides, it could help customers associate or memorize such positive consumption experiences and the service providers when requiring similar services or products, so as to establish the long-term relationship.

Experience marketing is also a popular research topic in recent years. Discussing the correlations between buyer-seller guanxi and brand image from the aspect of experience marketing to further influence the purchase intention could be highlighted in future research. Different types of industries and the degree of participation could be selected for future studies to discuss the effects of the relations between brand attachment and brand emotions on the establishment of buyer-seller guanxi.

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