

Ethical Consumers, The Myth or the Reality?: The Effects of Ethics in CSR on Corporate Authenticity and Pro-Firm Behaviours

Authors : K. Shim, J. N. Kim

Abstract : This study investigates how consumers' evaluations of a multinational corporation's corporate social responsibility program connected to the perceived corporate authenticity and consumers' pro-firm behavioral intention. With special attention to the two different types of CSR motives, business-oriented CSR motive and society-oriented motive, the current study empirically tests a theoretical model of a mediating role of corporate authenticity between perception of CSR motives and the consumers' subsequent pro-firm behaviours. Results indicate significant mediation effects of corporate authenticity between perception of altruistic and societal CSR motives and consumers' pro-firm behaviours. Unlike previous notions of the negative influence of self-interested motives on corporate authenticity, perceived strategic and business-oriented motives in CSR does not negatively affect the evaluation of corporate authenticity when stakeholders have utilitarian ethical perspectives. Unlike the Korean participants, US participants are not willing to conduct pro-firm behaviors when they perceive strategic and business-oriented CSR motives. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Keywords : corporate authenticity, corporate social responsibility, CSR motives, strategic CSR, utilitarian ethics, kantian ethics

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