

## CSR and Employer Attractiveness: The Relationship of Value Orientation of High-Potential Applicants and Their Decision for an Employer

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**Abstract :** Against the background of demographic changes and the need for motivated and talented employees, companies have a growing interest in being perceived as an attractive employer and gain a competitive edge in the market for talents. Research indicates that corporate social responsibility plays an important role employer choice. This is assumed to be particularly true for the cohorts of the so-called generations y younger applicants born later. Several studies identified cultural, educational and generational differences in CSR preferences. However, until now literature that links preferences for employers' responsibility with the individual value orientation of the job applicant is scarce. This paper seeks to close this gap and analyzes the preference structure of 500 German university graduates for CSR-related and non-CSR-related employer attributes contingent on their value orientation. In a first step, we identified 17 CSR related attributes in five CSR dimensions (ecology, community, workplace, governance, and market) as well as 11 traditional attributes such as salary, reputation, personal development etc. based on literature review and focus groups. We then used an adapted Conjoint Analysis framework in order to understand the relative preference of each attribute for each participant. Additionally, we surveyed the value orientation of participants based on the European Social Survey (ESS) 21-item human values scale that allow a differentiation of participants into clusters of value orientation. The results allow us not only to operationalize preferences for CSR and other important employer attributes, but – more importantly – to answer the question how different values structures play together with CSR preferences of potential employees. They hereby allow companies to customize employee directed messages to their respective target group and design their employer brand accordingly.

**Keywords :** corporate social responsibility, employer attractiveness, employer brand, recruiting, values

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