

Consumer Value and Purchase Behaviour: The Mediating Role of Consumers' Expectations of Corporate Social Responsibility in Durban, South Africa

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Abstract : Prevailing strategic Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) research is predominantly centred around the predictive implications of the construct on behavioural outcomes. This phenomenon limits the depth of our understanding of the trajectory of strategic CSR. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the mediating effects of CSR expectations on the relationship between consumer value and purchase behaviour by identifying the implications of the multidimensionality of CSR (economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic) on the latter. Drawing from the stakeholder theory and its interplay with the prevalence of Ubuntu values; the underlying force which governs the values of South African camaraderie, we hypothesise that the multidimensionality of CSR expectations has positive mediating effects in the relationship between consumer value and purchase behaviour. Partial Least Square (PLS) path modelling was employed, using six measures of the average path coefficient (APC) to test the relationship between the constructs. Results from a sample of mall shoppers of (n=411), based on a survey conducted across five major malls in Durban, South Africa, indicate that only the legal dimension of CSR serves as a mediating factor in the relationship among the constructs. South Africa's unique history of segregation, leading to the proliferation of spontaneous organisational approach to CSR and higher expectations of organisational legitimacy are identified as antecedents of consumers' reliance on the law (legal CSR) to redress the ills of the past, sustainable development, and socially responsible behaviour. The paper also highlights theoretical and managerial implications for future research.

Keywords : consumer value, corporate marketing, corporate social responsibility, purchase behaviour, Ubuntu

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