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To cite this article: Ken Butcher & Rojanasak Chomvilailuk (2022) Guest benefits of hedonic value and perceived community value drive hotel CSR participation, Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 30:6, 1262-1279, DOI: [10.1080/09669582.2021.1931255](https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2021.1931255)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2021.1931255>



Published online: 20 Jul 2021.



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Guest benefits of hedonic value and perceived community value drive hotel CSR participation

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ABSTRACT

Successful promotion of guest participation in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities for the hedonic context of a hotel stay is challenging, especially where the CSR activity requires substantial guest involvement. Moreover, understanding of this issue becomes increasingly important as investment by hotels on CSR engagement strategies that include guests directly participating in such activities grows. While perceived benefits of guest participation are critical to optimizing CSR participation strategies, studies explicitly investigating guests' evaluation of costs versus benefits are lacking. Using an experimental scenario based on a guest's return to a hotel recently visited, a self-oriented hedonic benefit, a other-oriented benefit of perceived community value, and perceived time constraint were tested for their effects on guest CSR participation. Data was obtained from respondents in the US and Thailand. Analysis using structural equation modeling (SEM-PLS) demonstrated that a hedonic value benefit had a substantial direct effect on guest CSR participation while the effect from perceived community value was fully mediated by CSR reputation. The effect of perceived constraints on CSR participation was significantly stronger for US respondents. Findings present insights for hotel managers, policy makers, non-government agencies with a mission to promote CSR practices and researchers.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 12 September 2020
Accepted 11 May 2021

KEYWORDS

Corporate social responsibility (CSR); self/other orientation; customer; hospitality; tourism; green marketing

Introduction

Hospitality service firms are arguably global leaders in responsible management and engaged in a diverse range of corporate social responsibility (CSR) related activities, such as waste reduction, environmental care, recycling practices, charitable donations, employee support, community support, customer care, and energy reduction (Han et al., 2020; Lo, 2020; Moscardo & Hughes, 2018; Wu et al., 2017). At the same time, there is an increased focus by hotels to involve guests in such CSR activities (Tuppen, 2015). For example, first-hand exposure and involvement by guests in the hotel's sustainability efforts is encouraged at the hotel Melia Zanzibar (Huang, 2017). Indeed, the luxury hotel group Anantara states on its website that they cherish the role that guests play in dozens of hands-on CSR initiatives (Anantara, 2020). Given this increased focus, a greater understanding of the costs versus benefits perceived by guests through their

participation will enable hotel managers to enhance the efficacy of hotel CSR practices (Ahn, 2020; Dolnicar et al., 2017; Moscardo & Hughes, 2018).

While hotels embrace positive and meaningful corporate social responsibility (CSR) policies to engage guests, implementation of CSR initiatives is more challenging (Bhattacharya et al., 2009). For instance, not all guests seek to participate in CSR activities nor are all CSR activities practised by firms suitable for guest participation (e.g. hotel design and engineering, treatment of employees, and legal/ethical policies). Overwhelmingly, the most common perspective of low-level guest participation relates to reducing the undesirable consequences of a guest using hotel resources, i.e. energy reduction, waste, plastic, re-use of linen. Within a hedonic tourism context, such activities are more akin to household chores and hotels may be reluctant to intrude upon a guests' desire for a perfect holiday or business stay (Dolnicar et al., 2017). This reluctance is accentuated where the CSR activity requires substantial guest involvement (Campbell-Arvai & Arvai, 2015). However, Moscardo and Hughes (2018) argue that many guests welcome the involvement in CSR activities, as part of their overall guest experience. Greater understanding of this uncertainty becomes more urgent, as new generations of guest display interest in hotel experiences reflecting greater social consciousness (Silver, 2017). Moreover, millennials will share their CSR experience on social media (Ettinger et al., 2018) where negative reviews of the overall hotel experience may be critical to hotel profitability.

A growing number of hospitality studies have attempted to address the issue of guest participation in CSR related activities. However, key gaps in knowledge can be illustrated through aspects reflecting the context, conceptualization and operationalization of previous studies. The context for this study is a short-break hotel stay, defined by Murphy et al. (2010) as about 2 to 4 days, and potentially rewarding CSR activities on-site at the hotel. Most CSR participation research falls outside of this context. First, largely passive guest CSR participation is reflected in outcomes, such as revisit intentions (Ahn et al., 2020), cause related donations (Gao et al., 2020) and towel re-use (Budovska et al., 2020). A second group of studies examine tourist CSR volunteerism (e.g. Curtin & Brown, 2019) which is characterized by a very active level of guest participation, longer duration and different purpose for travel (Callanan & Thomas, 2005). However, a third smaller group of guest CSR participation studies reflect a hands-on involvement but without the substantial commitment evident in volunteerism (e.g. Lee et al., 2019; Lo, 2020; Moscardo & Hughes, 2018). We position our research into CSR practices within this latter group of hospitality studies and define guest CSR participation as the willingness of an in-house hotel guest to be proactively involved in a hotels' CSR activities during the hotel stay. Furthermore, we recognize a lack of salient customer engagement research for the hedonic context of a hotel stay, that moves beyond towel re-use (Moscardo & Hughes, 2018). More specifically, Dolnicar et al. (2017) call for work that fits the hedonic context that proactively develops, and tests, specific interventions that provide a self-oriented benefit to guests. Accordingly, we investigate the impact of the self-oriented benefit of hedonic value, defined as the level of personal pleasure and enjoyment received from CSR participation.

Further gaps in knowledge are reflected in the nature of theoretical frameworks utilized in previous work. First, we extend the small range of potentially rewarding benefits that have previously been investigated (e.g. Budovska et al., 2020; Han et al., 2020; Lo, 2020) by including two additional independent variables absent from previous research. A other-oriented variable labeled perceived community value will be tested for its comparative effect on guest CSR participation. In contrast to the self-serving nature of self-interested benefits, other-orientation relates to the degree to which a person is concerned with the well-being of others. Accordingly, we define perceived community value as the level of worth perceived by guests accruing to the intended beneficiaries of a CSR activity. Despite Weaver (2015, p. 683) arguing that motives relating to both "altruism and self-interest should be combined," such joint studies have focused narrowly on the passive context of charitable donations (e.g. Gao et al., 2020; White & Pelozo, 2009; Wu et al., 2017), rather than a broader perspective of CSR activity. Furthermore, in the

context of a CSR activity during a short-break hotel stay, a time constraint is a particularly relevant factor. We define perceived time constraint as the guests' perception that they have insufficient time during their hotel stay or are unable to rearrange their travel schedule. All three independent variables are novel to this area of the literature.

Second, we take a critical look at the utility of social exchange theory (SET) as a compelling explanatory theory for CSR participation (Aljarah, 2020; Wu et al., 2017). The central tenet of SET relates to a voluntary beneficial action by a hotel or hotel staff member toward a hotel guest leading to an exchange relationship between the guest and hotel/staff member and subsequent reciprocal guest behaviors (Cropanzo et al., 2017). Despite its popularity, SET alone is unlikely to provide sufficient explanation for any expected variance in CSR participation by guests. We anticipate that any CSR communication will have an additional effect on overall evaluations of the hotel and its' CSR performance (Lee et al., 2019). This view derives from attitude consistency theory (Kruglanski et al., 2018) which suggests that positive consumer attitudes will likely be also positive for related beliefs, feelings and behaviors. Accordingly, we include CSR reputation as a mediating variable to capture this impact and reflect an alternate pathway to CSR participation.

Further gaps in knowledge are reflected in the operationalization of previous related works. First, is the indiscriminate use of SET (Cropanzano et al., 2017) where regard to contextual factors is lacking. Guest responses will vary widely when exposed to different referents and contexts (Vlachos et al., 2014). If it is not clear which parties are involved in the exchange relationship, ungeneralizable exchange relationships result. An appropriate application of SET requires that the range of potential exchange variables must be reduced to a more coherent set (Cropanzano et al., 2017). By using hotel reception staff as a focal referent for this study, we extend SET studies which lack sufficient clarity about the parties to the exchange relationship. In addition, the measurement of benefits in previous studies do not explicitly distinguish the particular benefit being investigated (e.g. Budovska et al., 2020; Han et al., 2020; Lo, 2019). Finally, Bhattacharya et al. (2009) suggest that a range of contingencies, such as demographics or individual differences, could affect the CSR stakeholders' benefits-outcome relationship. However, there is a lack of studies investigating national culture differences in particular (De Roeck & Farooq, 2018; Du et al., 2015; Gao et al., 2020; Ye et al., 2015).

The overall aim of the two studies in this paper is to determine how new CSR information will affect guest willingness to participate in a CSR activity at a hotel. Our first objective is to test how the effects of two types of perceived benefits from anticipated participation in a CSR campaign compare with the effect of perceived time constraint on guest CSR participation. A second objective is to examine the potential mediating role of CSR reputation in the relationship between perceived benefits and CSR participation. Our third objective is to examine these relationships in the collectivistic and individualistic national cultures of Thailand and US respectively. The paper extends our knowledge of the efficacy of CSR practices within the hospitality sector, through a more explicit examination of salient guest benefits that fit the hedonic context of a hotel stay. Findings are especially relevant for hotels seeking to expand their CSR—guest engagement activities, multi-national hotel corporations and non-government agencies with a mission to promote CSR practices.

Literature review

Our conceptualization starts with the overarching framework of social exchange theory (SET), whereby a perceived benefit received by a hotel guest can be reciprocated (Homans, 1961). Within the field of tourism and hospitality, the important strategic role of "providing guests with incentives and rewards" for CSR participation has been emphasized by Moscardo and Hughes (2018, p. 1266). Likewise, Cha et al. (2016) argued that intrinsic rewards directed at

coffee shop patrons through CSR participation would produce positive outcomes. We argue that SET can accommodate self-oriented benefits, that provide a hedonic value to guests as well as other-oriented benefits. Where guests receive an offer to participate in a pleasurable CSR activity they will be more likely to respond favorably. In addition, a more altruistic motive could see that guests may also respond positively if they believe that their CSR efforts are likely to be worthwhile and deliver value to parties other than themselves (Holbrook, 1999). This follows the argument by Bhattacharya et al. (2009) who state that stakeholders evaluate CSR initiatives based on the degree to which initiatives are successful in improving the lives of the intended beneficiaries.

We further argue that, in addition to a direct relationship between perceived benefits from CSR participation and guest participation, there is likely to be an accompanying effect on an evaluation by guests about the overall CSR performance of the hotel. New CSR information may be used directly to affect CSR related behaviors but also may be assimilated into the employee's belief set related to the overall evaluation of a firm's CSR performance. That is, the overall evaluation of CSR performance arises from an accumulation of various CSR messages from a range of sources. In this paper, we label a construct reflecting CSR performance evaluation as CSR reputation. The impact on overall CSR reputation can be explained by Heider's consistency theory that depicts how a person's beliefs, feelings and behaviors, toward an object, tend to be consistent with each other (Kruglanski et al., 2018). Hence, positive cognitive evaluations will more likely result in positive beliefs, feelings and behaviors, rather than negative attitudes. In turn, such internalized beliefs will also affect CSR participation, especially when the context provides clear messages about the firm's specific CSR campaigns. This mediating role of CSR reputation has been suggested by several scholars (e.g. Bhattacharya et al., 2009; Du et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2019).

A small group of studies have investigated beliefs about CSR activities that present reasons, motives or benefits associated with consumer behavior (e.g. Budovska et al., 2020; Han et al., 2020; Lo, 2020). For example, Budovska et al. (2020) found a significant relationship between behavioral beliefs and towel re-use. However, the measure used comprised a mix of self-oriented and other-oriented items related to environmental practices. Uncertainty in findings arising from measurement also arose in the study by Han et al. (2020). They found that perceived benefits from a healthy and fresh hotel or restaurant experience would increase green product purchasing at the restaurant but not the hotel. It is evident that a healthy and fresh benefit was likely to be more salient for the restaurant context. In both these studies, the theory of planned behavior was used to explain guest outcomes. In contrast, a novel approach was adopted by Lo (2020) to operationalize the work of Bhattacharya et al. (2009) using SET and stakeholder theory. She reported that guests having experienced first-hand the CSR activities within a Banyan Tree Hotel Group property reported functional, psychological and value attained benefits. In addition, guests were more likely to be positive about their future engagement with CSR at a hotel, if prior CSR participation provided similar benefits. However, functional benefits were measured as a mix of self and other-oriented benefits. Furthermore, the authors analyzed the effect of such benefits on brand relationship quality and future engagement using a higher order construct that masked the specific effects of any benefit. Hence, there is a lack of studies that have examined the influence of perceived benefits on CSR participation explicitly.

Hypothesis development

The first independent variable posited to impact CSR participation is explicitly depicted as a self-oriented benefit. Hedonism is widely recognized as an important behavioral characteristic in hospitality and tourism research (Dolnicar et al., 2017; Font & Lynes, 2018; Su & Swanson, 2017). Evidence from industry suggests that communication of CSR activities to stakeholders that includes a high level of pleasure and enjoyment to participants, including guests is well

received (Kim et al., 2017; Supanti et al., 2015). Indeed, Miao and Wei (2013) argue that even if environmentally friendly behavior is the norm at home, hedonism is more prevalent on holiday. In practice, hospitality consultants advise firms to engage guests by creating fun activities with a social message (Tuppen, 2015) and without the pain or guilt of decisions relating to linen re-use. While hedonism is a major area of interest within hospitality there is a lack of studies that have investigated the outcomes from a CSR initiative that provides an explicit hedonic benefit to guests. Our first hypothesis is stated as:

H1: Higher hedonic value from anticipated CSR participation will have a positive and direct influence on guest CSR participation.

The second benefit examined is perceived community value. We depict this variable as a other benefit which draws from a more altruistic motive. While previous hospitality studies have largely focused on self-serving interests (e.g. Ahn, 2020; Budovska et al., 2020; Han et al., 2020; Lo, 2019; Wu et al., 2017) there is a small group of cause-related-marketing studies that have examined other-oriented benefits (e.g. Gao et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2017). In such studies, investigations centered on comparing self-versus other-oriented benefits within a contextual framework of making donations in a cafe setting. It is evident that the dominance of one type of benefit over another type appears to rely on contextual factors, such as type of messaging (Gao et al., 2020) or public/private setting (Wu et al., 2017). Such studies also reflect passive CSR practices that require little guest effort, especially from a temporal perspective. In addition, prior research has reported that tourists with other-oriented values were more likely to be persuaded by messages relating to a hotel's CSR performance when booking a hotel (e.g. Vinzenz et al., 2019) and to demonstrate pro-sustainable behavioral intentions (Landon et al., 2018). A further small group of studies offers support from a broader tourism perspective. For instance, in a qualitative study investigating the experiences of elephant conservation expedition volunteers, Curtin and Brown (2019, p. 204) found that participants "needed to feel useful, that they were positively contributing." Furthermore, other-oriented motives were found to be salient for National Park visitors when asked to participate in a range of 20 hypothetical volunteering and quasi-volunteering site enhancement activities (Weaver, 2015).

H2: Higher perceived community value from anticipated CSR participation will have a positive and direct influence on guest CSR participation.

Our third independent variable is perceived time constraint. In contrast to benefits, constraints can be described as factors that restrict the performance of desired travel behaviors and limit participation in preferred activities (Hung & Petrick, 2010). In the case of a short stay of a few days at a destination, time is a fixed resource. We expect that a high value placed on such a resource will restrict guests' capacity to engage in a hotel's CSR activities, especially hands-on and time-consuming activities. In support, numerous studies suggest that time and money are the two most important constraints affecting travel related behavior (e.g. Nyaupane & Andereck, 2008). In the context of sustainable choice behavior, Landon et al. (2018) found that tourists were willing to sacrifice time and money. Furthermore, Budovska et al. (2020) hypothesized and reported that control beliefs reflected by measurement items, such as inconvenience, not easy to do, and takes time and effort, were positively related to towel re-use intentions within a hotel context. In contrast, Weaver (2015) found that distance and time were the main barriers for National Park visitors to volunteer for site enhancement activities.

H3: Perceived time constraint will have a negative and direct influence on guest CSR participation.

The integrated model presented in this study posits that CSR reputation will mediate the relationship between perceived benefits and CSR participation. We follow scholars, such as Lee et al. (2019) who conceptualized the evaluation of a firm's CSR performance as a consequence

of guests receiving CSR information, in a non-hospitality context. They reported that marketing communications to guests that creates, modifies or expands guest awareness of CSR actions leads to higher CSR perceptions and subsequently to increased likelihood of CSR participation. Hence, perceived benefits positively received by guests from anticipated CSR participation will affect guest perception of CSR performance of the hotel (O'Riordan & Fairbrass, 2014). In turn, CSR reputation has been found to be a significant predictor of guest behavior in many studies (e.g. Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Gonzalez-Rodriguez et al., 2020; Swimberghe & Wooldridge, 2014). In a context of tour guiding, Tuan (2018) found that CSR perceptions were significantly related to customer citizenship behavior. Likewise, Aljarah (2020) found a significant and positive relationship between CSR perceptions and customer-oriented citizenship behavior for hotel guests. In a further hotel context, indirect support for our hypothesis is illustrated by Gonzalez-Rodriguez et al. (2020) who reported that a customer's perception of a hotel's environmental image and practices significantly affected their willingness to pay a price premium. Both independent variables in this latter study reflected a guests' evaluation of the hotel's CSR performance.

H4: Perceived CSR reputation will mediate the relationships between perceived benefits and guest CSR participation.

The final hypothesis involves an examination of the effects of perceived benefits on CSR participation in a cross-cultural context. Scholars argue that guest heterogeneity and complex situational factors require careful consideration of the actual effects evident in any aggregated modeling approach (e.g. Bhattacharya et al., 2009; Dolnicar et al., 2017). More specifically, many scholars suggest national culture differences may elicit different responses to CSR initiatives (e.g. De Roeck & Farooq, 2018; Du et al., 2015; Gao et al., 2020; Ye et al., 2015). A small number of studies have reported on how responsible tourism is viewed across national cultures (e.g. Filimonau et al., 2018; He & Filimonau, 2020; Kang & Moscardo, 2006). In a single national culture study by Filimonau et al. (2018), a specific national culture model was used to explore attitudes of Polish respondents toward pro-environmental tourist behavior. The authors reported that cultures higher in a harmony dimension may have more favorable attitudes. A cross-cultural study by Kang and Moscardo (2006) found largely demographic differences between respondents from Korea, UK and Australia across a battery of attitude statements towards responsible tourism. In a further cross-cultural study, He and Filimonau (2020) found that respondents from the UK, reflecting a national culture high on individualism, had a more negative attitude toward pro-environmental attitudes than Chinese tourists. While these studies illustrate that tourists from different cultural backgrounds may vary in their pro-social and/or pro-environmental attitudes, we lack information as to whether the relationships between drivers of pro-social and pro-environmental behaviors and actual behavior also varies. However, we accept the general notion that self-serving benefits may be favored by individualistic cultures (Ye et al., 2015).

H5: The relationships between perceived benefits, time constraint and guest CSR participation will depend upon the cultural value orientation of hotel guests

Method

To provide a robust causal test of the effects of two types of benefits, a scenario-based experimental design was utilized. While correlational designs are most popular for studies investigating CSR practices in the hospitality sector, the causal ambiguity present in correlational designs can only be reduced by experimental designs (Rousseau, 2006). Indeed, scholars have long recognized the inherent strength of random assignment in experimental design which provides the gold standard for evidence-based inquiry (Pfeffer and Sutton, 2006). The constructs tested, and stimulus material used to create different treatments of the independent variables in study 1, were replicated for study 2 in a different cross-cultural context.

Data collection and sample size

Data was collected in both studies by cross-sectional survey administration using convenience samples. In study 1, the sample comprised 139 hotel guests in Thailand. Respondents were recruited in person via their part-time enrolment in an MBA program at a University in Bangkok, Thailand. The survey instrument was administered in hard copy format in Thai and back translations ensured that meanings for survey questions were consistent. The second sample comprised 138 hotel guests based in the US. Respondents were recruited via a panel provided by SurveyMonkey with data collected online. For both data sets the respondents were screened to ensure that they had stayed overnight at a hotel in the previous 12 months. Both samples exceeded sample size requirements for the use of structural equation modeling using partial least squares (SEM-PLS). Partial least squares analysis relies on ordinary least square regressions for which Cohen's (1992) power analysis provides a widely cited rule of thumb using four criteria. Based on our model with four paths to CSR participation, to achieve a commonly cited statistical power of 80% and detect a minimum explained variance threshold of 25%, with a 1% probability of error, a minimum sample of 58 respondents was required in each study.

The experimental scenario

The two independent variables to be manipulated were (1) hedonic value and (2) perceived community value. Two levels were designed for each variable and operationalized as either a high or low condition. Respondents were randomly assigned to one of four scenarios. Respondents were asked to imagine that they were making another trip to the same hotel they stayed at before, and they were traveling for the same reason as before. In support, De Roeck and Farooq (2018) suggest that familiar contextual cues will enhance the capacity of the experiment to determine the reactions of guests to planned CSR activities. Respondents were further asked to imagine that hotel reception staff warmly welcome them back and invite respondents to personally participate in the hotel's new CSR campaign. The manipulated treatments are shown as follows:

After reading the details of the CSR activity, you feel that the corporate social responsibility initiative will provide very [high/low] benefits to the local area where you work. In addition, the planned CSR activity looks to be very [interesting/uninteresting] to yourself and a [lot of fun/boring]. You wonder whether it is worthwhile to take part in a CSR activity that gives a [lot/little] back to the local community. You think about whether you want to be involved in this very [enjoyable/boring] CSR activity. You think about how this activity will affect your travel arrangements.

The questionnaire also contained measures for manipulation checks of the two manipulated variables. The check for perceived community value was stated as "this CSR campaign will help the local community a lot." The statement used to check for perceived hedonic value was "this CSR campaign should be fun." Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to check the efficacy of the manipulations for the two perceived benefits.

Structural equation modeling using partial least squares (SEM-PLS)

Following numerous scholars, (e.g. Gonzalez-Rodriguez et al., 2020) a partial least squares (PLS) approach for statistical testing of (SEM) was undertaken using Smart Plus version 3. Researchers have reported that SEM-PLS is particularly suitable for analyzing smaller samples, and distributional assumptions of the data are less restrictive than the case for co-variance modelling (Hair et al., 2019). In particular, the SEM-PLS software allowed the analysis of the dichotomous treatments of both manipulated variables. Data was initially entered into SPSS version 26 for preliminary analysis and imported to SmartPlus. While the data set had few missing values, we adopted a mean replacement approach which is the default option for SmartPlus3.

Table 1. Measurement model items used in SEM–PLS analysis.

	Study 1 (THAI)		Study 2 (US)	
	Factor loading	Cronbach alpha α	Factor loading	Cronbach alpha α
CSR reputation (drawn from Glavas, 2016)		0.88		0.86
The hotel I stay at demonstrates a strong commitment to CSR	0.80		0.69	
This hotel brand devotes a lot of effort to help society	0.88		0.82	
I believe this hotel management is very socially responsible	0.86		0.92	
Guest CSR participation (drawn from Lee et al., 2019)		0.89		0.90
I will be happy to take part in the CSR campaign	0.87		0.87	
I look forward to participating in the CSR campaign	0.82		0.88	
I will be happy to be heavily involved in the campaign myself	0.85		0.83	
Time constraint (drawn from Crawford et al., 1991)	NA	NA		0.76
I don't really have the time to participate			0.95	
It would not be easy to fit this CSR activity into my travel schedule			0.61	
I would have to sacrifice doing some things if I was involved in the CSR activity			0.60	

Note 1: In study 1, a single item scale was used to measure perceived time constraint.

Note 2: The two independent variables of hedonic value and perceived community value used the dummy variables directly from the experimental treatments. N = 139 (Thai) and 138 (US).

All scales used a Likert format with 7 points. Scale statements and their source are shown at Table 1. Measurement scales used multiple items, except for time constraint in study 1. In this study, a single item was used to reduce the cost of data collection from a commercial data house: "I don't really have the time to participate." While single item scales lack the psychometric properties of multi-item scales, they are considered acceptable where the statement meaning is particularly clear or where questionnaire length is problematic (Bergkvist & Rossiter, 2007). Scale reliabilities were considered acceptable with Cronbach alpha coefficients ranging from 0.76–0.90.

A bootstrapping procedure was undertaken using 1000 sub-samples initially which was followed by a final run with 5000 sub-samples. We used two commonly cited criteria to assess model fit—SRMR values lower than 0.8 and NFI values greater than 0.9 (Hair et al., 2019). While the use of an experimental design diminished common method variance (CMV) concerns, emanating from the two manipulated variables, further steps were taken to reduce CMV. These steps included procedures in instrument design to provide assurance of respondent anonymity, proximal separation of measurement items and reducing difficulty of respondent accuracy, together with a pre-test and a pilot test of the instrument. In addition, we used the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio as recommended statistical controls for CMV (Hair et al., 2019).

Results

The Thai respondent profile comprised 139 participants with 65% female, whereas the US sample comprised 138 participants with 45% female. For the Thai sample, 90% of respondents were younger than 35 years with the majority aged between 25–34 years (62%). In contrast, a majority

Table 2. Scale reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity.

Variable	Mean score	SD	1	2	3	AVE	Alpha	CR
Study 1 (Thai) N = 139								
1	CSR reputation	4.6	1.5	.85			.72	.88
2	Guest CSR participation	4.4	1.6	.59***	.85		.72	.89
3	Perceived time constraint	4.3	1.1	.14	.08	–	–	–
Study 2 (US) N = 138								
1	CSR reputation	4.8	1.1	.81			.66	.86
2	Guest CSR participation	4.4	1.3	.58***	.86		.74	.90
3	Perceived time constraint	4.4	1.2	–.32***	–.59***	.74	.55	.76

The square root of average variance explained (AVE) is shown in bold on the diagonal with correlations in columns.

Significant correlations shown as:

*** $p < 0.001$.

Table 3. Direct and indirect effects on guest CSR participation.

Independent variable	CSR reputation Direct effect	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Total effect	Mediation
Study 1 (Thai) N = 139					
Perceived community value	.65***	.06	.32***	.38***	Full
Hedonic value	.29***	.48***	.14**	.62***	Partial
Perceived time constraint		–.11		–.11	
CSR reputation		.49***		.49***	
Study 2 (US) N = 128					
Perceived community value	.42***	–.10	.19***	.09	Full
Hedonic value	.30***	.23***	.14**	.37***	Partial
Perceived time constraint		–.47***		–.47***	
CSR reputation		.45***		.45***	

Values in effects columns are standardized regression weights.

*** $p < 0.001$;

** $p < 0.01$.

of respondents in the US sample were aged between 45–60 years (40%), a further 31% over 60 years and 19% aged 30–44 years. In both samples over 70% of respondents held a bachelor degree. About ninety percent of the respondents in both studies were traveling for both business and leisure purposes. A majority of respondents reported that they planned to stay for 2–3 nights (64% Thai and 68% US). This profile of duration of stay matches Murphy et al.'s (2010) definition of a short-break.

Preliminary analysis

Experimental manipulations worked as planned for both studies. In study 1, the mean scores for perceived community value were 3.2 (low condition) and 5.9 (high condition) on a scale of 1–7. An ANOVA test demonstrated that there was a significant difference between the value conditions ($F = 140.2$; $p < 0.001$). Similarly, the manipulation for hedonic value also displayed a significant difference between the low and high conditions ($F = 44.1$; $p < 0.001$). The mean scores for this scale were 3.6 (low condition) and 5.4 (high condition). In study 2, a similar outcome was achieved. The mean scores for perceived community value were 3.6 (low condition) and 5.4 (high condition) and an ANOVA demonstrated a significant difference between value conditions ($F = 78.9$; $p < 0.001$). Similarly, the manipulation for hedonic value also displayed a significant difference between the low and high conditions ($F = 23.4$; $p < 0.001$). The mean scores for this scale were 4.2 (low condition) and 5.2 (high condition).

For both studies, SEM-PLS analysis was conducted in two stages following Fornell and Larcker (1981). In the first stage, a measurement model was analyzed by examining the outer loadings and using well established criteria for validity and reliability. All the indicator loadings for each multi-item scale exceeded 0.6 in both studies. In addition, average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Discriminant validity was demonstrated in three ways. First, AVE for each construct was greater than the square of the inter-construct correlations (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Second, an examination of the loading for each indicator variable was greater than any cross-loadings, as suggested by Chin (1998). Third, all hetero-mono trait ratio scores were below 0.9, as recommended by Hair et al. (2019). Reliability was established with all Cronbach alpha and composite reliabilities exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.7. Finally, all variance inflation factor (VIF) scores were below the recommended threshold of five (maximum 3.2). Accordingly, measurement properties of all scales were considered appropriate for both studies. The psychometric properties of scales and relationships are shown in Table 1.

Structural analysis using SEM-PLS

Next, the data from each sample was subjected to a structural analysis using SEM-PLS. The results from the bootstrapping procedure indicates reasonable fitting models for both studies. The model for the Thai sample in study 1 found SRMR and NFI to be 0.03 and 0.96 respectively. Similarly, for the US sample in study 2, SRMR and NFI indices were 0.04 and 0.91 respectively. The models in both studies explained a moderate level of variance in CSR reputation (50% and 30% in studies 1 and 2 respectively). Likewise, a substantial level of variance in CSR participation was explained by the models in both studies (68% and 73% in studies 1 and 2 respectively). In both studies, the paths between hedonic value and CSR participation and between CSR reputation and CSR participation were both significant. In contrast, perceived community value had no significant direct effect on CSR participation in both studies. The path between perceived community value and CSR participation was fully mediated by CSR reputation. The construct of CSR reputation was a partial mediator between hedonic value and CSR participation for both studies. However, the results from the two studies differ in terms of the direct effect of perceived time constraint. For the Thai sample in study 1, the effect of perceived time constraint on CSR participation was not significant. In contrast, the results from US respondents in study 2 displayed a substantial and significant influence of perceived time constraint on CSR participation. Indeed, of all four potential influencing variables, perceived time constraint had the strongest direct effect on CSR participation for US respondents. Of the two perceived benefits tested, hedonic value provided the greatest total effect on the outcome of CSR participation (0.62, $p < 0.001$ and 0.37, $p < 0.001$) for studies 1 and 2 respectively. This effect comprised both direct and indirect effects with the direct effects dominant. In contrast, the total effects from perceived community value on CSR participation was lower and resulted primarily from indirect effects through CSR reputation for both studies. Further details of psychometric properties and significant path coefficients are shown in Tables II and III and Figures 1 and 2.

In summary, all five stated hypotheses were at least partially supported. Hypotheses H1 and H2 were both fully supported, as perceived benefits had either a positive direct or indirect effect on guest CSR participation. Hypotheses H3, H4 and H5 were partially supported. For hypothesis H3, perceived time constraint significantly and negatively influenced CSR participation for the US respondents only. Likewise, for H4, we found that CSR reputation fully mediated the relationship between perceived community value and guest CSR participation. However, CSR reputation was only a partial mediator of the relationship between hedonic value and guest CSR participation. Similarly, for H5, the cross-cultural analysis illustrated that just one relationship was affected by national cultural differences.

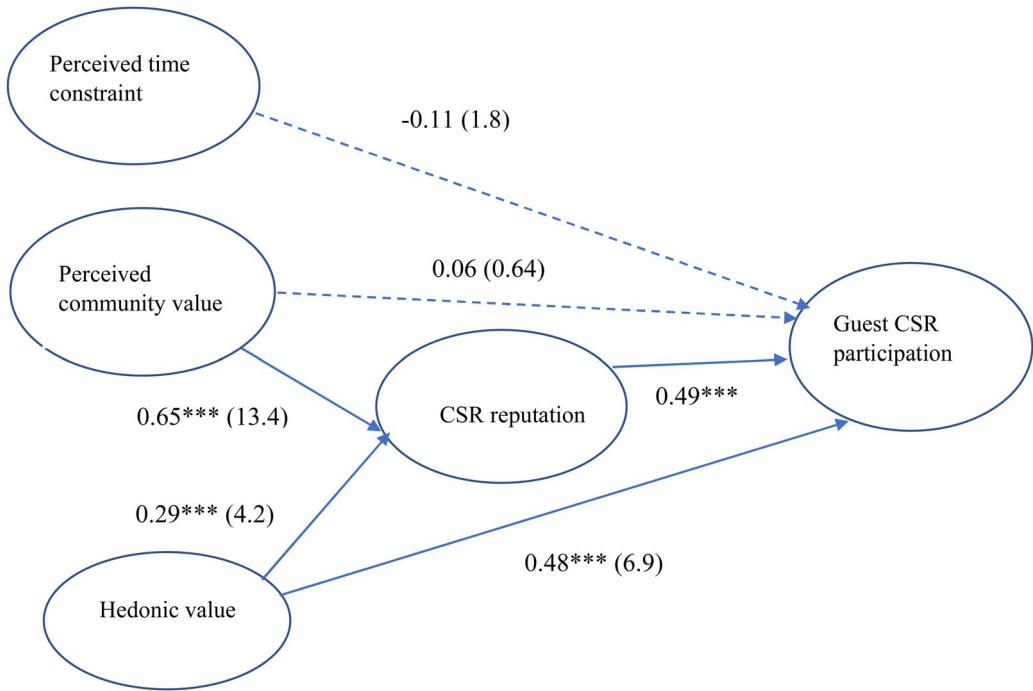


Figure 1. Standardized path estimates (t values are in brackets) in study 1 (Thai). Note: Significance *** $p < 0.001$, N = 139.

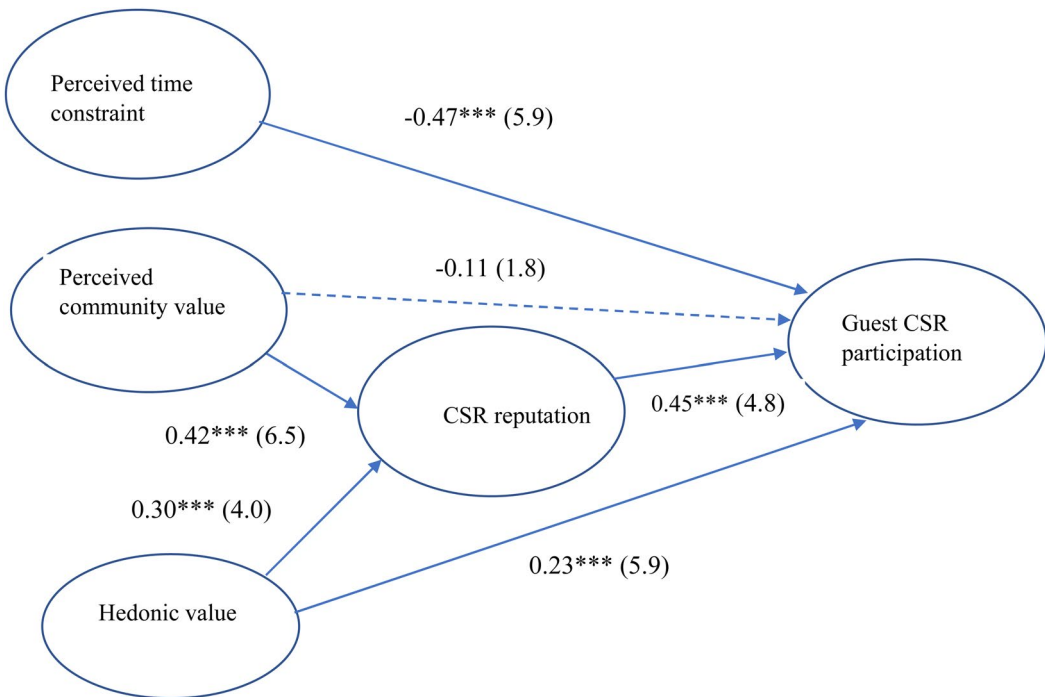


Figure 2. Standardized path estimates (t values are in brackets) in study 2 (US). Note: Significance *** $p < 0.001$, N = 138.

Discussion

Theoretical implications

Overall, the findings from this paper contribute to our understanding of the efficacy of CSR practices leading to guest participation within the hospitality sector. Improving the efficacy of a hotel's CSR practices generates greater buy-in from guests, staff and CSR beneficiaries and results in broader, more productive outcomes. Scholars have advocated the use of multiple, complementary theories (e.g. De Roeck & Maon 2018) to explain the complex nature of CSR-stakeholder reactions. Accordingly, this study extends theory by combining SET and attitude consistency theory to this field of research. Likewise, we integrated the conceptual approaches of Bhattacharya et al. (2009) & Lee et al. (2019) to link the specific constructs of perceived benefits, time constraint, CSR reputation and CSR participation. This model conceptualization is designed to fit the hedonic context of a short break holiday stay and is novel to the literature.

The novelty of this study lays in the investigation of hedonic value as a driver that fits the hedonic context of a hotel stay. As expected, our study found strong support for hedonic value as a driver of CSR participation. This result contrasts with much of the literature which generally has reported weak support for self-oriented benefits. For instance, Han et al. (2020) and Ahn (2020) found that perceived benefits and needs satisfaction, implicitly depicting self-oriented benefits, did not affect green hotel consumption intentions. Likewise, cause-related marketing studies found weak direct support for the effect of self-oriented benefits on charitable donations (e.g. Gao et al., 2020; White & Peloza, 2009). However, Wu et al. (2017) reported that emotional benefits played an important role in increasing attitudes and intentions to make charitable donations within a restaurant setting. In addition, the more closely related work of Lo (2020) demonstrated a strong relationship between functional benefits (largely measured as self-oriented benefits) and positive CSR behaviors. However, her measurement items were reflective of personal development benefits (e.g. greater awareness of community/environmental issues). Our extension of Lo (2020) also illustrates how a self-oriented benefit can be operationalized as hedonic value, within the CSR participation literature. This extension addresses calls from researchers, such as Dolnicar et al. (2017), for drivers that reflect a self-interest motive within a hedonic tourism context. In addition, the findings support the views of scholars, such as Moscardo and Hughes (2018), who argue that appropriate CSR messaging can be well received by guests on holiday.

A further theoretical contribution is the joint testing of two types of perceived benefits, alongside a constraint variable. Limited studies have investigated different types of benefit simultaneously (Ahn, 2020; Lo, 2019). Perceived benefits examined in previous CSR participation related studies largely reflect a self-oriented perspective. While several cause related marketing studies (e.g. Gao et al., 2020; White & Peloza, 2009; Wu et al., 2017) investigated self-versus other appeal types in their work on charitable donations, type of appeal was modeled in dichotomous terms, as either self or other oriented. From our research, we found that a self-oriented variable of hedonic value has a strong effect on guest CSR participation. Furthermore, this study extends the effects of two types of perceived benefits against perceived constraints in the same investigation. Constraints have been shown to be an important factor affecting travel behavior (Nyaupane & Andereck, 2008), including sustainable tourist behavior (Weaver, 2015). We reinforce this generalized view by showing how perceived time constraints can play a significant role with a CSR activity within a hotel setting, depending upon the national culture of guests. However, our findings contrast with Budovska et al. (2020) who reported that control beliefs are positively related to towel re-use intentions within a hotel context. They measured control beliefs with a broader set of items reflecting time, effort, convenience and ease of use. While the majority of respondents in this current study reported a hotel stay of 2–3 nights (68%), a further 22% of guests stayed longer.

Variance in length of stay and purpose of travel may also account for differences between studies.

A further theoretical contribution is better understanding of the mediating role of CSR reputation, as most consumer related CSR research treats CSR reputation or performance as an independent variable (e.g. Aljarah, 2020; Palacios-Florencio et al., 2018; Tuan, 2018). While a handful of scholars have conceptualized CSR reputation as deriving from CSR related communications, limited empirical research exists (e.g. Gonzalez-Rodriguez et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2019), especially within hospitality contexts. Our findings are consistent with the study by Gonzalez-Rodriguez et al. (2020) in a sustainable hotel context. The authors reported that environmental image partially mediated the relationship between hotel environmental practices and willingness to pay a price premium. The measurement of hotel environmental image by Gonzalez-Rodriguez et al. (2020) reflected an evaluation of the hotel's CSR performance. Furthermore, the stronger mediating role of CSR reputation for the relationship between perceived community value and CSR participation may be attributed to social identity theory. A "other" oriented benefit can influence the hotel's CSR reputation as a company that does good for society, builds esteem for guests and impacts guests' willingness to identify with such hotels. In contrast, hedonic value is a self-interested value that appears to be influenced more by social exchange theory.

A fourth theoretical contribution relates to further understanding of how complex CSR inter-relationships may be moderated by cultural characteristics. Scholars state that caution is needed in assessing the impacts of factors in travel related models, due to guest heterogeneity and complex situational factors (e.g. Dolnicar et al., 2017; Gonzalez-Rodriguez et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2017). More specifically, our findings drawn from two culturally distinct samples, support scholars who argue that the strength of particular CSR relationships are likely to be subject to cultural value differences (Gao et al., 2020; Ye et al., 2015). In addition, our results are consistent with the limited number of tourism studies that have found national culture differences can affect responsible tourist behavior (e.g. Filimonau et al., 2018; He & Filimonau, 2020; Kang & Moscardo, 2006). However, we temper this general expectation by affirming that cultural value differences should be salient. While cultural value orientations play a role in the relationship between time constraint and guest CSR participation, other relationships are stable. This finding suggests that the perceived benefits investigated have a similar valence and impact across disparate cultures in the short break holiday situation.

More specifically, we extend knowledge by reporting the first CSR participation study to reflect the collectivist versus individualistic national cultures of Thai and US hotel guests respectively. While He and Filimonau (2020) and Filimonau et al. (2018) found that individualism and harmony dimensions respectively influenced environmental attitudes, neither studies investigated the impact on CSR participation. Furthermore, both previous studies reflected a general tourist context whereas the context for our current study has focused on a real-life specific hotel stay. More importantly, previous studies have shed light to a limited degree on specific relationships, such as how a time constraint influences CSR participation. Hence, we can articulate more clearly how hotel managers, hosting international guests in particular, need to be mindful of national culture differences.

We also recognize that our samples were distinct in terms of age profile. However, a difference based on national culture offers a more plausible explanation for differences in the strength of the effect of perceived time constraint on guest CSR participation. Senior travelers are thought to be less restricted by time or monetary constraints and more motivated by relaxation (Prayag, 2012). Such research findings suggest that any demonstrated age effect would be displayed in the opposite direction to that found in our study. Accordingly, the cultural context of time may have substantial salience for fixed-time hotel stays. Numerous studies have indicated that cultures may vary according to their perspective on time, particularly in terms of polychronic versus monochronic time (Fieg & Mortlock, 1989). In Thailand, time is a more flexible contextual factor

and tends toward the polychronic end of a spectrum. In practice, Thais will be more accepting of activities without checking closely for time availability. Indeed, polychronic cultures, such as Thai, are just as likely to complete any CSR participation activity they are immersed in at the expense of pre-set schedules (Victor, 2020).

Practical implications

This paper also has implications for academics and practitioners. Methodological innovations introduced in this paper may prove useful for academic researchers. The use of a scenario-based experimental design adds a layer of robustness to the causal nature of all relationships, absent in this genre of literature. Indeed, in a recent review of tourism research, Dolnicar and Ring (2014) found that almost 90% of studies reflected second order knowledge and consequently unable to make conclusions about cause—effect relationships. In addition, our experimental approach framed the study with real life aspects for each respondent guest, which distinguished the experimental context from laboratory and artefactual field experiments (Harrison & List, 2004) prevalent in many cause related marketing studies (e.g. Gao et al., 2020; White & Peloza, 2009; Wu et al., 2017). Second, we included a focal referent in stimulus materials to establish a more meaningful, and consequently a more generalizable, exchange relationship. While previous studies invoke SET (e.g. Lo, 2020) to explain relationships between CSR perceptions and organizational outcomes, there is a high level of uncertainty as to who is the initiating party in any potential exchange relationship—firm, brand, senior manager, supervisor or employee.

The findings suggest a number of practical implications for hoteliers, in particular. While some guests may be indifferent, or perhaps annoyed, about being encouraged to participate in any CSR activities at the hotel while on holiday, the findings support Moscardo and Hughes (2018) who argue that most guests will be more accepting. It is evident that while fun activities are the dominant driver of guest CSR participation, perceived community value is also a strong predictor. We might surmise that hotels positioned for a family market, such as a resort with a full range of services and activities for guests, could adopt a hedonic path. A wide range of potential hedonic CSR activities could be considered by hotels. In contrast, an urban CBD hotel, or a budget hotel without the frills, might lean toward perceived community value as a preferred driver to persuade guests. This approach follows guidelines suggested by Moscardo and Hughes (2018), to ensure that CSR programs are a good fit for each hotel. However, a hedonic approach overall appears to be a good fit for a holidaying guest seeking a hedonic experience, regardless of a hotel's brand position. This general observation should give managers who are unsure about guest reactions while on holiday, more confidence to instigate CSR activities. Again, we note that this situation was anticipated by Moscardo and Hughes (2018) who argue that CSR programs should not extend beyond guest capabilities or interests. This view also fits with the categorization of guests by Callanan and Thomas (2005) that some potential participants have a shallow interest in CSR. Nonetheless, this categorization suggests that the pool of potential CSR participants is wider than just relying on guests who are the most committed toward CSR. A lot of guests will be interested in fun!

We found that US hotel guests place more weight on time availability than Thai guests. Hence, this suggests that time saving CSR campaigns are more suited for US guests or arrangements should be made for activities to fit into guest schedules. At the same time, if Thais are physically immersed in a CSR activity, they may not seek to rush away to meet another appointment on time. The findings suggest that guests from polychronic cultures can be encouraged to participate at any time in a CSR activity whereas guests from monochronic cultures need to be treated in a more scheduled format. Hence, this finding has implications for hotels with international guest profiles and multi-national hotel corporations who decide and implement CSR policies and practices in a centralized manner.

Limitations, future research and conclusion

Several limitations were recognized during the conduct and reporting of studies in this paper. It is unknown whether the hotels visited had a culture of undertaking corporate social responsibility activities. Again, we attempted to overcome this issue by framing the stimulus material to accommodate hotels with both high and low levels of CSR practices. We anticipated that social desirability bias would be present in any study requiring respondents to self-report on their own behaviors. While this issue is of lesser concern when comparing the effects of the two independent variables, we acknowledge that self-reports of CSR participation may be overestimated. All these issues are common in CSR studies and offer further opportunities for future research. Two independent variables were tested in this paper using an experimental design and other CSR activities/motives/benefits form a natural extension. The operationalization of self-oriented benefits with a hedonic variable was shown to be an effective fit for guests from a range of hotel types. However, further studies investigating hedonic benefits at specific hotel types would be useful. A perceived time constraint was a nice match to the context of a guest taking a short-break stay at a hotel. However, other cultural value orientations and contextual factors may provide additional sources of difference in how CSR initiatives affect guest behaviors, as suggested by Gao et al. (2020).

In conclusion, this paper reveals that salient benefits, explicitly measured and tested, can determine guest CSR participation outcomes. In particular, the role of hedonic value inherent in any CSR activity is critical for the hedonic context of a hotel stay. However, a more holistic understanding of other influencing factors is also essential. In particular, where guests are from individualistic cultures, such as the US, perceived time constraints are an important restriction on guest participation. The findings suggest policy and practice implications for hotels globally seeking to expand their CSR-guest engagement activities, multi-national hotel corporations and non-government agencies with a mission to promote greater CSR participation in industry.

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