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Abstract

In times of Fridays for Future and emerging forecasts concerning the dawning climate crisis, the pressure on brands to assume their environmental responsibilities is continuously growing. So far, there has been much research on consumer responses to environmental CSR, but not much is known about the underlying mechanisms causing different consumer responses to brands' initiatives. Previous branding literature suggests that stereotypes often influence consumers' affective and behavioral responses toward brands with or without them being aware of it. The concept of brand stereotypes builds on the notion that consumers perceive brands along the two dimensions of warmth and competence, referring to the perceived good or bad intentions of the brand and its perceived ability to pursue those intentions.

Against this background, the present research investigates whether environmental CSR enhances brand stereotypes and whether the pre-post CSR difference in warmth and competence varies across brands with different initial stereotypes. Also, it examines whether brand stereotypes after CSR influence consumers' brand attitude, through it, their behavioral responses to CSR and whether this effect is moderated by CSR skepticism.

An empirical study measured brand stereotypes and behavioral intentions of 257 consumers toward fashion brands before and after providing them with information about the brands' environmental initiative. The results indicate that overall environmental CSR enhances brand stereotypes, but that not all brands benefit equally from higher warmth and competence after CSR. In particular, those brands benefit from enhanced brand stereotypes who are initially regarded as low in brand warmth or competence, which contrasts with CSR as a warm and competent activity. The results also show that higher brand warmth and competence after CSR enhance brand attitude, which, in turn, leads to higher purchase intention and positive word-of-mouth (pWOM) after CSR. Considering that not all brands benefit from enhanced stereotypes after CSR, these findings explain why not all brands generate more positive consumer responses when they engage in CSR.

By linking the concepts of brand stereotypes and (environmental) CSR, the findings contribute to marketing theory in both fields. Also, they provide valuable insights for brand managers as to whether engaging in and communicating environmental CSR is an option to enhance their brands' perception leading to more favorable consumer behavior.

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Abbreviations

ANCOVA/ANOVA	Analysis of Covariance /Analysis of Variance
BF	Brand familiarity
BI	Brand involvement
BIAF	Brands as Intentional Agents Framework
BIAS	Behavior from Intergroup Affect and Stereotypes
BO	Brand ownership
CSI	Corporate Social Irresponsibility
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
HCHW	high competence, high warmth
HCLW	high competence, low warmth
LCHW	low competence, high warmth
LCLW	low competence, low warmth
M	Mean
PBG	Perceived brand globalness
PBL	Perceived brand localness
PCI	Product category involvement
pWOM	Positive word-of-mouth
SCM	Stereotype Content Model
SD	Standard deviation
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

1. Introduction

Stereotypes can be described as an oversimplified and generalized set of beliefs about the characteristics of a social group that we automatically assign to everyone who we identify as being a member of that particular group (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). Therefore, stereotyping represents a type of categorization process that we may deliberately use as a cognitive shortcut to process (new) information about other people more quickly (Gilbert, Fiske, & Lindzey, 1998). Still, often stereotyping influences our emotions and behavior outside of our conscious awareness (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995).

Literature extensively draws from the Stereotype Content Model (SCM) as one of the most prominent and validated theoretical frameworks for understanding the nature of stereotypes (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2007, 2008). According to the SCM, we perceive others and form our stereotypes along two underlying dimensions of social perception, i.e., warmth and competence. Warmth refers to our perception of others' intentions that may be beneficial or harmful to us; competence is related to our perception of other's ability to enact those intentions. Based on our perception of social groups as being perceived as more or less warm and competent, we can differentiate and categorize other people into four stereotypical groups (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002). Whether we perceive someone as higher or lower on warmth and competence influences our affective and behavioral reactions toward the other person (Cuddy et al., 2008).

Based on the observation that consumers similarly relate to brands as they relate to other people, i.e., they may form relationships with brands (Fournier, 1998) and perceive brands similarly as they perceive other people (Aaker, 1997), the Brands as Intentional Agents Framework (BIAF) applied the two dimensions of social perception (i.e., warmth and competence) also to the perception of brands (Kervyn, Fiske, & Malone, 2012). The BIAF suggests that similar to social stereotypes, we differentiate brands into four stereotypical categories based on their combination of high or low warmth and competence. Moreover, these brand stereotypes also influence our emotional and behavioral responses toward brands (Ivens, Leischnig, Muller, & Valta, 2015; Kervyn et al., 2012).

Although the two underlying perceptual dimensions - warmth and competence - are stable, a stereotype's content as being higher or lower on those dimensions may change

(Fiske et al., 2002). In particular, we reconsider our stereotypes when we receive additional information about the warmth or competence for the subject of interest. Here, our previous stereotypical perception represents a reference frame for evaluating new information (Biernat, 2006; Sherif & Hovland, 1961). Depending upon assimilation or contrast, i.e., whether the new information confirms or disconfirms our previous perception, it either strengthens or causes us to adapt our stereotype. So far, this behavior has mainly been observed for social stereotypes (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2004). Recently, Shea & Hawn (2019) have extended research on assimilation and contrast effects to an organizational context. They found that assimilation or contrast between consumers' perception of a firm's CSR initiative and the firm's country of origin stereotype - which served as the reference frame in their study - influenced consumers' perception of firm reputation and purchase intentions. Thus, although they did not investigate whether consumers' perception of the firm changed after the firm's engagement in CSR activities, they found evidence that assimilation and contrast effects influence consumers' behavior toward a firm. Nevertheless, we currently lack knowledge, whether CSR engagement leads to changes in consumers' (brand) stereotypes. That is, do brands engaging in CSR experience changes in their perceptions of warmth and competence?

CSR refers to “the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society” (European Commission, 2011, p. 6), meaning that firms should pursue actions to assume their responsibility toward society and the environment above their legal obligations. Previous research has shown that CSR impacts consumers' perception of firms suggesting that firms with CSR engagement are perceived as warmer (Aaker, Vohs, & Mogilner, 2010; Shea & Hawn, 2019) and eventually also more competent than firms that do not engage in CSR (Bolton & Mattila, 2015). These first insights propose that CSR may have a similar influence at the brand level, meaning that brands with CSR engagement are perceived as warmer and more competent than brands without CSR engagement. However, so far, no study has investigated whether CSR influences consumers' brand stereotypes. Moreover, previous studies have solely compared the perception of firms with CSR engagement to firms without CSR engagement (Aaker et al., 2010; Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Shea & Hawn, 2019). There has been no study examining whether there is a pre-post CSR stereotype change in warmth and competence. Consequently, the first aim of this research is to investigate at the brand level whether and how CSR influences

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changes in stereotype dimensions, i.e., whether CSR has the power to enhance consumers' brand warmth and competence perceptions.

Previous studies on consumer responses to CSR suggested that not all companies and brands benefit equally from positive consumer responses after engaging in CSR (Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen, 2007, 2011; van Doorn et al., 2017). Previous research has examined the impact of several brand characteristics, e.g., brand strength and innovativeness as indicators of brand success, that may cause this variation (van Doorn et al., 2017). In an organizational context, Shea & Hawn (2019) found that assimilation or contrast between the CSR initiative and the firm's country of origin stereotype causes different consumer responses toward firms' CSR engagement. However, so far, no study has considered assimilation and contrast effects as a potential explanation of why some brands benefit more from CSR than others. Therefore, this study also investigates whether consumer responses, in this particular case, the pre-post CSR difference in brand warmth and competence, differ across brands due to assimilation or contrast between the CSR initiative and brand stereotype. More precisely, it examines whether the effect of the CSR engagement of a brand on its brand warmth and competence perception varies across the four brand stereotype categories that result, according to the SCM, from the combination of low or high warmth and competence (Fiske et al., 2002; Kervyn et al., 2012).

In general, Aguinis & Glavas (2012) state that there is a lack of knowledge regarding the underlying mechanisms that lead to different consumer reactions to CSR. They refer to these underlying mechanisms as a "black box" that needs to be examined by more research to improve the understanding of consumer responses to CSR. Branding literature found that brand warmth and competence act as underlying mechanisms that explain consumer behavior (Davvetas & Halkias, 2019; Ivens et al., 2015; Kervyn et al., 2012; Kolbl, Arslanagic-Kalajdzic, & Diamantopoulos, 2019). More specifically, it is suggested that warmth and competence influence consumers' affective responses, and through it, their behavioral responses while the relative importance of warmth and competence differs depending on the context.

Previous studies have also considered brand stereotypes as underlying mechanisms of consumer responses in the context of CSR. Shea & Hawn (2019) found that higher warmth of CSR firms had a positive effect on company reputation and consumers' purchase intentions, while competence had no influence. Bolton & Mattila (2015) showed

that, depending on the type of CSR initiative, both stereotypical dimensions could increase consumers' satisfaction and loyalty after a service failure. Hence, so far, studies offered contradicting results implying that additional research is needed to establish whether and when stereotypes after CSR predict consumer responses to CSR. In particular, it emerges that previous studies in the CSR context have examined the direct influence of stereotypes on consumer responses to CSR (Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Shea & Hawn 2019), while branding literature suggested that brand stereotypes do not influence consumer behavior directly, but through eliciting affective responses (Davvetas & Halkias, 2019; Ivens et al., 2015; Kervyn et al., 2012; Kolbl et al., 2019). Therefore, the second aim of this research is to examine whether brand stereotypes after CSR influence consumers' brand attitude and, through it, their behavioral responses after CSR.

Finally, previous research suggested that consumers often question brands' intentions behind CSR initiatives and that consumers' attributed motives affect their affective and behavioral responses to CSR (Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Du et al., 2007; Koschate-Fischer, Stefan, & Hoyer, 2012; Trudel & Cotte, 2009). Skarmeas & Leonidou (2013) suggested that the influence of attributed motives on consumer behavior can be assessed through CSR skepticism, which refers to the extent to which consumers question and doubt CSR efforts. Therefore, this research also examines whether consumers' CSR skepticism influences the relationship between brand warmth and competence after CSR engagement and brand attitude and, through it, their behavioral responses to CSR.

When examining the influence of CSR on brand stereotypes and the underlying influence of brand stereotypes on consumer behavior, this research focuses particularly on the impact of environmental CSR. Previous research has shown that consumers' responses differ across different types of CSR initiatives (Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Du et al., 2007). Therefore, it was chosen to concentrate solely on one type of CSR. The focus was placed upon environmental CSR because it is particularly of rising importance for brands in times of Fridays for Future and alarming forecasts regarding the future of our planet. According to a recent survey, 81% of global consumers expect companies to improve the environment, emphasizing the growing pressure on brands to assume their environmental responsibilities (The Nielsen Company, 2018, p. 5). Therefore, it will be of particular managerial interest to understand whether and how assuming these environmental responsibilities impacts consumers' brand perception and, through it, their brand-related

behavior. These insights can provide valuable guidance for branding decisions as to whether their brand benefits from engaging in and communicating CSR engagement.

Also, studying the influence of environmental CSR on brand stereotypes and the subsequent impact of brand stereotypes on consumer responses is important from a theoretical point of view. First of all, this research adds to theory by examining the influence of CSR on initial brand stereotype dimensions. Herewith, it extends current literature by looking at the influence of CSR on stereotypes at the brand level and by investigating differences in brand stereotypes pre-post CSR while previous research has only compared the perception of CSR firms to firms without CSR engagement (Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Shea & Hawn, 2019). Secondly, this research contributes to theory by extending research on assimilation and contrast effects to the field of brand stereotypes as it investigates whether the pre-post CSR difference in brand warmth and competence differs between brands with different initial stereotypes. These results may also contribute to research examining potential reasons why some brands benefit more from CSR than others (van Doorn et al., 2017). Third of all, this research tries to shed light on the “black box” of underlying mechanisms of CSR by providing more insights on whether and when warmth and/or competence after CSR predict consumer responses to CSR. In particular, it considers brand attitude as an affective and potentially mediating variable of the relationship between brand stereotypes and behavioral variables and CSR skepticism as a potential moderator that may interact with the underlying influence of brand stereotypes on brand attitude.

1.1. Research Objectives

Against this background, it emerges that the aim of the present research is two-fold. The *first* aim of this research is to explore the influence of environmental CSR on consumers’ brand stereotype content, which is addressed by the following research questions:

- Does environmental CSR enhance the perceived warmth and competence of a brand?
- Does environmental CSR equally affect brand warmth and competence regardless of the brand’s stereotype before CSR (i.e., the four different combinations of warmth and competence)?

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To answer these questions, the present research will conduct an empirical study. More specifically, it will measure respondents' brand stereotypes before and after providing them with additional information about the brand's environmental initiative. It will compare whether perceived brand warmth and competence are higher after CSR, which would indicate that CSR enhances brand stereotypes.

Furthermore, this research will use several brands with different initial stereotypes to examine whether the change in brand stereotypes after CSR differs across brands depending upon assimilation or contrast between the CSR initiative and their brand stereotype before CSR. Here a pre-test will be conducted to identify brands for the main study that represent the four different stereotypical categories resulting from the combination of high or low brand warmth and competence. In the main study, the pre-post CSR difference in brand warmth and competence will be calculated for each stereotypical category and compared to find out whether there are differences between stereotypical categories. More precisely, it will be assessed whether the pre-post CSR difference in warmth (competence) is larger for those brands whose initial warmth (competence) level contrasted with CSR as a signal of warmth (competence) than for those brands who were initially already perceived as high in warmth (competence).

The *second* aim of this research is to explore the influence of brand stereotypes on consumer responses to environmental CSR, which is addressed by the following research questions:

- Do brand warmth and competence after CSR engagement influence consumers' purchase intentions and pWOM via brand attitude?
- Is the effect of brand stereotypes after CSR engagement on purchase intentions and pWOM via brand attitude moderated by CSR skepticism?

To answer these questions, the empirical study will measure consumers' brand attitude, purchase intentions, and pWOM toward the brand before and after the CSR manipulation. It will relate consumers' behavioral responses after CSR to consumers' brand attitudes after CSR and perceived brand warmth and competence after CSR to find out whether brand stereotypes after CSR predict consumer responses to environmental CSR through brand attitude as a mediator. Furthermore, additional explorative analyses may be conducted to examine whether the impact of brand stereotypes on purchase intention and

pWOM via brand attitude differs before and after CSR. Lastly, the empirical study will also measure consumers' skepticism toward the CSR initiative to assess whether there is a significant interaction between consumers' brand perception and CSR skepticism, indicating that CSR skepticism moderates the relationship between brand stereotypes and brand attitude after CSR.

1.2. Structure of the Thesis

The rest of this thesis is structured as follows. The second chapter provides the relevant background knowledge on (brand) stereotypes and CSR as the two focal concepts, including their origin and their influence on consumer behavior. After introducing both concepts separately, the last section of the literature review links both concepts. The third chapter presents the conceptual framework of this research and the respective hypotheses.

The fourth chapter deals with the methodology to test the proposed framework, which includes the research design and the set-up and outcomes of the pre-test conducted before the main study. Furthermore, it comprises a description of the measurements, the data collection process, and the sample's characteristics. The fifth chapter presents the results of the data analyses. These results are further discussed and interpreted with references to literature in the sixth chapter. Ultimately, the conclusion summarizes the findings to answer the research questions at hand. Also, it considers the theoretical and managerial implications of this research, the limitations of the present study, and avenues for future research.

2. Review of Literature

This chapter reviews the relevant literature on (brand) stereotypes and CSR. The third section links both concepts by presenting previous research findings regarding the stereotypic perception of CSR.

2.1. Stereotypes

This section presents the concept of (brand) stereotypes. First, it explains why and how people use stereotypes in general. Then, it introduces the SCM as a model that describes how people stereotype along the two perceptive dimensions of warmth and competence and how these perceptions influence our emotions and behavior. The SCM originates in social psychology and explains intergroup behavior, but it has also been applied to brands in the form of brand stereotypes. Hence, the third part of this chapter deals with the formation of brand stereotypes and their influence on consumer behavior. The last section elaborates on the adaptation of stereotype content through assimilation and contrast effects of additional information.

2.1.1. Stereotyping Process

In their daily environment, people are regularly exposed to an overload of information. This applies to every aspect of their life, including the people and brands they encounter every day. To make sense of all this information, people often engage in categorization processes that assign and organize people and objects into homogenous groups. Categorizing helps them to reduce the complexity of their environment, process (new) information more quickly, and respond faster (Gilbert et al., 1998; Tajfel, 1981).

Thus, when one meets someone, one often assigns the person to a group based on spontaneous trait inferences and filters all following information based on this first impression. Many of these quick inferences are based on stereotypes (Gilbert et al., 1998). Stereotypes represent oversimplified and generalized sets of beliefs about traits that are characteristic of members of a social group (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). For instance, Germans are always on time, women are weak, or lawyers are distant. These stereotypical associations with different nations, genders, races, professions, etc. can be formed through past experiences, education, or media exposure (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995;

Verlegh & Steenkamp, 1999). A central element of stereotyping is that when one meets someone and identifies the other as a member of a particular group, one will automatically assign the stereotypical group characteristics to the other person (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). For example, German people are stereotyped as punctual and well-organized. Consequently, every time one meets a German person such as Paul, a business partner from Germany, one will expect him to be on time and well-prepared for the business meeting.

As mentioned above, people can use stereotypes as a cognitive shortcut to save mental resources (Gilbert et al., 1998; Tajfel, 1981), but stereotyping also often occurs outside of conscious awareness, implying that the exposure to stereotypical information, e.g., nationality, automatically activates stereotypical associations. These characteristics are then unconsciously assigned to the other person, which often influences subsequent actions and interactions with the other person without being aware (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995).

Stereotypes are a phenomenon that has also received attention in international marketing literature because “stereotypical associations do not only apply to people but also to every stimulus object that is ascribed to the stereotypical category,” including brands and products (Halkias, Davvetas, & Diamantopoulos, 2016, p. 3624). The SCM is a validated theoretical framework to assess social stereotypes that has also been used in marketing literature to assess the stereotype content of brands (Ivens et al., 2015; Kervyn et al., 2012).

2.1.2. Stereotype Content Model

As a social perception model, the SCM “allows researchers to measure [the] perception of a large number of social objects, thus creating a whole landscape in which the images of all the relevant objects can be located and compared” (Kervyn et al., 2012, p. 171). In their initial study, Fiske et al. (2002) measured and mapped the perception of different social groups characterized by different races, gender, professions, nationalities, etc. In the meantime, researchers have also applied the model to map and compare perceptions of other objects such as countries (Cuddy et al., 2009) and brands (Kervyn et al., 2012).

2.1.2.1. The Two Underlying Dimensions of Social Perception

The SCM is based on the idea that stereotype content, e.g., the associations with German people, may change, but that “stereotyping processes respond to systematic principles that (...) are presumably stable over time, place and out-group” (Fiske et al., 2002, p. 878). Fiske and his colleagues (2002) identified the two dimensions of warmth and competence as systematic principles along which other social objects are perceived. These are referred to as the two fundamental dimensions of social cognition as they “account almost entirely for how people characterize others” (Fiske et al., 2007, p. 77).

The warmth dimension relates to the perceived intent of others to help or harm one’s social group, while competence refers to the others’ capability to enact those intentions (Fiske et al., 2002). Warmth and competence can also be distinguished into other- and self-profitable traits (Peeters, 2001). Warmth traits are other-profitable, i.e., they directly affect others (harm or benefit). In contrast, competence traits are rather self-profitable, i.e., they determine the effort that it requires someone to harm or benefit others.

The two dimensions are determined by competition and status: Groups are perceived as lacking warmth and having harmful intentions when they have conflicting goals or compete for the same resources. Cooperative groups are regarded as high in warmth and respectively ascribed warmth traits like friendliness, sincerity, helpfulness, and trustworthiness (Fiske et al., 2007). Powerful and high-status groups are perceived as competent and assigned traits like intelligence, efficacy, and skill, whereas low-status and powerless people are viewed as incompetent (Fiske et al., 2002, 2007).

The initial study of Fiske et al. (2002) found that other social groups can be differentiated and categorized into four clusters based on their combination of perceived high or low warmth and competence. One sees one’s social group and their close allies who share the same goals as high in competence and warmth (HCHW). Societal reference groups, e.g., the middle class that many people can identify with, also fall into this cluster. On the other hand, homeless people, drug addicts, or welfare recipients are perceived as low in competence and warmth (LCLW) because they compete for resources even though they do not compete for status (Fiske et al., 2002, 2007).

Most social groups hold mixed stereotypes, i.e., scoring high on one but low on the other dimension (Fiske et al., 2002). For example, elderly or disabled people are perceived as incompetent but warm (LCHW) because they neither have nor are they capable of pursuing harmful intentions. In their initial study, Fiske et al. (2002) identified Jews and Asians as two social groups representing the competent but cold stereotype (HCLW). These social groups are socioeconomically successful (i.e., competent). Still, their success mainly contributes to their own goals, e.g., Jews (Glick, 2002), or they are perceived to lack sociability, e.g., Asians (Lin, Kwan, Cheung, & Fiske, 2005). Therefore, they are viewed as cold (Fiske et al., 2002).

As a combination of stereotypic high or low warmth and competence, each of the four clusters evokes a specific emotion (Cuddy et al., 2007; Fiske et al., 2002). People admire HCHW groups, whereas LCLW groups evoke disgust and contempt. The mixed stereotypes produce ambivalent emotions: HCLW groups are faced with envy, which combines resentment with respect. LCHW groups evoke pity, which results from feeling superior over the other in combination with compassion as a result of high warmth (Cuddy et al., 2007; Cuddy et al., 2008).

2.1.2.2. The Influence of Warmth and Competence on Behavior

The Behavior from Intergroup Affect and Stereotypes (BIAS) map uses stereotypes and their corresponding emotions to predict behavioral tendencies toward other social groups. The BIAS map assumes that a wide range of intergroup behaviors are captured by two behavioral dimensions: active-passive and facilitative-harmful. Active-passive concerns intensity, i.e., whether someone acts with more or less effort. In contrast, facilitation-harm is related to valence, i.e., whether behavior produces favorable or detrimental outcomes for other groups. The combination of the two dimensions results in four distinct behavioral tendencies: active facilitation, active harm, passive facilitation, and passive harm (Cuddy et al., 2007).

How we behave toward others is determined by our warmth and competence perception. Warmth determines the valence of active behaviors: High warmth results in active facilitation such as helping and defending others. Perceived negative intentions (i.e., low warmth) trigger active harmful behavior, e.g., attack or harassment. On the other hand, competence predicts the valence of passive behaviors. High competence generates

passive facilitative behavior, e.g., associating; low competence leads to passive harm such as excluding or neglecting others (Cuddy et al., 2007, 2008). Consequently, each stereotypic combination of warmth and competence generates a pair of corresponding active and passive behavioral tendencies.

Besides, Cuddy et al. (2007) tested whether the emotions elicited by stereotypic perception also predict behavioral responses. This revealed that emotions predict behavior more strongly than stereotypes and usually mediate the relationship between stereotypes and behavioral tendencies. Hence, they suggest a cognition-affect-behavior sequence meaning that stereotypes (cognition) influence emotions (affect), which then cause behavioral tendencies.

Even though both dimensions predict affective and behavioral responses, previous research showed that they are not weighted equally in forming stereotypes and responses (Fiske et al., 2007; Wojciszke, Bazinska, & Jaworski, 1998). From an evolutionary perspective, evaluating warmth, i.e., whether others have beneficial or harmful intentions, is more important than competence that is informative of the effort that it takes the other person to carry out those intentions (Fiske et al., 2007; Peeters, 2001). Wojciszke et al. (1998) confirmed that warmth is perceived as more diagnostic and weighted more in determining behavioral consequences. The primacy of warmth is also reflected in the BIAS map, which uses warmth to predict active and competence to predict passive behaviors (Cuddy et al., 2007).

Another reason for the primacy of warmth is that it can be inferred more quickly, e.g., through facial expressions, whereas information to determine competence is not as easily accessible (Willis & Todorov, 2006). Instead, it requires ongoing evaluation and collection of information to make inferences about competence traits such as a person's skills and knowledge. Hence, warmth carries particularly more weight in immediate evaluations and first encounters when there is no information beyond that on warmth. In the absence of any competence-related information, warmth may also have a halo effect on competence perception. This implies that the presence (or lack) of warmth influences competence judgments, e.g., someone who is perceived as warm is automatically also assumed to be competent (Fiske et al., 2007; Judd, James-Hawkins, Yzerbyt, & Kashima, 2005).

2.1.3. Brand Stereotypes

People relate to brands in many ways as they relate to other people. They may form relationships with brands or products (Fournier, 1998) and perceive brands in a similar way as they perceive other people (Aaker, 1997). Therefore, it emerged that social perception theories, such as the SCM, may also be applied to consumers' brand perception (Kervyn et al., 2012).

2.1.3.1. Brands as Intentional Agents Framework

The BIAF applies the SCM in the context of brands. It suggests that consumers view brands as intentional agents with good or bad intentions and high or low abilities. Perceived intentions and abilities represent the two underlying dimensions of brand perception, which help consumers to differentiate brands and influence their responses toward brands (Kervyn et al., 2012). Ability refers to “how able a brand is perceived to be” (Kervyn et al., 2012, p. 171). Thus, it represents the competence dimension; whereas intention is related to “how well/ill-intentioned a brand seems to be,” which is the equivalent to warmth in social perception (Kervyn et al., 2012, p. 171). Kervyn and his colleagues (2012) suggested that competence may be inferred from brands' performance features such as quality, reliability, durability, and consistency. In contrast, brand warmth may result from brand love and brand passion.

The BIAF shows that brands – similar to social groups in the SCM - can be differentiated into four quadrants based on consumers' perceptions of a brand as well-/ill-intentioned and having high/low abilities. Furthermore, the combination of perceived intentions and ability also evokes a corresponding emotion toward the brand: Popular and successful brands such as Coca-Cola generate admiration as they are perceived as well-intentioned and high-ability brands. Well-known but troubled brands that have received negative attention by the press, e.g., Primark, are located in the low-ability, ill-intentioned cluster, which evokes contempt amongst consumers (Ivens et al., 2015; Kervyn et al., 2012).

Similar to social groups, many brands generate mixed stereotypes and ambivalent emotions (Fiske et al., 2002; Ivens et al., 2015). For example, luxury brands like Rolex are often viewed as having high abilities but “negative intentions (or at least not particularly good intentions) toward the general public, as they specifically target

consumers more wealthy than [the] average” (Kervyn et al., 2012, p. 9). Kervyn and his colleagues (2012) found that luxury brands’ high ability elicits envy amongst consumers; Ivens et al. (2015) found no support for envy as an emotional consequence of high competence and low warmth. The low-ability, well-intentioned stereotype consists of brands with good intentions, but that rely on external support, e.g., public transportation, which is often subsidized by the government. Their inability and dependence on external support cause consumers to face these brands with pity (Ivens et al., 2015; Kervyn et al., 2012).

2.1.3.2. The Influence of Warmth and Competence on Consumer Behavior¹

In social interactions, intergroup behavior can be predicted from both dimensions and their corresponding emotions. Respectively, higher levels of warmth and competence promote higher levels of active and passive facilitation, such as helping and associating with others. On the other hand, low levels of warmth and competence lead to active and passive harm, such as attacking or neglecting others (Cuddy et al., 2007). In the branding context, facilitation and harm can be conceptualized as positive and negative consumer responses.

Previous research found similarly to social stereotypes that brand stereotypes predict consumers’ behavior toward a brand. This implies that high (low) levels of warmth and competence have a positive (negative) effect on consumer behavior, such as purchase intentions (Aaker et al., 2010; Davvetas & Halkias, 2019; Ivens et al., 2015; Kervyn et al., 2012; Kolbl et al., 2019; Shea & Hawn, 2019), loyalty (Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Kervyn et al., 2012), intention to switch (Davvetas & Halkias, 2019) or willingness to recommend a brand (Ivens et al., 2015). In line with the observed cognition-affect-behavior sequence in social stereotyping (Cuddy et al., 2007), most studies found that brand stereotypes influence consumer behavior by eliciting affective responses. This suggests that stereotypes influence affective responses such as brand emotions (Ivens et

¹ Due to the limited literature on brand stereotypes, this sections also considers the findings of studies examining the influence of country stereotypes on consumer behavior. The observed effects were similar regardless of whether country stereotypes or brand stereotypes served as a source of warmth and competence. Therefore, both concepts were used to examine the influence of both stereotypical dimensions on consumer behavior.

al., 2015), brand affect (Davvetas & Halkias, 2019), or consumers-brand identification (Kolbl et al., 2019), which, in turn, influence behavioral intentions.

Some previous studies found that competence determined brand evaluations and brand-related behavior, but warmth had no direct effect, which contradicts the primacy of warmth in social interactions (Aaker et al., 2010; Chen, Mathur, & Maheswaran, 2014; Diamantopoulos et al., 2017; Halkias et al., 2016). Chen et al. (2014) argued that competence is more important in determining consumers' evaluations and subsequent behavior because it can be directly related to the ability to produce high-quality goods. In contrast, it is difficult to make inferences about products based on warmth judgments.

However, the effect of warmth should not be underrated. Even though warmth may have no direct impact on consumer behavior, previous research found that brands benefit from the interaction of warmth and competence. Hence, brands generate more favorable consumer responses when perceived as high in competence and warmth than only as highly competent (Aaker et al., 2010; Ivens et al., 2015). Furthermore, Diamantopoulos et al. (2017) found that the relative importance of warmth and competence depends upon the decision-making context. When consumers deliberately evaluate product choices, their product preference is guided by competence judgments, but when consumers choose spontaneously, their decisions are unconsciously determined by warmth. The importance of warmth in spontaneous decisions is in accordance with the primacy of warmth because it can be judged more quickly than competence (Willis & Todorov, 2006).

Also, previous research suggested that warmth is particularly a valuable trait in times of a crisis because it indicates positive intentions and reduces negative consequences. For instance, perceived warmth could reduce blame attributions and, consequently, the negative influence of a food harm crisis on consumer responses to the brand (Barbarossa, De Pelsmacker, Moons, & Marcati, 2016). Similarly, Bolton & Mattila (2015) observed that perceived warmth positively influenced consumer satisfaction and loyalty after a service failure.

Lastly, Kolbl et al. (2019) found that high brand warmth, not competence, had a positive influence on consumer-brand identification, which translated into higher purchase intentions and actual brand ownership. This observation can be attributed to the notion that consumers identify and form relationships with brands as they do with people

(Fournier, 1998). Similar to interpersonal relationships, consumers are more appealed by well-intentioned brands. Thus, perceived warmth is particularly important in consumer-brand relationships to create a greater sense of attachment that drives positive consumer responses.

2.1.4. Adaptation of Stereotype Content

As mentioned earlier, the two underlying dimensions of social perception are stable. Still, the stereotype content of certain groups and individuals, in terms of being higher or lower on both dimensions, may change (Fiske et al., 2002). Previous literature suggested that stereotype adaptation occurs in particular through additional information on other sources of warmth or competence for the subject of interest. Hence, when one receives new information, this information is perceived and evaluated in the context of the current point of view formed by past experiences, beliefs, and feelings because judgment always occurs in relation to a comparative standard or frame of reference (Sherif & Hovland, 1961). Stereotypes can also represent a frame of reference for evaluating new information (Biernat, Manis, & Nelson, 1991).

The outcome of these comparative processes can fall into two categories: assimilation or contrast. Assimilation occurs when the new stimulus is consistent with the reference frame, e.g., Paul, the German business partner from the example earlier, shows up on time and well-prepared for the meeting, thus, confirms the stereotype of Germans as punctual and well-organized. On the other hand, it would contrast with the German stereotype if Paul arrived 20 minutes late and forgot to bring his laptop for the meeting. Whereas assimilation confirms and strengthens a certain stereotype, contrasting stimuli cause doubts about the accuracy of stereotypes and, respectively, often lead to an adaptation of stereotypes (Biernat, 2006). Here, it is important to emphasize that the standard against which new information is compared may shift. As a result, certain information may be perceived differently and have a different influence on stereotype adaptation depending upon the particular reference frame (Biernat et al., 1991). For example, if Paul was tardy, he would violate the German stereotype leading to doubts whether the stereotype of Germans as punctual is accurate. On the other hand, if Paul was from Argentina, his late arrival would be less surprising and would rather confirm the stereotype of Argentinians

as being unpunctual. Hence, one type of information can lead to assimilation or contrast, causing different effects on stereotype adaptation due to shifting standards.

Previous research also observed these effects in the context of warmth and competence perception. For example, Cuddy et al. (2004) found that additional information about professionals' parental status was evaluated differently depending upon professionals' gender that served as a reference frame. Professionals are stereotypically viewed as highly competent but cold. After having a baby, female professionals were perceived as warmer but less competent. On the other hand, male professionals' perception as highly competent was not affected by having a child while their perceived warmth also increased.

Shea & Hawn (2019) recently observed assimilation and contrast effects in an organizational context. They showed that consumers' responses to a corporate strategy, i.e., CSR or corporate social irresponsibility (CSI), changed depending upon the firm's country of origin stereotype, which represented the reference frame for the evaluation of CSR/CSI information in their study. They found that firms from low warmth countries were less punished for CSI than firms from high warmth countries because the irresponsible behavior matched their stereotype. Furthermore, companies from low warmth countries generated more favorable consumer responses when they engaged in CSR than firms from high warmth countries because it contrasted with their stereotypical perception. This effect occurred in particular for firms from LCLW countries (opposed to HCLW countries) because their engagement in CSR violated both stereotypical dimensions.

2.1.5. Summary of Stereotypes

Overall, this chapter showed that consumers perceive brands similar to people along the two dimensions of warmth and competence. Based on their perception as being high or low on competence and warmth, brands can be differentiated into four different categories: HCHW, HCLW, LCHW, and LCLW brands. Moreover, both dimensions can be used to predict consumers' affective responses, and through them, their behavioral responses toward brands. The last section of this chapter showed that additional information could lead to an adaptation of stereotype content. Either additional information strengthens the previous stereotype through assimilation, or it changes the

previous stereotype through contrast. Whether additional information leads to assimilation or contrast depends upon the reference frame against which new information is compared. Even though these effects have not been observed in the context of brand stereotypes yet, these first insights suggest that perceived brand warmth and competence also change through additional information. Moreover, it proposes that additional information may be evaluated differently and, consequently, has different effects on brand stereotype content depending upon the particular reference frame, i.e., the initial brand stereotype, against which the additional information is evaluated.

CSR is a topic that is becoming increasingly important to consumers and, respectively, also affects their behavior. To answer the question of whether and how additional information about a brand's CSR engagement influences brand stereotypes and subsequent consumer responses, the next chapter provides the background on CSR before the two concepts are linked.

2.2. Corporate Social Responsibility

This chapter reviews the relevant literature on CSR. To illustrate the rising importance of CSR in literature and practice, a quick overview is provided of what CSR meant in the past and how the concept has evolved to arrive at the definition of CSR today. Then, the focus shifts toward environmental CSR, which includes companies' environmental responsibilities and different forms of assuming these responsibilities. Subsequently, consumer responses to environmental initiatives are discussed. The chapter closes with a review of factors that influence consumer responses to CSR, and thus, must also be considered in the present research.

2.2.1. Evolution of CSR

Looking back in history, businesses' concern for society can be traced back as far as the Industrial Revolution when facilities for recreation, lunchrooms, or bathhouses were provided to employees to improve their welfare and increase their productivity (Wren, 2005). The concept of CSR, as it is known nowadays, was formed in the 1950s when Howard R. Bowen (1953) published his book *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman*. In his book, Bowen elaborated on the responsibilities that businessmen at that time were expected to assume toward society and set forth an initial definition of CSR. He stated

that the social responsibilities of businesses refer to “the obligations of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions or follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of society” (Bowen, 1953, p. 6).

Bowen’s publication initiated a lasting debate on whether businesses should assume social responsibilities. While some argued that it is the sole purpose of companies to “make as much money for their stockholders as possible” (Friedman, 1962, p. 133), many scholars and practitioners have acknowledged that companies should consider and assume responsibility for the impacts of their business on society (Carroll, 2009). As a result, the concept of CSR received growing attention over the years, which has shaped its theory, research, and practice.

The early CSR literature focused on conceptualizing CSR and its components, which resulted in a broader concept considering a larger range of stakeholders and issues. Whereas the initial focus was placed upon few stakeholders, socially responsible firms were soon expected to consider and balance the interests of multiple groups, including employees, suppliers, customers, local communities, the nation, and eventually even global interests such as improving the living conditions in third-world countries (Johnson, 1971). This notion later evolved into stakeholder theory, suggesting that companies should consider all parties affected by their decisions in their decision-making processes and minimize harm or maximize benefits to all stakeholder groups (Freeman, 1984).

The widely cited definition of Carroll (1979) illustrates the different types of responsibilities that businesses have toward their stakeholders. In his four-part definition Carroll (1979) stated that “the social responsibility of businesses encompasses the economic, legal, ethical and discretionary (philanthropic) expectations that society has of organizations at a given point of time” (p. 500). Later, this definition was depicted as the pyramid of CSR that is shown in Figure 1.

Economic responsibilities refer to “the responsibility to produce goods and services that society wants and to sell them at a profit” (Carroll, 1979, p. 500). They represent the base of the pyramid since they ensure the company’s continued existence, which is required to assume any other social responsibilities. Laws and other regulations create a framework of legal responsibilities that companies have to obey. Thus, economic and legal responsibilities represent a company’s minimum responsibilities. Furthermore, firms are

expected to take on ethical responsibilities, which refer to actions, norms, and standards that are important to society and expected even though they are not codified into law. As can be seen in Figure 1, philanthropic responsibilities are on top of the pyramid. Opposed to ethical responsibilities, these are entirely voluntary and not necessarily expected in an ethical or moral sense. However, many companies engage in philanthropic activities to show that they are good corporate citizens (Carroll, 1979, 1991).

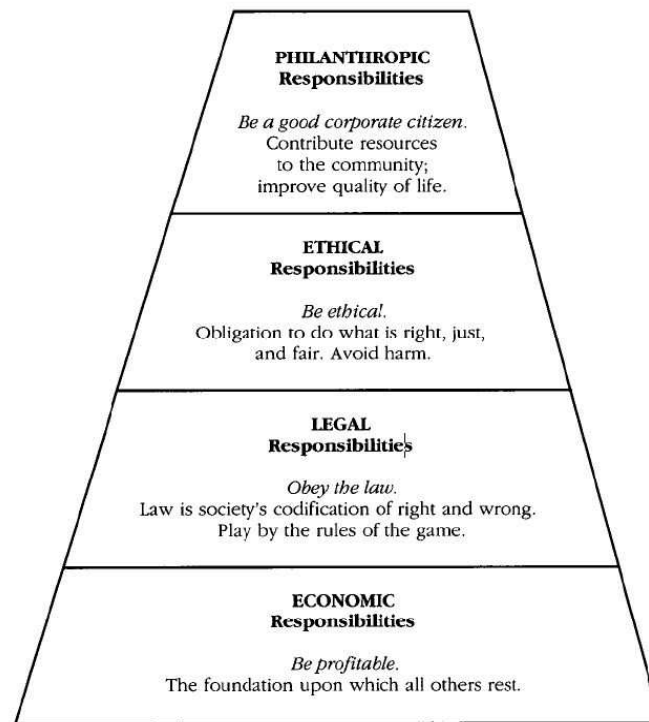


Figure 1: The Pyramid of CSR
Source: Carroll (1991)

Initially, CSR was mainly related to social issues. Environmental issues were covered by a separate stream of research, environmental management, and only integrated later as an additional dimension of CSR (Montiel, 2008). For a long time, CSR was viewed as businesses' voluntary decisions and actions to contribute to societal well-being instead of generating direct economic benefits. However, since Carroll's definition (1979), most scholars recognize economic responsibility as a third dimension of CSR.

The view of CSR as a three-dimensional construct is very similar to the concept of corporate sustainability, which is often used interchangeably by researchers and managers (Montiel, 2008). Corporate sustainability is built on the notion of sustainable development, i.e., "development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (World

Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, p. 43). For businesses, corporate sustainability implies that instead of a single financial bottom line, they have to meet a triple bottom line: people, planet, and profit (Elkington, 1998). It suggests that firms have to balance their social, environmental, and economic responsibilities to achieve long-term sustainability. Corporate sustainability is only one of the many new and related (sub) concepts that have evolved, which shows scholars' rising interest in CSR (Carroll, 1999). However, despite the many competing concepts, CSR remains a dominant concept in literature and practice until today (Carroll & Shabana, 2010).

Over the years, CSR has also received growing attention from researchers, which is emphasized by the increasing number of empirical CSR studies investigating the effect of CSR on other variables (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012). These revealed that, in many cases, CSR has positive effects on stakeholder behavior, e.g., employee commitment (Lee, Park, & Lee, 2013), shareholders' investments (Orlitzky, Schmidt, & Rynes, 2003), consumers' purchase intentions or loyalty (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004) that, ultimately, all enhance firm performance.

The notion that "doing well leads to doing good," hence, firms benefit from CSR in an economic and financial sense is referred to as the business case for CSR (Carroll & Shabana, 2010). It caused many firms to engage in some form of CSR for normative as well as financial reasons. Some firms even perceive CSR as a competitive advantage and have started to integrate CSR into every aspect of their business to position themselves as a CSR brand in their category, e.g., Patagonia, Ben and Jerry's, or the Body Shop (Carroll, 2009).

2.2.2. Definition of CSR

As a consequence of many related constructs and the natural evolution of CSR, many researchers claim that CSR lacks a common definition. To establish what CSR means, Dahlsrud (2008) reviewed 37 definitions of CSR and identified that throughout them, five dimensions repetitively occur to describe CSR: The social, environmental, and economic dimensions represent the different categories of responsibilities. The stakeholder dimension implies that all potential stakeholders should be equally considered in the firm's decisions and actions, and voluntariness indicates that companies should assume responsibilities beyond legal requirements.

This research adheres to the new definition of the EU Commission (2011) that set forth a general definition of CSR as “the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society” (p.6). The more detailed description of the new definition considers the social, environmental, economic, and stakeholder dimensions (Dahlsrud, 2008). In line with the dimension of voluntariness, it states that legal compliance is a prerequisite for being socially responsible (European Commission, 2011). This suggests that CSR only refers to initiatives beyond legal requirements which are voluntary by nature. Herewith, the definition aligns with other recent views which state that CSR only starts where the law ends and that “the essence of CSR and what it really refers to are the ethical and philanthropic obligations of the corporation towards society” (Carroll & Shabana, 2010, p. 90).

Whereas many definitions solely conceptualize CSR as firms’ initiatives that contribute to societal well-being, the definition of the EU Commission (2011) emphasizes that CSR does not only imply “doing good” but also entails preventing potential negative impacts. Lin-Hi & Müller (2013) argued that preventing “corporate actions that result in (potential) disadvantages and/or harm others” (p.1932), i.e., CSI essentially represents the bottom-line of CSR and, thus, a precondition to be perceived as socially responsible.

2.2.3. Environmental CSR

After providing a thorough overview of the concept of CSR and its evolution, including all types and dimensions of CSR, the remaining part of this thesis solely focuses on the stakeholder group of consumers and the environmental dimension of CSR. Here environmental CSR is understood according to the recent definitions, which means that it only refers to ethical and philanthropic responsibilities. This section draws upon the principles of the UN Global Compact, the world’s largest sustainability initiative, to illustrate the environmental responsibilities of firms. Afterward, it presents examples of CSR initiatives that companies engage in to assume their environmental responsibilities.

2.2.3.1. Environmental Responsibilities of Companies

In 2015, all UN member states adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that set out a 15-year plan to combat global challenges like ending poverty, fighting inequality, and protecting the planet. At the center of the 2030 Agenda are 17 Sustainable

Development Goals to achieve sustainable development in areas of critical importance until 2030. Regarding the sustainable development of the planet, the 2030 Agenda stated the overall ambition:

“We are determined to protect the planet from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, sustainably managing its natural resources and taking urgent action on climate change, so that it can support the needs of the present and future generations” (UN General Assembly, 2015, p. 3).

Businesses play an enormous role in achieving this goal. Therefore, the UN Global Compact proposed ten principles that represent businesses' basic responsibilities and assist firms in developing their CSR policies. By aligning their strategies and operations with these principles, companies can do business responsibly and contribute to the achievement of broader social and developmental goals (UN Global Compact, 2020a).

Three of these principles illustrate firms' environmental responsibilities and go hand in hand to reach the overall goal of preventing further environmental degradation (UN Global Compact, 2020b). At the heart of this approach, firms are encouraged to invest in the research and development of more environmentally friendly products and technologies. These are characterized by a more sustainable and efficient use of resources such as water, soil, and energy. Also, firms must stop the release of chemicals and other wastes. Instead, they should invest in cleaner production processes and pollution prevention technologies. Furthermore, firms are requested to improve their waste management, e.g., recycling and reusing materials to reduce existing and prevent new waste (UN Global Compact, 2020e). Besides the prevention of future environmental degradation, firms should engage in initiatives to restore previously damaged eco-systems (UN General Assembly, 2015).

Moreover, the UN Global Compact states that environmentally responsible firms are required to adapt their managerial practices to prevent CSI. It demands that businesses must integrate risk assessment, risk management, and risk communication practices to detect potential harm and adjust their business practices precautionary before any damage occurs (UN Global Compact, 2020c). Firms should also define environmental targets and indicators to measure and report on their environmental performance regularly (UN Global Compact, 2020d).

2.2.3.2. Environmental Initiatives of Companies

There are numerous ways for firms to assume their environmental responsibilities. Peloza & Shang (2011) reviewed various CSR activities and organized them into three broad categories of engagement: philanthropic, business-practice, and product-related activities.

Philanthropy refers to firms' voluntary contributions to improve the environment, which can occur in different forms (Peloza & Shang, 2011). Many firms engage in cause-related marketing initiatives, where each donation is tied to a sale, e.g., H&M donated 10% of the sale price of each item to an environmental organization (WWF, 2019). Other firms make donations that are not dependent on a commercial exchange or assume their philanthropic responsibilities through employee volunteering, e.g., Coca-Cola organized a trash-collecting initiative (Coca-Cola HBC Austria, 2018).

Whereas philanthropic CSR indicates good corporate citizenship, business-practice and product-related CSR represent a company's ethical responsibility to reduce their negative impact on the environment (Carroll & Shabana, 2010). Business-practice CSR is not directly related to the product. Instead, it refers to a company's efforts to increase the environmental friendliness of internal processes associated with the production of a product or delivery of a service (Peloza & Shang, 2011). Examples of business-practice CSR include fashion companies that pursue sustainable farming practices (Armedangels, 2020) or the initiative of the Austrian post to replace regular cars with electric cars to achieve CO₂ neutral deliveries (Österreichische Post AG, 2020). On the other hand, product-related CSR refers to initiatives that make product features and usage more environmentally friendly (Peloza & Shang, 2011). For instance, adidas launched a product line of high-functional sports apparel made out of recycled ocean plastic (adidas, 2015), and Unilever introduced refills for their cleaning products to reduce new plastic waste (Unilever, 2020). Hence, the environmental responsibilities of companies that are stated by the UN Global Compact rather refer to business-practice and product-related CSR than philanthropic initiatives.

2.2.4. Consumer Responses to Environmental CSR

The notion of the business case for CSR suggests that firms can benefit from CSR through positive consumer responses. Previous research has investigated the impact of CSR on many affective and behavioral consumer outcome variables. This section reviews a selection of papers to present the key findings regarding the influence of environmental CSR on consumer responses.

One of the most frequently researched outcome variables is brand attitude, which is positively influenced by CSR (Peloza & Shang, 2011). Brand attitude is an internal consumer variable and, thus, often has a positive influence on other consumer responses such as purchase intentions (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004). Despite higher purchase intentions for socially responsible products, consumers differ in their willingness to pay for these products. On the one hand, researchers found that consumers were willing to pay a price premium for organically grown products (Trudel & Cotte, 2009), environmentally friendly products (Haws et al., 2014), or products that benefit a cause through cause-related marketing (Koschate-Fischer et al., 2012). On the other hand, other researchers found that consumers were not willing to buy environmentally friendly products when they were sold at a higher price than regular products (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004; Borin et al., 2013).

As mentioned earlier, consumers form relationships with brands similar to the relationships they form with people (Fournier, 1998). Du et al. (2007) argue that CSR can be regarded as informative about the fundamental values or character of a brand, which makes it easier for the consumer to identify and form a relationship with the brand. As a result, CSR leads to higher levels of consumer-brand identification (Du et al., 2007). Similar to brand attitude, consumer-brand identification is an internal consumer variable that influences other consumer responses (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004). Higher levels of consumer-brand identification particularly lead to long-term relational benefits such as loyalty and advocacy behaviors (Du et al., 2007). For instance, consumers are more willing to talk positively about a brand and recommend it to their peers when it is known for environmentally responsible business practices (Xie, Bagozzi, & Grønhaug, 2015). An environmentally friendly reputation can even cause consumers' resistance to negative information (Du et al., 2007; Xie et al., 2015). For example, after a product-harm crisis,

the reputation as an environmentally responsible company could act as an insurance policy. Rather than blaming the company, consumers attributed the crisis to external circumstances, which led to a reduced negative effect on brand attitude and consumer behavior (Klein & Dawar, 2004). Similarly, Bolton & Mattila (2015) found that CSR had a positive impact on consumer satisfaction and loyalty after a service failure.

Overall, previous findings suggest that environmental CSR can positively influence consumers' affective and behavioral responses. Bhattacharya & Sen (2004) observed that, in general, the effect of CSR on variables internal to the consumer, e.g., awareness or attitude is larger and more easily accessible than the impact on external variables such as purchase intention or willingness to talk about a brand. Moreover, there are many consumer- or brand-related factors that influence consumer responses to CSR, which make it difficult to generalize consumer responses to CSR (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004; Sen et al., 2016). The subsequent sections present and discuss some factors that influence consumer responses to CSR that are relevant for this thesis in more detail.²

2.2.4.1. The Influence of Brand Characteristics on Consumer Responses to CSR

Previous research suggested that consumer responses to CSR differ between companies and brands (Du et al., 2007, 2011; van Doorn et al., 2017). Consequently, researchers have started to examine the impact of different brand characteristics on consumer reactions to CSR. This revealed that the brand's product category affects consumer responses to CSR, meaning that consumers may react positively to CSR initiatives in one product category, but negatively when these initiatives are pursued by brands that compete in another product category. For instance, Luchs et al. (2010) showed that consumers' preference for sustainable products depended on the benefits sought of a particular product category. Consumers preferred sustainable products in categories for which they valued gentleness, e.g., baby shampoo or body lotion. In contrast, they preferred non-sustainable options for car tires, laundry detergent, and other product categories for which they valued strength-related product attributes. The influence of product category on consumer responses to CSR is also supported by Essoussi & Linton

² For a full review of factors influencing consumer responses to CSR see Bhattacharya & Sen (2004) and Sen et al. (2016).

(2010), who found that consumers' willingness to pay for recycled products depended on the functional risk associated with the respective product category.

Moreover, previous research investigated the impact of brands' success in the market on consumer reactions to CSR (Du et al., 2011; Luo & Bhattacharya, 2006; van Doorn et al., 2017). In particular, van Doorn et al. (2017) looked at different facets of brand success to examine whether and when brand success impacts consumer responses to CSR. Their study showed that unknown brands benefit more from positive customer attitudes when they engage in CSR than well-known brands. This observation is in line with Du et al. (2011), who showed that market challengers benefit more from engaging in CSR than market leaders. Van Doorn et al. (2017) attributed their finding to ceiling effects meaning that popular brands already generate positive consumer responses without CSR engagement. Therefore, there is little potential for CSR to further enhance consumers' behavior toward popular brands. Also, the study by van Doorn et al. (2017) investigated the impact of brands' innovativeness as another indicator of brand success, finding that innovative brands benefit more from engaging in CSR than less innovative brands. This finding is in accordance with previous studies arguing that CSR often requires substantial resources and, consequently, the CSR engagement of less successful firms may be viewed as a misallocation of scarce resources which harms consumer responses to CSR (Luo & Bhattacharya, 2006; Newman et al., 2014).

In addition, it emerged that the type of CSR initiative that the brand engages in also influences consumers' responses to CSR. For example, Du et al. (2007) found that consumers are more loyal and show advocacy behaviors toward brands that engage in business-practice and product-related CSR by integrating CSR with their core strategy than toward brands that merely engage in philanthropic CSR by donating money.

2.2.4.2. The Influence of Attributed Motives and CSR Skepticism on Consumer Responses to CSR

Previous research showed that consumers often question why brands engage in CSR and that their attributed motives for CSR engagement influence their responses to CSR initiatives (Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Du et al., 2007; Koschate-Fischer et al., 2012; Trudel & Cotte, 2009). In general, consumers perceive extrinsic, self-centered motives such as increasing sales or profits negatively, which, in turn, has adverse effects on their behavior.

On the other hand, consumers perceive intrinsic, other-centered motives that show the brand's genuine concern about the environment positively. Hence, they also have a positive effect on consumer responses.

Ellen, Webb, & Mohr (2006) argued that self- and other-centered motives are not two ends of a continuum, but that many consumers perceive a company's engagement as a combination of extrinsic and intrinsic motives. Therefore, self- and other-centered motives represent two distinct constructs and must be assessed separately. Besides, Ellen et al. (2006) proposed that self- and other-centered motives must be further differentiated into components with different valence. They suggested that other-centered motives can be divided into values- and stakeholder-driven motives. Values-driven motives relate to a company's purely benevolent motivation, which is perceived positively; stakeholder-driven motives suggest that the company solely engages in CSR because their stakeholders expect it. Respectively, stakeholder-driven motives are viewed negatively. Self-centered motives can be differentiated into strategic and egoistic motives. Egoistic motives refer to beliefs that companies are taking advantage of a cause rather than supporting it; hence, they are perceived negatively. Strategic motives refer to companies' engagement in CSR to reach their business goals, e.g., increase profit or market share while supporting a cause. Ellen et al. (2006) stated that consumers accept strategic motives and perceive them as positive self-centered motives because they are aware that firms also have an economic responsibility. Hence, this suggests that the effect of CSR on consumer behavior not only depends upon the attribution of intrinsic or extrinsic motives but also upon their positive (values- and strategic-driven) or negative (egoistic and stakeholder-driven) valence.

Skarmeas & Leonidou (2013) criticized the categorization of attributed motives into positively and negatively valenced self- and other-centered motives. In particular, they argued that strategic motives benefit the company and society, and respectively represent a combination of self- and other-centered motives. Also, they found that consumers tolerate strategic motives, but disconfirmed that they are perceived positively. Furthermore, Skarmeas & Leonidou (2013) proposed to assess the effect of attributed motives on consumer behavior not directly, but indirectly through CSR skepticism. CSR skepticism refers to the extent to which consumers question and doubt CSR efforts. Perceived motives influence the level of CSR skepticism. Negative motives (egoistic- and

stakeholder-driven) increase CSR skepticism, whereas positive motives (values-driven) inhibit CSR skepticism. Romani, Grappi, & Bagozzi (2016) supported these findings. They found that intrinsic motives inhibited skepticism, and extrinsic motives increased CSR skepticism, whereby they viewed intrinsic motives as positive and extrinsic motives as negative. CSR skepticism mediates the effect of attributed motives on consumer behavior; hence, high levels of CSR skepticism have a negative influence on consumer behavior (Romani et al., 2016; Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013).

Overall, it emerges that the influence of attributed motives on consumer responses to CSR depends upon the positive or negative valence of attributed motives rather than upon the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motives. However, in most cases, intrinsic motives tend to be perceived positively and extrinsic motives negatively. Furthermore, it emerges that the influence of attributed motives can also be assessed through CSR skepticism. Regardless of the conceptualization of attributed motives, positive motives inhibit CSR skepticism, and negative motives increase CSR skepticism, which, respectively, has a negative influence on consumer behavior.

2.2.5. Summary of CSR

This chapter showed that CSR is not a new topic, but a concept that has evolved into a broad concept considering a large number of stakeholders and issues over time. Following the modern understanding of CSR, this thesis views those firms and brands as environmentally responsible that prevent potential negative impacts of their business and engage in philanthropic and ethical CSR initiatives to benefit the environment.

Previous research found that CSR can have a positive influence on consumer behavior. However, it is difficult to generalize consumer responses to CSR because there are many consumer- and brand-related factors that influence consumer responses to CSR and must, therefore, also be considered in the present study.

2.3. The Stereotypic Perception of CSR

This section completes the literature review by linking the two concepts. However, since brand stereotypes are a relatively new concept, there has been only a small number of studies examining the influence of CSR on consumers' warmth and competence

perception. This section reviews the findings of these studies and additional research investigating the influence of CSR on similar concepts, e.g., corporate ability, to establish whether CSR is regarded as a signal of warmth and competence.

2.3.1. CSR as a Signal of Warmth

Aaker et al. (2010) found that non-profit companies were perceived as higher in warmth than for-profit companies. Although the business case for CSR suggests that CSR has a positive effect on firm performance, CSR initiatives are primarily viewed as non-profit activities because they do not directly generate a profit. Therefore, the finding of Aaker et al. (2010) can be transferred to the context of CSR, suggesting that companies with CSR engagement are perceived as higher in warmth than firms without CSR engagement.

This proposition is further supported by Shea & Hawn (2019). They found that firms that ensured fair overseas labor practices, i.e., social CSR, were perceived as warmer than firms that pursued irresponsible practices and firms that did not engage in any way. Similarly, Bolton & Mattila (2015) showed that firms that donated to environmental causes or engaged in sustainability initiatives were perceived as warm. Also, previous research found that, through high levels of warmth, CSR increased customer satisfaction and loyalty after service failure (Bolton & Mattila, 2015) as well as company reputation and purchase intentions (Shea & Hawn, 2019). However, Aaker et al. (2010) stated that high levels of warmth after CSR alone were not enough to increase willingness to buy but that high competence was also required to generate favorable consumer responses.

Although previous research in this field is limited, it proposes that CSR is a signal of warmth, and, respectively, organizations that engage in CSR initiatives are perceived as higher in warmth than organizations without CSR engagement (Aaker et al., 2010; Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Shea & Hawn, 2019). Shea & Hawn (2019) argued that the effect of CSR on warmth is straightforward because “CSR behavior resembles the same set of attributes that social psychologists traditionally associate with being high in warmth” (p.1611). Warmth is associated with positive intentions toward others and traits like friendliness, sincerity, helpfulness, and trustworthiness (Fiske et al., 2007). CSR implies the alignment with norms of care and concern for others, which indicates positive and sincere intentions (Bolton & Mattila, 2015). Moreover, Aaker (1996) suggested that considering the environment in their decision-making may enhance the liking and

trustworthiness of a company, which also represents an attribute of warmth. Therefore, CSR can be understood as a signal of warmth per definition.

2.3.2. CSR as a Signal of Competence

Competence is associated with traits like intelligence, efficiency, and skill (Fiske et al., 2007). The competence of a brand is often inferred from its performance features such as quality, reliability, durability, and consistency (Kervyn et al., 2012). Therefore, from a definitional point, CSR does not imply competence in the same way as it implies warmth.

Aaker et al. (2010) found that non-profits were perceived of lower competence than for-profit companies. As mentioned earlier, the findings regarding non-profits can be transferred to companies engaging in CSR as CSR initiatives are primarily viewed as non-profit activities. Hence, this suggests that firms with CSR engagement are perceived as lower in competence than firms without CSR engagement. However, Aaker et al. (2010) also found that the negative effect disappeared, and the perceived competence of non-profits increased to the level of for-profits when money had been primed. Bolton & Mattila (2015) proposed that this creates a case similar to a profit-oriented company that engaged in social initiatives meaning that CSR does not influence competence perception. This is supported by Shea & Hawn (2019), who found that organizations' engagement in social CSR had no direct effect on organizations' perceived competence. However, they showed that perceived competence increased through a halo-effect of warmth, i.e., the CSR firm was regarded as warm and through it also as competent. Opposed to warmth, Shea & Hawn (2019) found that perceived competence did not mediate the effect of CSR on consumer responses.

On the other hand, Bolton & Mattila (2015) showed that engagement in CSR could also influence the perceived competence of a firm. They found that organizations that communicated sustainability as part of their core business strategy, i.e., business-practice and product-related environmental CSR, were regarded as higher in competence than organizations without CSR engagement. Moreover, higher competence perception led to more favorable consumer responses. In contrast, marginal CSR engagement, e.g., a philanthropic donation to an environmental cause, did not affect competence perception. This proposes that it depends upon the type of CSR initiative whether CSR is viewed as a signal of competence: Whereas the social CSR initiative in the study by Shea & Hawn

(2019) had no influence on perceived competence, Bolton & Mattila (2015) showed that an environmental initiative could enhance perceived competence. Moreover, their results propose that it does not solely depend upon the distinction between social or environmental CSR, but also upon the type of initiative, i.e., business-practice, product-related, or philanthropic CSR.

This proposition is further supported by research examining the influence of CSR on the perceived ability of a firm/brand (Bhardwaj et al., 2018; Crespo & Inacio, 2019; Du et al., 2007). Corporate ability refers to the expertise of a firm in producing and delivering its outputs (Brown & Dacin, 1997). Corporate ability not only relates to high quality, but it is also associated with customer orientation and innovativeness (Marín, Cuestas, & Román, 2016). Hence, it can be viewed as a construct similar to competence.

Crespo & Inacio (2019) found that consumers' association of a firm with CSR had a positive influence on corporate ability and, through it, on consumers' loyalty. Similarly, Du et al. (2007) found that consumers' awareness of brands' CSR initiatives enhanced the perceived ability of brands, which, in turn, improved consumers' loyalty and advocacy behavior toward the brand. However, they also observed that some CSR initiatives had a larger effect on perceived ability than others. Their study showed that the perceived ability of brands that integrated CSR into core competencies, i.e., business-practice and product-related CSR, was higher than the perceived ability of brands that merely affiliated with a cause by donating money, i.e., philanthropic CSR. These findings are in accordance with the finding by Bolton & Mattila (2015) that it depends upon the type of initiative, whether CSR is viewed as a signal of competence or corporate ability.

Bhardwaj et al. (2018) extended these findings by proposing which CSR initiatives enhance corporate ability. In their study, they distinguished between two types of CSR: company ability relevant and company ability irrelevant initiatives. They used TOM's initiative of donating a pair of shoes to a child in need for each product sold, i.e., cause-related marketing, as an example of company ability irrelevant initiatives. On the other hand, they referred to Procter & Gamble's investment in green technology to produce more environmentally friendly cleaning products as an example of a company ability relevant initiative. This suggests that philanthropic initiatives, such as cause-related marketing, are company ability irrelevant initiatives. While business-practice and

product-related CSR initiatives to increase the environmental friendliness of products and business processes represent company ability relevant initiatives.

Overall, the findings regarding the influence of CSR on perceived competence and corporate ability are similar, suggesting that it depends on the type of initiative whether CSR is perceived as a signal of competence (Bhardwaj et al., 2018; Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Du et al., 2007). It emerges that, so far, social initiatives were found to have no direct effect on perceived competence (Shea & Hawn, 2019), while environmental CSR could enhance competence perception (Bolton & Mattila, 2015). Also, philanthropic initiatives had no impact on competence perception, while business-practice and product-related initiatives were viewed as a signal of competence (Bhardwaj et al., 2018; Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Du et al. 2007).

In particular, environmental business-practice and product-related CSR initiatives signal competence because the adaptation of more environmentally friendly business processes and development of sustainable products requires specific knowledge and capabilities of a firm (Dangelico, Pontrandolfo, & Pujari, 2013; Hofmann, Theyel & Wood, 2012). For instance, firms must have the innovative capacity and must be willing to take the risk of changing existing processes and products (Hofmann et al., 2012). They must exploit their existing and acquire new knowledge, e.g., about clean production processes, alternative materials, or environmental standards, by training their employees, hiring new employees, or external experts. Firms must have substantial financial resources for the acquisition of knowledge and more environmentally friendly technologies and machinery (Dangelico et al., 2013). Also, it requires close networks of suppliers and customers to ensure that people and processes are not only aligned within their organization but that environmental friendliness increases along the entire supply chain (Dangelico et al., 2013; Hofmann et al., 2012). Hence, it emerges that firms must be highly capable to become more environmentally friendly through business-practice and product-related CSR. Consequently, these environmental initiatives represent a signal of firms' competence.

2.3.3. Summary of the Stereotypic Perception of CSR

Previous literature suggested that CSR engagement is perceived as warm, and firms that engage in CSR are perceived as warmer than firms without CSR engagement. On the other hand, the findings are not as straightforward whether CSR is regarded as competent,

and, respectively, companies that engage in CSR are perceived as more competent. However, as mentioned earlier, the type of initiative has a considerable influence on consumer responses to CSR. While CSR was perceived as warm irrespective of the type of CSR, previous studies suggested that the type of initiative also influences whether CSR is viewed as a signal of competence.

The literature review showed that social CSR initiatives and philanthropic initiatives concerning donations of money or products have no effect on the perceived competence of an organization. In contrast, firms require specific knowledge and capabilities to pursue business-practice and product-related CSR initiatives to become more environmentally friendly. Respectively, the engagement in business-practice and product-related environmental CSR signals that the firm is capable, i.e., high in competence. Hence, environmental CSR initiatives beyond the marginal engagement of donations may represent a signal of warmth and competence, and, therefore, enhance the perceived warmth and competence of an organization.

Furthermore, previous studies showed that higher warmth and competence of those firms engaging in CSR might generate more favorable consumer responses as opposed to firms without CSR engagement. However, the results on the underlying influence of warmth and competence on consumer behavior are relatively inconclusive. Whereas Aaker et al. (2010) found that competence had a stronger influence than warmth, Bolton & Mattila (2015) showed that warmth had a larger effect on consumer behavior, and Shea & Hawn (2019) found that only warmth determined consumers' responses to CSR.

3. Hypothesis Development

The literature review set the stage for the development of the conceptual model and hypotheses that are tested in this thesis. The conceptual framework underlying this research is illustrated in Figure 2. It consists of two models since this research pursues two different objectives, which are also examined separately. Model 1 investigates the influence of environmental CSR on consumers' brand stereotypes. Model 2 links brand stereotypes after CSR with consumer responses to environmental CSR. It shows brand attitude as a mediator of the respective relationship while considering CSR skepticism as a potential moderator.

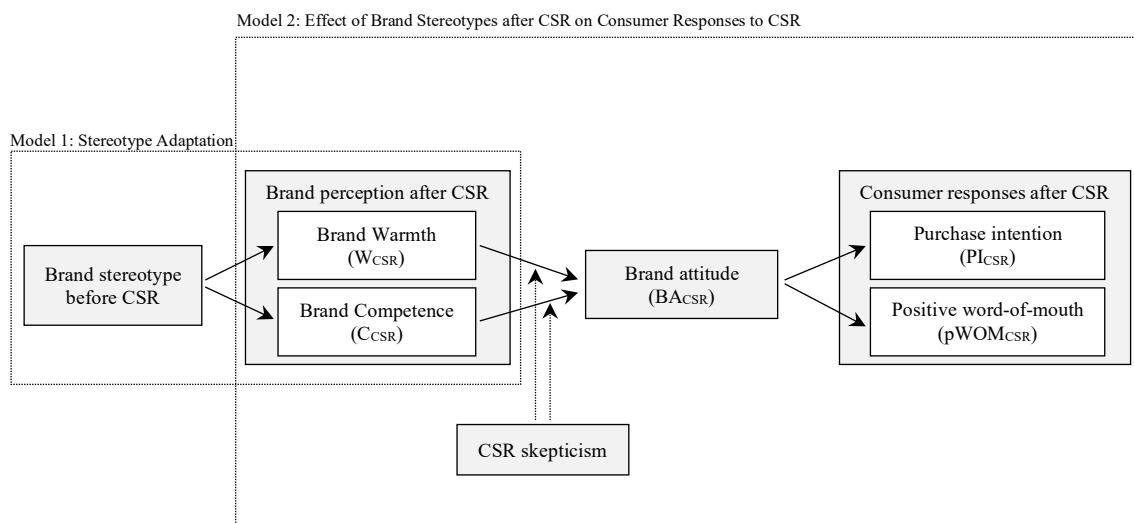


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

3.1. The Influence of Environmental CSR on Brand Stereotypes

Previous research on the perception of other people proposed that additional information on warmth or competence for the subject of interest can lead to an adaptation of stereotype content (Cuddy et al., 2004). Even though brands have been given human-like characteristics and are perceived along the same perceptual dimensions as other people, no research has investigated whether additional information influences brand stereotype content. Therefore, this study investigates whether, similar to social stereotypes, additional information about the brand of interest leads to an adaptation of brand stereotypes. More precisely, it examines whether the engagement of a brand in a business-practice and product-related environmental CSR initiative, i.e., a fashion brand's

introduction of a sustainable product line, leads to higher perceived warmth and competence of the respective brand after CSR.

Moreover, this research examines whether the pre-post CSR difference in brand warmth and competence differs across brands with different initial stereotypes due to assimilation and contrast effects. Previous research suggested that consumer reactions to CSR differ across companies and brands and has started to investigate brand characteristics that may cause this variation (Du et al., 2011; Luo & Bhattacharya, 2006; van Doorn et al., 2017). Shea & Hawn (2019) found in an organizational context that assimilation or contrast between the CSR initiative and the firm's country of origin stereotype causes different consumer responses. However, so far, no study has considered assimilation or contrast between the CSR initiative and brand stereotype as a potential explanation for different consumer responses to brands' CSR initiatives. Therefore, this study investigates whether consumer responses, in this particular case, the pre-post CSR difference in brand warmth and competence, differ across brands depending upon their initial brand warmth and competence perception.

3.1.1. Pre-Post CSR Differences in Brand Warmth and Competence

The literature review revealed that CSR is perceived as an activity that is associated with warmth traits and that firms that engage CSR initiatives are perceived as warmer than firms without CSR engagement (Aaker et al., 2010; Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Shea & Hawn, 2019). Whereas previous research suggested that all types of CSR enhance the perceived warmth of an organization, it emerged that the effect of CSR on perceived competence depends upon the type of CSR initiative (Bhardwaj et al., 2018; Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Du et al., 2007). Shea & Hawn (2019) found that social CSR initiatives do not influence on the perceived competence of a firm. They argued that the social initiative in their study comprised no competence-related information and, hence, did not directly affect competence perception. Similarly, philanthropic initiatives that merely concern monetary or product donations do not indicate, and consequently do not increase the competence of the organization pursuing the initiative (Bhardwaj et al., 2018; Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Du et al., 2007). In contrast, it requires specific knowledge and capabilities to pursue business-practice and product-related environmental CSR initiatives (Dangelico et al., 2013; Hofmann et al., 2012). Therefore, the engagement in these

initiatives signals competence and, respectively, enhances the perceived competence of the organization (Bhardwaj et al., 2018; Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Du et al., 2007).

Even though previous studies concentrated on the influence of CSR on the perception of organizations (Aaker et al., 2010; Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Du et al., 2007; Shea & Hawn, 2019), it is expected that the effect is similar at the brand level. Moreover, previous research solely compared the perception of organizations with CSR engagement to the perception of organizations without CSR engagement (Aaker et al., 2010; Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Du et al., 2007; Shea & Hawn, 2019). In contrast, the present study looks at the influence of CSR on initial brand stereotype dimensions to examine whether CSR has the power to change brand stereotypes. Nevertheless, it is expected that the effect will be similar so that the introduction of a sustainable product line, i.e., a business-practice and product-related environmental initiative, enhances the perceived warmth and competence of a brand:

H1: a) The perceived warmth and b) perceived competence of a brand are higher after the brand's engagement in environmental CSR.

3.1.2. The Role of Initial Brand Stereotypes on Stereotype Adaptation

The literature review showed that human judgments are always relative comparisons. Therefore, additional information is perceived in the context of prior information, which serves as the reference frame for the evaluation of new information (Sherif & Hovland, 1961). Depending upon the relevant reference frame, new information either confirms or contrasts with the previous perception, which often leads to an adaptation of stereotype content. In the present context, initial brand stereotypes serve as the reference frame for the evaluation of new brand-related information, i.e., CSR engagement. Hence, it depends upon the initial brand stereotype, whether additional information about the brand's engagement in environmental CSR leads to assimilation or contrast.

Previous research suggested that the environmental CSR initiative in the present study, i.e., a fashion brand's introduction of a sustainable product line, is viewed as a warm and competent activity (Bhardwaj et al., 2018; Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Du et al., 2007; Shea & Hawn, 2019). Therefore, the environmental initiative matches the brand stereotype of a warm (competent) brand. Congruent information reinforces and strengthens the

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previous stereotype through assimilation (Biernat, 2006). However, similar to other consumer responses to CSR, it is expected that there are also ceiling effects for brand perception (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004; van Doorn et al., 2017). This suggests that for brands, which are already high on warmth (competence), the environmental CSR initiative confirms their previous stereotype but has little potential to further increase brand warmth (competence).

On the other hand, the environmental CSR initiative contrasts with the stereotype of brands that are perceived as low in warmth (competence). The engagement of a brand in an environmental initiative signals the brand's care and concern about the environment, i.e., warmth (Bolton & Mattila, 2015). Moreover, a brand must be competent to introduce a sustainable fashion product line, which involves adapting more environmentally friendly business processes and developing sustainable product alternatives (Dangelico et al., 2013; Hofmann et al., 2012). Therefore, the environmental initiative, as a signal of warmth and competence, positively disconfirms a perceived lack of warmth (competence). Consequently, it is expected that the environmental initiative increases the perceived warmth (competence) of those brands that are initially viewed as lower in warmth (competence) through positive contrasts.

Even though environmental CSR is expected to have a positive effect on perceived brand warmth and competence overall (H1), it is expected that some brands benefit from a larger pre-post CSR increase in brand warmth and competence due to assimilation and contrast effects:

H2: The increase in a) perceived brand warmth and b) perceived brand competence through environmental CSR differs across stereotypical categories, such that:

- a) The increase in perceived brand warmth is larger for brands that are initially perceived as lower in warmth than for brands with a higher initial level of warmth.
- b) The increase in perceived brand competence is larger for brands that are initially perceived as lower in competence than for brands with a higher initial level of competence.

3.2. The Influence of Brand Stereotypes on Consumer Responses to CSR

Branding literature suggested that similarly to social interactions, perceived brand warmth and competence influence consumers' affective responses and, through them, their behavioral responses to brands. In particular, competence has been found to have a positive effect on consumer behavior (Aaker et al., 2010; Chen et al., 2014; Halkias et al., 2016). Still, brand warmth has also been identified as having an influence on consumer behavior, e.g., it explains consumer decisions in spontaneous situations (Diamantopoulos et al., 2017) or leads to higher consumer-brand identification, which results in favorable consumer behavior (Kolbl et al., 2019).

So far, previous research in the CSR context offered inconsistent findings regarding the underlying influence of warmth and competence on consumer responses to CSR (Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Shea & Hawn, 2019). While Shea & Hawn (2019)'s study was placed in the context of social CSR, Bolton & Mattila (2015) examined the influence of stereotypes on consumer behavior in an environmental context. Nevertheless, both found that through higher warmth, CSR had a positive effect on company reputation and purchase intention (Shea & Hawn, 2019) as well as customer satisfaction and loyalty (Bolton & Mattila, 2015). Therefore, it is also expected in the present study that warmth after CSR predicts consumers' responses to the environmental CSR initiative.

Opposed to previous findings from branding literature, Shea & Hawn (2019) found no effect of competence on consumer behavior. However, they proposed that this effect may differ for other types of CSR that are viewed as more competent than the social CSR initiative in their study. Bolton & Mattila (2015) revealed that, depending on the type of environmental initiative, organizations engaging in CSR were also perceived as more competent than organizations without CSR engagement. Also, they found that through higher perceived competence, CSR had a positive effect on consumer satisfaction and loyalty after a service failure. Thus, their finding is following the proposition of Shea & Hawn (2019) that other types of CSR initiatives are perceived as competent, and, in that case, perceived competence also influences consumer behavior. The literature review suggested that a business-practice and product-related environmental CSR initiative, such as the introduction of a sustainable fashion product line in the present study, is viewed as

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a signal of competence. Consequently, it is expected that not only brand warmth but also brand competence predicts consumer responses to CSR in this research.

In particular, the present study investigates the effect of brand stereotypes after CSR on consumer responses to CSR via brand attitude using two different consumer outcome variables: purchase intention and pWOM. Purchase intention refers to consumers' willingness to buy a particular brand or product (Dodds, Monroe, & Grewal, 1991), while pWOM relates to consumers' willingness to talk positively about a specific brand and recommend it to others (Alexandrov, Lilly, & Babakus, 2013). In line with the observed cognition-affect-behavior sequence in previous stereotyping literature, it is expected that perceived brand warmth and competence influence these behavioral variables by eliciting affective responses (Cuddy et al., 2007; Davvetas & Halkias, 2019; Diamantopoulos et al., 2017; Halkias et al., 2016; Ivens et al., 2015). Hence, it is predicted that perceived brand warmth and competence affect consumers' brand attitude, which, in turn, influences behavioral variables. More precisely, it is expected that the higher a brand is perceived in terms of brand warmth and competence after CSR, the more positive are consumers' attitudes toward the brand, which leads to higher purchase intentions after CSR and a higher pWOM after CSR.

H3: a) Brand warmth and b) brand competence after CSR have a positive effect on consumers' brand attitude, which then positively influences consumers' purchase intentions.

H4: a) Brand warmth and b) brand competence after CSR have a positive effect on consumers' brand attitude, which then positively influences consumers' pWOM.

Moreover, the literature review showed that consumers often question why brands engage in CSR and that the attribution of the engagement to positive (negative) motives has a positive (negative) influence on consumers' responses to CSR initiatives. Instead of assessing the impact of different motives on consumer behavior, their influence can also be assessed through CSR skepticism (Romani et al., 2016; Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013).

CSR skepticism refers to the extent to which consumers doubt and question CSR efforts. The attribution of positive motives reduces consumers' doubts, whereas perceived negative motives lead to high levels of CSR skepticism, which, in turn, has a negative influence on behavioral variables (Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013). Consequently, it

emerges that CSR skepticism is an essential consumer-related variable that must be considered when measuring consumer responses to CSR.

Overall, it is expected that high levels of brand warmth and competence after CSR enhance consumers' brand attitude, which causes positive consumer responses to CSR (H3-H4). However, it is expected that consumers will not have positive brand attitudes if they question the intention behind the brand's CSR engagement even though they perceive the brand as warm and/or competent in general. Therefore, it is expected that CSR skepticism moderates the relationship between brand warmth and competence after CSR and brand attitude:

H5: CSR skepticism reduces the positive effect of a) brand warmth and b) brand competence after CSR on brand attitude after CSR.

3.3. Control Variables

To obtain better statistical insights regarding the influence of environmental CSR on consumers' brand stereotypes and brand-related behavior, (potentially) confounding variables must be considered and controlled for. Based on previous research, brand familiarity (BF), brand ownership (BO), perceived brand globalness (PBG), perceived brand localness (PBL), brand involvement (BI), product category involvement (PCI), environmental responsibility of the brand before the CSR manipulation (ER), and socio-demographic variables were included as covariates in the present study. The subsequent section shortly introduces and explains the importance of each of the variables.

Brand Familiarity and Brand Ownership

BF refers to "the number of product-related experiences that have been accumulated by the consumer," including exposure to advertisements, information search, product usage as well as interactions with other persons using the product (Alba & Hutchinson, 1987, p. 411). Consistent with prior research on brand stereotypes, BF is included as a control variable to measure whether respondents are familiar with the brand so that they can evaluate the perception of the brand (Ivens et al., 2015). It is important to control for BF because brand perception may differ depending upon the respondent's level of BF. Furthermore, previous research found that BF had a positive influence on consumers'

brand attitudes and behavior (Diamantopoulos et al., 2017; Halkias et al., 2016; Kolbl et al., 2019).

In addition to BF, BO is included as another covariate. BO refers to the frequency of purchases of the brand in the past (Kolbl et al., 2019). BO is considered as a covariate because the actual clients of a brand might perceive the brand differently than the average consumer, e.g., customers of luxury brands might perceive luxury brands as well-intentioned, whereas they are instead seen as ill-intentioned by most consumers (Kervyn et al., 2012). Hence, BF and BO are included as covariates to better assess and control for the confounding effects of previous brand experiences on brand-related behavior.

Perceived Brand Globalness and Perceived Brand Localness

Previous research found that PBG and PBL of a brand influence the formation of consumers' brand stereotypes as well as their attitudes and behavior. PBG refers to the degree to which "consumers believe that the brand is marketed in multiple countries and is recognized as global in these countries" (Steenkamp, Batra, & Alden, 2003, p. 54). On the other hand, PBL is related to the extent to which "a brand is being recognized as a local player and a symbol or icon of a local culture" (Swoboda, Pennemann, & Taube, 2012, p. 72). Even though PBG and PBL represent two distinct constructs, they are not mutually exclusive as many global brands adapt parts of their strategy to the needs of the local market, hence, generating perceptions of localness and globalness at the same time (Halkias et al., 2016).

The extent to which brands are perceived as global and/or local influences consumers' brand perception (Davvetas & Halkias, 2019; Kolbl et al., 2019). Due to their global availability and success, consumers often perceive global brands to be valuable and of high quality, which increases their competence perception. On the other hand, the ability and willingness of a brand to adapt their strategy to the needs of the local market are often perceived as a signal of warmth. Halkias et al. (2016) found that PBG and PBL influenced consumers' attitudes and behavior not only through brand stereotypes but also directly. Consequently, the measures for PBG and PBL are included as covariates to control for their influence on brand attitude and behavioral responses to CSR.

Consumer Involvement

Consumer involvement refers to “a person’s perceived relevance of the object based on inherent needs, values, and interests“ (Zaichkowsky, 1985, p. 342). Here, the object can refer to different objects of interest with BI and PCI being of particular interest in this research. BI refers to the level of interest in and personal relevance of a brand to a consumer, which determines the consumer’s cognitive, emotional, and behavioral activity related to the brand (Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014). In the present study, consumers with high BI may process the information about the CSR engagement of the brand differently than consumers with low BI, which may influence the extent to which stereotype content is adapted. Furthermore, consumers with high BI may have more positive brand attitudes and show more favorable behavioral responses to the brand than consumers with low levels of BI. Consequently, BI is considered as a covariate when examining the influence of CSR on brand stereotypes and consumer responses to CSR.

Besides, PCI is included as a covariate, which refers to “the degree of interest of a consumer in a product category on an on-going basis” (Mittal & Lee, 1988, p. 44). In general, consumers with high PCI are willing to exert a greater cognitive effort to process (new) information and show more favorable brand attitudes and behavioral intentions than consumers with low PCI (Dens & De Pelsmacker, 2010). PCI varies widely between consumers and must be considered as a control variable when investigating consumer behavior within one particular product category. This research focuses solely on one product category, i.e., fashion, and respondents’ interest in fashion is likely to differ. Therefore, PCI is included as a covariate when examining the influence of CSR on brand stereotype content and the influence of brand stereotypes on consumers’ brand attitudes and behavior after CSR.

Perceived Environmental Responsibility of the Brand

One of the goals of this research is to investigate how additional information about the CSR engagement influences consumers’ brand stereotypes. Therefore, brands with a common reputation as CSR brands will not be considered as brands for the study. However, nowadays, most companies engage to some extent in CSR, and respondents may be more or less informed about these initiatives. As a result, the CSR scenario may

not represent completely new information for some respondents. Thus, it is important to measure and control for consumers' ER when investigating brand stereotype changes.

Socio-Demographic Variables

Lastly, demographic variables (gender, age, income, occupation) are included as potential control variables. Öberseder et al. (2011) identified the financial situation of the consumer as an important criterion that determines consumer responses to CSR. They stated that consumers' financial situation not solely influences price perception and willingness to pay for socially responsible brands but that it rather represents a prerequisite for considering CSR as a relevant purchase criterion. Therefore, income as an indicator of the respondents' financial situation is considered as a control variable when examining the influence of CSR on brand stereotypes and their respective impact on consumers' behavioral responses to CSR.

Regarding the influence of other socio-demographic variables, previous research suggested that they do not influence consumer responses to CSR. Diamantopoulos, Schlegelmilch, Sinkovics, & Bohlen (2003) found that socio-demographic characteristics did not play a role in characterizing green consumers, but consumers with different characteristics were equally environmentally conscious. They attributed their finding to the fact that "the environment is no longer a marginal issue and hence, high levels of environmental consciousness are not only reflected in certain sectors of the consumer base" (p. 477). These findings are supported by Auger, Devinney, Louviere, & Burke (2008). They found that the extent to which consumers considered CSR as part of their purchase decisions differed, indicating that a segment of socially conscious consumers exists. However, they also found that gender, age, and education could not be used to characterize these socially conscious consumers.

Nevertheless, gender, age, income, and occupation are assessed to characterize the sample and test them as potential control variables when examining the influence of CSR on brand stereotypes and their respective influence on consumer responses to CSR.

4. Methodology

This chapter presents the methodology of the empirical research that was conducted to test the conceptual framework. The study was based on primary data, meaning that the data was specifically collected for this research instead of using secondary data that was previously collected for other research purposes and readily available (Babin & Zikmund, 2016). The decision to work with primary data was based on the justification that primary data allows to perfectly tailor the data to answer the research questions at hand. This research used a quantitative survey to obtain primary data.

First, this chapter describes the research design of the empirical study. Then, it presents the design of the pre-test and its results, which is followed by the methodology of the main study. It includes a description of the relevant measurement instruments, the data collection procedure, and the characteristics of the sample drawn.

4.1. Research Design

This research applied a mixed factorial design to investigate the influence of environmental CSR on consumers' brand stereotypes and subsequent brand-related behavior. A mixed factorial design is a combination of a within-subjects and between-subjects design. Hence, it involves two or more independent variables, of which at least one is a within-subjects factor, and at least one is a between-subjects factor (Field, 2013).

A within-subjects (or repeated-measures) design is a type of experimental design in which each participant is exposed to all treatments (Babin & Zikmund, 2016). In the case of this study, the treatment was a fictitious article that informed participants about the CSR engagement of the brand. All participants were exposed to this treatment. Brand stereotypes and behavioral variables were measured before and after the treatment to examine whether there were differences pre-post CSR. Therefore, the repeated-measures factor refers to different points in time. In doing so, each subject served as his/her own control group instead of assigning participants to experimental (CSR) and control (no CSR) conditions. This type of research design increases internal validity so that the variation of dependent variables can be attributed to the CSR manipulation instead of individual differences (Field, 2013).

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Moreover, the present study combined the pre-post CSR repeated-measures design with a between-subjects design. In a between-subjects design, respondents are assigned to different treatments, and each respondent only experiences one experimental treatment to reduce order effects and respondents' fatigue (Babin & Zikmund, 2016). In the present research, the between-subjects treatment referred to the use of different brands. This research used different brands to find out whether assimilation or contrast between the CSR initiative and the initial brand stereotype before CSR influenced the extent to which brand warmth and competence changed pre-post CSR. Therefore, a pre-test was conducted to identify brands that represent the four different stereotypes that result from the combination of high or low warmth and competence: HCHW, HCLW, LCHW, and LCLW. Consequently, the research was set-up as a 2 (before/after) x 4 (initial stereotypical categories) mixed factorial design in which every respondent was randomly assigned to one brand for which he/she stated brand stereotypes and behavioral intentions before and after the CSR treatment.³

This research used real brands instead of creating fictitious brands with different brand stereotypes. The advantage of using real brands is that it increases the external validity of the study. On the other hand, real brands often reduce the internal validity of studies because consumers' a priori associations with brands influence their behavior regardless of the treatment, which makes it difficult to attribute the variation of dependent variables to the manipulation. However, the repeated-measures design allowed to control for a priori brand associations and look at the impact of the CSR engagement in isolation.

Since the literature review showed that consumer responses to CSR differ across product categories (Essoussi & Linton, 2010; Luchs et al., 2010), this research focused solely on one product category and used various brands within that product category. Fashion emerged as a suitable product category with many well-known brands. Furthermore, fashion brands can be regarded as having different levels of warmth and competence depending upon attributes such as price, quality, innovativeness, and functionality. A pre-test was conducted to identify fashion brands that differ in their stereotypical perception for the main study. Moreover, the fashion industry emerged as a relevant setting because

³ In retrospect, it turned out that in the main study the stereotypical perception of some brands before the CSR treatment deviated from their stereotypes that were assessed in the pre-test. As a result, there were no brands representing the HCLW initial stereotype. Eventually this created a 2 (before/after) x 3 (HCHW, LCHW, LCLW) mixed factorial design instead of the 2x4 design as originally intended.

of the large negative impacts of its production and manufacturing processes on the environment, including high water and energy consumption, pollution of water through the use of hazardous chemicals and pesticides, high CO₂ emissions, and textile waste (Šajn, 2019). In recent years, many fashion companies have started to acknowledge their environmental responsibility and engaged in different initiatives to reduce their environmental impact, such as sustainable farming practices (Armedangels, 2020), recycling materials to reduce existing and prevent new waste (adidas, 2015), and offering undyed, unbleached or naturally dyed textiles (Harvest & Mill, 2020).

Even though these initiatives improved the environmental performance of the fashion industry over the last years, the Pulse of the Fashion Industry 2019 Update stated that the industry is still far away from being sustainable. Instead, the report emphasized that there is still much untapped potential and that the fashion industry must accelerate the pace of integrating sustainable solutions to counterbalance the environmental harm of the quickly growing fast fashion industry. Consequently, the fashion industry represented a relevant setting for investigating the influence of environmental CSR on brand perception and consumer behavior. Moreover, it was possible to create a realistic CSR scenario based on the initiatives of real brands in recent years. The pre-test was also used to assess whether the CSR scenario, describing the introduction of a sustainable fashion product line, was perceived as environmentally friendly and responsible so that it could be used as a CSR manipulation in the main study.

Germany was chosen as the country of research, and data was only collected from German citizens or people who have lived in Germany for at least five years. This restriction was imposed as previous studies showed that differences between cultures and countries might influence stereotypes. Even though the two underlying dimensions of warmth and competence are universal, the perception of other social groups (Cuddy et al., 2009) and brands (Kolbl et al., 2019) along these two dimensions can differ across cultures and countries. For instance, Kolbl et al. (2019) found that brands are perceived differently in developing and developed countries. This suggests that findings from Germany, as the country of research, may be transferred to other highly developed countries in Central and Western Europe such as Austria, Switzerland, the Netherlands, or France. Nevertheless, one must be careful when generalizing results across countries.

4.2. Pre-Test

One of the goals of this research was to investigate whether CSR enhances brand stereotypes and whether this effect differs across brands with different initial stereotypes due to assimilation and contrast effects. Therefore, a pre-test was conducted to identify and select brands with different initial brand stereotypes (HCLW, HCHW, LCHW, LCLW) for the main study. The pre-test aimed at identifying two brands per stereotype. Furthermore, the pre-test tested whether the scenario was regarded as a responsible and environmentally friendly initiative so that it could be used as a CSR manipulation in the main study.

First, this section elaborates on the design of the pre-test, including the reasoning behind the choice of fashion brands for the pre-test and the creation of the environmental CSR scenario. Then, it introduces the measurements before it presents the pre-test results.

4.2.1. Brand Selection

A variety of brands was tested in the pre-test to identify brands representing the four stereotypical categories. These brands had to be well-known so that consumers were able to state their brand perception. Furthermore, only brands that offer apparel for men and women were selected to avoid potential differences between male and female respondents. Lastly, the brands must not be positioned as CSR brands or have a strong reputation for sustainability. The pre-test brands were selected, considering the insights on brand perception provided by Kervyn et al. (2012). According to Kervyn et al. (2012), luxury brands are often perceived as HCLW brands. Therefore, luxurious fashion brands such as Armani, Chanel, BOSS, and Tommy Hilfiger were included in the pre-test. Besides, adidas, Nike, Jack Wolfskin, and Levi's were added to represent popular and successful brands that are often perceived as HCHW brands.

Kervyn et al. (2012) propose that quality, reliability, durability, and consistency serve as competence cues. Hence, fast fashion brands such as ZARA and C&A were included in the pre-test because they were expected to represent the LCLW stereotype. They were expected to be seen as low in competence because their apparel is often of lower quality and does not last as long as the products of other brands. Also, they were expected to be viewed as low in warmth due to their negative press coverage, e.g., on cheap labor and

bad working conditions. On the other hand, it was quite challenging to come up with LCHW brands. Therefore, numerous brands were tested, whether they were perceived as LCHW brands. These included brands that do not have a negative reputation as opposed to LCLW brands but may be regarded as low in competence because their products are mostly basics, e.g., United Colors of Benetton, or less innovative and trendy than other fashion brands, e.g., Tom Tailor, s.Oliver, Esprit. Furthermore, sports brands such as FILA and Champion were included as potential LCHW brands because they offer more lifestyle products than functional apparel. Overall a total of 19 brands was tested.

4.2.2. Scenario Design

There are different ways for fashion brands to engage in environmental CSR. Philanthropic CSR includes initiatives such as planting a tree for every product that is sold (NIKIN, 2020) or donating to an environmental organization (WWF, 2019). Business-practice CSR improves the environmental friendliness of the production, e.g., through using natural coloring materials (Harvest & Mill, 2020), whereas product-related CSR increases the environmental friendliness of product features, e.g., recycled materials (adidas, 2015).

Even though CSR strategies will be most effective when they target different issues and pursue multiple initiatives, the scenario had to be designed carefully because previous research showed that various initiatives might have different influences on consumer responses (Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Du et al., 2007). However, in the case of apparel, business-practice and product-related CSR are often interconnected, e.g., shirts from organic cotton are more environmentally friendly products, and their production is also more environmentally friendly (Armedangels, 2020; Patagonia, 2020). Thus, the scenario also combined product-related and business-practice CSR but refrained from integrating information on philanthropic CSR, which may have had a different effect on brand perception.

The scenario described the launch of sustainability initiatives by major fashion brands to reduce their environmental footprint and encourage consumers to make more responsible purchase decisions. In particular, it described the initiative of launching a sustainable product line in addition to regular collections (see Appendix A). Websites of sustainable fashion brands (Armedangels, 2020; Patagonia, 2020) and brands that launched a

sustainable product line in addition to their regular collections, e.g., H&M Conscious, were used to create a realistic scenario (H&M Group, 2020).

4.2.3. Pre-Test Measurement

The pre-test was conducted in the form of an online survey from February 24th to February 28th, 2020. All respondents were presented with all 19 fashion brands for which they had to state their brand familiarity, their perceived brand warmth, and competence on five-point Likert scales. Brand familiarity was measured with one item (Halkias et al., 2016). The existing measures for brand stereotypes (Halkias et al., 2016) were adapted to reduce the length of the pre-test. Respectively, only one item was chosen to measure brand warmth (good-natured) and brand competence (competent). The order of the brands and stereotypic dimensions was randomized to avoid order bias (Babin & Zikmund, 2016)

Following the brand evaluation, respondents were presented with the CSR scenario. Subsequently, they had to indicate on two five-point bipolar scales to which extent they perceived the brands' behavior as environmentally irresponsible or responsible and the initiative as environmentally unfriendly or friendly. Lastly, respondents were asked to provide their demographic information (gender, age, and occupation) and how long they have lived in Germany. The full pre-test questionnaire is included in Appendix A.

4.2.4. Pre-Test Results

A sample of 47 respondents participated in the pre-test. Four data sets were incomplete. Therefore, 43 data sets remained for the analysis. In the first step, the means for brand warmth and competence were calculated for all brands (see Appendix B). It emerged that most brands were perceived as higher in competence than in warmth (see Appendix B). Therefore, the approach of Kervyn et al. (2012) was used to categorize the brands into the four stereotypical categories instead of comparing whether there are significant differences between warmth and competence of each brand to form categories. In accordance with the approach by Kervyn et al. (2012), grand means for brand warmth ($M=2.89$, $SD=0.61$) and brand competence ($M=3.45$; $SD=0.45$) were calculated. Then, the perception of each brand was compared against the grand means, and, respectively, the brands were categorized as high or low on warmth and competence. In line with the approach by Kervyn et al. (2012), brands were classified as high in warmth (competence)

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when their mean score was above the grand mean of warmth (competence) and as low on warmth (competence) when their mean score was below the grand mean of warmth (competence). Figure 3 provides an overview of the perception of brands in the pre-test and how they can be categorized into different quadrants depending upon their perceived brand warmth and competence.

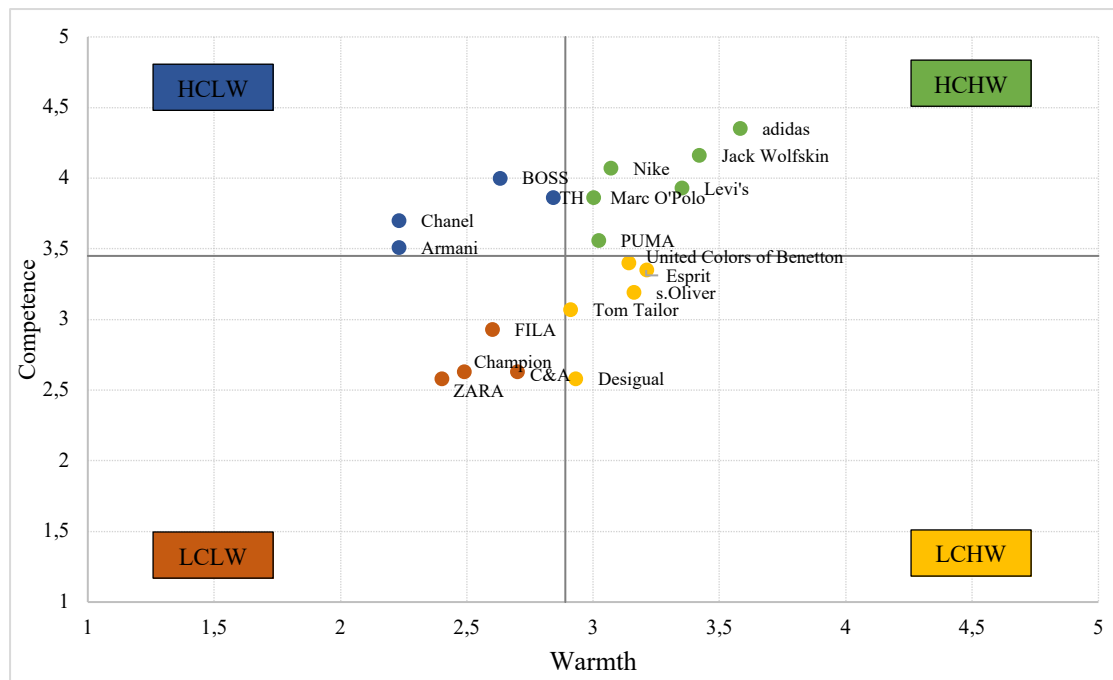


Figure 3: Perceptual Map of Pre-Test Brands

The pre-test aimed at identifying two brands per stereotype and eight brands in total. Each of these brands had to differ significantly from the brands in the other three quadrants, while it must not vary significantly from the other brand in the same quadrant. Paired sample t-tests were used to test which brands fulfilled both criteria and, respectively, were suitable for the main study (see Appendix B). The following brands emerged as appropriate to represent the four different stereotypes in the main study: adidas and Jack Wolfskin (HCHW), Chanel and Armani (HCLW), ZARA and Champion (LCLW), Tom Tailor and s.Oliver (LCHW).

It emerged that respondents indicated different levels of familiarity with the brands selected for the main study (see Appendix B). In particular, the luxury brands Chanel ($M=1.88$, $SD=1.03$) and Armani ($M=1.79$, $SD=1.01$) were of low familiarity. It is expected that their low brand familiarity can be attributed to the fact that respondents do not purchase these brands themselves, but still know them. Furthermore, respondents also indicated low familiarity with Champion ($M=2.12$, $SD=1.10$). However, respondents

should be familiar with a brand to evaluate its brand stereotype (Ivens et al., 2015). Also, previous research showed that brand familiarity influences the level of perceived brand warmth, competence, and consumers' behavioral responses (Diamantopoulos et al., 2017; Halkias et al., 2016; Kolbl et al., 2019). Since Armani, Chanel, and Champion emerged as the only suitable brands to represent the HCLW and LCHW stereotype, they were selected for the main study despite their low brand familiarity, which was controlled for in the main study. In addition to brand familiarity, brand ownership was added as another potential covariate to control for the influence of previous brand experiences.

Furthermore, the pre-test tested whether the scenario was a suitable CSR manipulation for the main study. Respondents viewed the initiative in the scenario as environmentally friendly ($M=3.81$, $SD=1.03$) and perceived brands that engage in such an initiative as environmentally responsible ($M=3.44$, $SD=1.29$). Respectively, the scenario was used as a CSR manipulation for each brand in the main study.

4.3. Main Study

Based on the results of the pre-test, the main study was designed. This section describes the measurements used to gather the data, the data collection method, and the characteristics of the sample drawn.

4.3.1. Measurement

Most of the constructs were measured using established scales from prior research. Since the survey was conducted in Germany, all of the scales had to be translated into German. For some scales, the German translations were readily available from previous research at the Chair of International Marketing of the University of Vienna. The other scales were translated into German and then converted back into English to ensure appropriate translations. All scales and their respective translations are listed in Appendix C.

After reading a short introduction, participants were randomly presented with one of the eight brands for which they had to answer the subsequent questions. First, they were asked for their familiarity with the particular brand, which was measured with the same item as in the pre-test from Halkias et al. (2016). Besides, respondents were asked about their previous brand ownership, which was included in addition to brand familiarity to control

for the confounding effects of prior brand experiences. Furthermore, the first part of the questionnaire assessed respondents' brand involvement using three items of the seven-point bipolar involvement scale based on the Personal Involvement Inventory (Hollebeek et al., 2014; Zaichkowsky, 1985). One bipolar item was added to measure and control for the perceived environmental responsibility of the brand prior to the CSR manipulation (environmentally unfriendly – environmentally friendly brand).

Since the study used a repeated-measures design, respondents were presented twice with several measures. These measures formed the main block of the questionnaire that was presented before and after the CSR manipulation. The first section of this main block contained the items to measure brand stereotypes. Here, it is essential to mention that a different scale was used in the main study than in the pre-test. Whereas the pre-test used a shortened version of the scale of Halkias et al. (2016), the main study used the eight items of the recently developed scale by Halkias & Diamantopoulos (2020). Following the new scale, a seven-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree was used to measure brand stereotypes. Afterward, respondents were presented with different scales to measure their brand attitude, purchase intention, and pWOM for the particular brand. Three items were used to measure brand attitude on a seven-point bipolar scale (Sweetin, Knowles, Summey, & McQueen, 2013). The three items measuring pWOM (Alexandrov et al., 2013) and four items assessing purchase intention (adapted from Dodds et al., 1991) also used seven-point Likert scales that ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Due to the recent outbreak of COVID-19, two scales were added after the main block to measure respondents' opinions regarding the brand's actual behavior (four items) and desired behavior (five items) during the pandemic. These scales were self-developed and included as potential control variables. Both scales were adapted to seven-point Likert scales to align with the other measures. Furthermore, an "I don't know option" was added.

Following this, respondents were presented with the experimental manipulation in the form of a fictitious article that informed them about the environmental initiative of the brand. The two bipolar items from the pre-test were included after the scenario to assess on a seven-point scale whether the CSR manipulation was successful. Then, respondents were presented with the main block of the questionnaire for the second time.

The next section of the questionnaire included the four items to measure CSR skepticism by Skarmeas & Leonidou (2013). The scale was slightly adapted to the context of an environmental CSR initiative and measured respondents' agreement on a seven-point Likert scale. Also, a logical statement, as proposed by Abbey & Meloy (2017), was added to the CSR skepticism scale as an attention check. Afterward, the potential covariates perceived brand globalness, perceived brand localness, and product category involvement were assessed. As for the rest of the questionnaire, these constructs were measured using seven-point Likert scales. The three items by Steenkamp et al. (2003) were used for perceived brand globalness and the three items of Swoboda et al. (2012) were selected to measure perceived brand localness. Two items were chosen from Mittal's scale (1989) to assess product category involvement. Fashion was selected as the product category for which involvement was measured, respectively. Ultimately, respondents were asked to provide their socio-demographic information, including gender, age, occupation, monthly income, and how long they have lived in Germany.

4.3.2. Data Collection

The main study was conducted from May 7th to May 14th, 2020. The data was collected using an online survey. Online surveys are an efficient and convenient form of data collection because a large number of people can be reached at a low cost and within a short time frame. Also, online surveys reduce systematic errors that often occur when transforming data into digital forms (Babin & Zikmund, 2016). Another benefit of using an online survey tool was that it was possible to set-up eight different versions of the questionnaire (one for each brand). The different versions were created with Qualtrics and accessible through one link. A randomizer was used to allocate respondents evenly to different brands.

This research used a convenience sample. By obtaining conveniently available respondents, convenience sampling is a quick and economic sampling method. Moreover, convenience sampling was combined with a snowball sampling approach. It means that initially, the survey link was shared with the personal network of the author who forwarded the link to their respective networks to reach additional respondents. This sampling approach was chosen due to time and money constraints, as well as a fairly large sample size. However, it must be considered that convenience samples are often biased

and not representative of the population. Therefore, one must be careful to generalize the results beyond the specific sample (Babin & Zikmund, 2016).

4.3.3. Sample

The final data set comprised of 257 cases. These respondents were divided into eight different groups corresponding to the brands that were identified in the pre-test. When collecting the data, it was ensured that respondents were allocated evenly to the different brands and that each group contained at least 30 participants. Table 1 shows the allocation of the respondents to different brands.

Table 1: Overview of Respondents Per Brand

Brand	Jack Wolfskin	adidas	Armani	Chanel	s.Oliver	Tom Tailor	ZARA	Champion	Total
N	32	30	36	31	30	30	34	34	257

The gender distribution of the sample was unequal, with 72% of the respondents being female. 27% of respondents were male, and two respondents preferred not to reveal their gender. The age in the sample ranged from 18 to 79 years, with a mean of 30.89 years (SD=11.74). The age distribution of the sample is depicted in Figure 4. It shows that the majority of respondents were less than 35 years old, with 47% being between 18 and 25 and 31% between 26 and 35 years. Most likely, the overrepresentation of younger people can be attributed to using a convenience sample and sharing the survey link through various online channels. Also, the author's age increases the chance of reaching a higher number of younger people. The age groups 36-45 and 46-55 represented 6% and 12% of the sample. 4% of the respondents were older than 56 years. Two respondents did not provide any information on their age.

Despite the large share of young respondents, students only represented 41% of the sample. Figure 4 shows that the majority of the sample was employed (53%), while 1% was self-employed. The group of pupils and pensioners accounted for 2% and 1% of the sample, respectively. Five respondents (2%) chose the option “other”; hence, there is no information on their occupation.

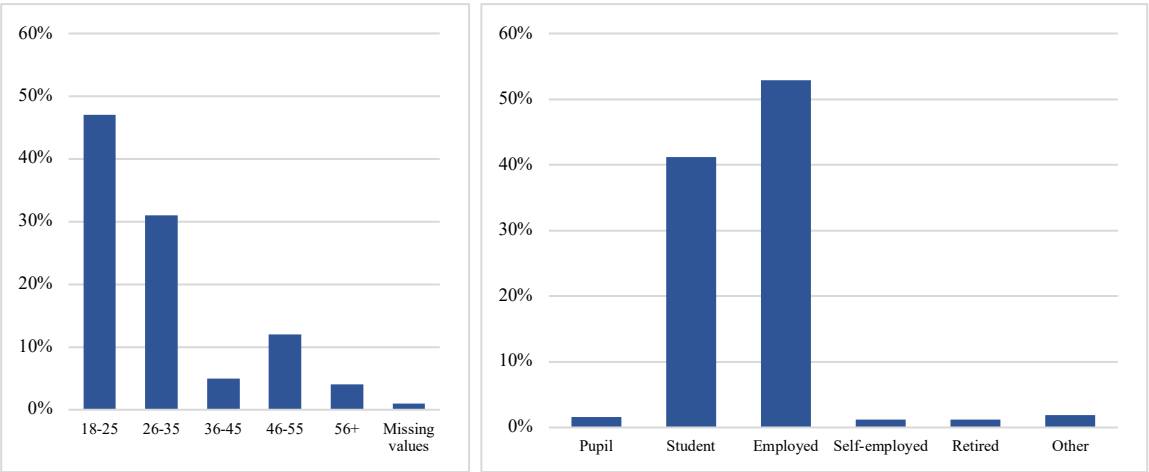


Figure 4: Characteristics of the Sample

Lastly, the study was restricted to German residents or people who have lived in Germany for at least five years. Of the final sample, 86% of respondents were born in Germany, and 3% have lived in Germany for at least five years. 11% were currently not living in Germany but have spent most of their life in Germany.

5. Results

The subsequent sections present the results of the data analyses that were conducted using IBM SPSS. First, this chapter reports the findings of some preliminary analyses that were carried out before the main analysis. Then, the results of the statistical tests are presented that were conducted to test the postulated hypotheses. The chapter also reports the results of additional analyses that were not explicitly hypothesized but carried out to gain a better understanding of the statistical data.

5.1. Preliminary Analyses

Before testing the hypotheses, the data was screened, and the reliability of the scales used was assessed. Also, it was examined whether the different brands were perceived similar to the pre-test before they were grouped into stereotypical categories for hypotheses testing and whether the experimental manipulation was successful. Lastly, the descriptive statistics for the measured variables are reported to provide an overview of the data collected.

5.1.1. Data Screening

The collected data was screened to identify respondents who provided the wrong answer to the logical statement that was used as an attention check or had lived in Germany for less than five years. Moreover, the data was screened for illogical answer patterns, outliers, and missing values. Initially, 295 respondents participated in the survey. After an initial screening of the data, 38 cases were deleted from the data set. 32 cases were eliminated because respondents had failed the attention check. Two cases were removed because the respondent had lived in Germany for less than five years. Besides, one respondent of the age of 16 was excluded.

Since the survey was set up in a way that forced the respondents to answer all of the questions (except for age and income), missing values were not an issue, and no cases had to be deleted due to incompleteness. Besides, z-scores were calculated for warmth and competence perception before CSR for each brand to identify outliers that may distort the initial stereotypes of brands. Following Field (2013), three cases were classified as extreme outliers whose perceived brand warmth or competence before CSR differed a lot

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($z > 3$) from the mean scores of the respective brand. These cases were also deleted, which resulted in the final data set of 257 cases that was described in Chapter 4.3.3.

5.1.2. Reliability Analyses

This research mostly used existing scales from previous research to measure the constructs of interest. Most of these scales were multi-item measures using several items to assess the underlying construct. Before the different items of a scale were combined to an overall index, the reliability of the scale had to be verified. This research used Cronbach's α to assess the reliability of the various scales. According to Field (2013), values above .7 indicate that a scale is reliable. Table 2 provides an overview of the constructs measured and their respective Cronbach's α .

Table 2: Scale Reliability

Construct	No. of items	Cronbach's α
Brand warmth before CSR (W)	4	.865
Brand competence before CSR (C)	4	.807
Brand attitude before CSR (BA)	2 (BA_2 excluded)	.886
Purchase intention before CSR (PI)	4	.953
Positive WOM before CSR (pWOM)	3	.912
Brand warmth after CSR (W _{CSR})	4	.913
Brand competence after CSR (C _{CSR})	4	.830
Brand attitude after CSR (BA _{CSR})	2 (BA _{CSR} _2 excluded)	.928
Purchase intention after CSR (PI _{CSR})	4	.969
Positive WOM after CSR (pWOM _{CSR})	3	.942
CSR skepticism	4	.910
Perceived brand globalness (PBG)	3	.875
Perceived brand localness (PBL)	3	.872
Product category involvement (PCI)	2	.924
Brand involvement (BI)	2 (BI_3 excluded)	.884
COVID 1: Opinion about brand's behavior	5	.241
COVID 2: Desired brand behavior	4	.542

It emerges that most scales were above the acceptable threshold of .7 except for the two scales measuring respondents' opinions regarding the brand's behavior and actions during the COVID-19 pandemic. These low reliabilities can be attributed to the fact that the majority of respondents did not provide their opinion on the brand's behavior and actions by choosing the "I don't know" option. Since this option did not provide any information on the respondent's opinion, it was recoded as system-missing information. After recoding the "I don't know" option, only 125 (COVID 1) and 167 cases (COVID 2) remained for the reliability analyses, which resulted in the low reliability of both

COVID scales with $\alpha = .241$ and $\alpha = .542$ respectively. As a result, the different items were not combined into the two respective scales, and the influence of respondents' opinions on the brand's behavior and actions during COVID-19 were not considered as control variables in further statistical analyses.

Regarding the scales for brand attitude and brand involvement, the reliability analyses proposed that excluding an item yielded a fairly large increase in reliability. Therefore, the second item for brand attitude and the third item for brand involvement were excluded to achieve higher scale reliabilities. Afterward, the items of each scale were combined to form a mean score for each construct. These means were used for all subsequent analyses.

5.1.3. Formation of Stereotypical Categories

Based on the results of the pre-test, eight brands had been selected for the main study. Two brands had been chosen to represent each of the four stereotypical categories so that it could be compared whether the influence of CSR on brand stereotypes differed depending upon assimilation and contrast effects between CSR and initial brand stereotype. Before grouping the brands into stereotypical categories for hypotheses testing, it was tested whether the brands were perceived similar to the pre-test.

The approach of Kervyn et al. (2012) that had also been applied in the pre-test was used to assess the stereotypical perception of the eight brands in the main study. Hence, the means for brand warmth and competence were calculated for each brand. Afterward, each brand's mean was compared to the grand means of brand warmth ($M=4.20$, $SD=0.97$) and competence ($M=4.96$, $SD=0.86$). In line with the approach by Kervyn et al. (2012), brands were classified as high in warmth (competence) when their mean score was above the grand mean of warmth (competence) and as low in warmth (competence) when their mean score was below the grand mean of warmth (competence).

It emerged that some brands were perceived differently in the main study than in the pre-test.⁴ Figure 5 provides an overview of the perception of the eight brands in the main study, while their marking indicates their stereotypical category according to the pre-test.

⁴ Potential reasons for the deviation in perceived brand warmth and competence from pre-test results are discussed in Chapter 7.

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Figure 5: Perceptual Map of Brands in the Main Study

Note: The color of the markings indicates the brands' categorization according to the pre-test results.

As can be seen in Figure 5, there were no brands in the main study whose mean competence was above the grand mean of competence while their mean warmth was below the grand mean of warmth, i.e., HCLW brands. Figure 5 shows that Armani and Chanel had been perceived as HCLW brands in the pre-test but were regarded as LCLW brands in the main study. Consequently, no brands represented the HCLW stereotype in the main study, and only three stereotypical categories could be formed and compared in the subsequent statistical analyses: LCLW (Chanel, Armani, and ZARA), LCHW (Champion, Tom Tailor, and s.Oliver), and HCHW (adidas and Jack Wolfskin).

It emerged that s.Oliver ($M=5.04$, $SD=0.69$) was regarded as significantly lower in competence than the other HCHW brands adidas ($M=5.74$, $SD=0.51$, $p<.01$) and Jack Wolfskin ($M=5.66$, $SD=0.83$, $p<.01$). On the other hand, the perceived competence of s.Oliver neither differed significantly from Chanel, $t(59)=1.45$, $p>.05$, nor Tom Tailor, $t(58)=1.66$, $p>.05$, that were both categorized as low competence brands. Therefore, s.Oliver was categorized as a LCHW brand even though its mean competence was slightly above the grand mean. After re-grouping s.Oliver the remaining HCHW brands (adidas and Jack Wolfskin), were significantly higher in competence than all LCHW and LCLW brands (see Appendix D). Moreover, all HCHW and LCHW brands were significantly higher in warmth than all LCLW brands (see Appendix D). Therefore, the brands could

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be grouped into three stereotypical categories. Table 3 presents the means and standard deviations of perceived brand warmth and competence of the eight brands. It also includes their stereotypical category based upon their perception in the main study.

Table 3: Brand Stereotypes Before CSR

Brand	Warmth before CSR M (SD)	Competence before CSR M (SD)
HCHW		
Jack Wolfskin	5.66 (0.83)	4.89 (0.68)
adidas	5.74 (0.51)	4.35 (0.89)
LCHW		
s.Oliver	5.04 (0.69)	4.81 (0.67)
Tom Tailor	4.75 (0.67)	4.57 (0.66)
Champion	4.67 (0.72)	4.31 (0.66)
LCLW		
Armani	4.67 (0.72)	3.58 (0.92)
Chanel	4.76 (0.83)	3.50 (1.01)
ZARA	4.48 (0.89)	3.76 (1.03)
Total	4.96 (0.86)	4.20 (0.97)

After grouping the brands into the three stereotypical categories that are displayed in Table 3, their means were compared to examine whether the formed categories were suitable. As can be seen in Table 4, the LCLW category was regarded as significantly lower in brand warmth than the HCHW and LCHW categories. Furthermore, the HCHW category was seen as significantly higher in competence than the LCLW and LCHW categories. Hence, the formation of stereotypical categories was successful, and the groups could be used for hypotheses testing.

Table 4: Brand Warmth and Competence of Stereotypical Categories Before CSR

	HCHW M (SD)	LCHW M (SD)	LCLW M (SD)	Mean comparison
Warmth before CSR	4.63 (0.83)	4.55 (0.69)	3.62 (0.98)	F(2,254)=39.98, p<.001
Competence before CSR	5.70 (0.69)	4.81 (0.71)	4.63 (0.81)	F(2,254)=42.19, p<.001

5.1.4. Manipulation Checks

The pre-test showed that the scenario was a suitable CSR manipulation for the main study. As part of the preliminary analyses, it was tested whether the CSR manipulation was also successful in the main study. Overall, the results confirmed the findings of the pre-test. The initiative of introducing a sustainable product line was viewed as environmentally friendly ($M=5.74$, $SD=1.13$), and the brand that pursued this initiative was perceived as environmentally responsible ($M=5.30$, $SD=1.26$).

Table 5: CSR Manipulation Checks

Brand	Environmental friendliness of initiative	Environmental responsibility of brand
	M (SD)	M (SD)
Jack Wolfskin	6.25 (0.80)	5.84 (1.02)
adidas	5.40 (1.40)	4.73 (1.23)
Armani	5.78 (1.07)	5.50 (1.06)
Chanel	5.42 (0.99)	4.74 (1.03)
s.Oliver	6.13 (0.82)	5.80 (1.10)
Tom Tailor	5.70 (1.29)	5.40 (1.38)
ZARA	5.29 (1.36)	4.59 (1.60)
Champion	5.91 (0.87)	5.74 (0.83)
Total	5.74 (1.13)	5.30 (1.26)

Table 5 provides an overview of the results of the manipulation checks for each brand. The extent to which the initiative was perceived as environmentally friendly, $F(7,249)=3.25$, $p<.01$, and the extent to which the brand that pursued the initiative was seen as environmentally responsible, $F(7,249)=6.38$, $p<.001$, differed significantly between brands. Furthermore, it emerged that there were significant differences in perceived environmental friendliness, $F(2,254)=3.61$, $p<.05$, and environmental responsibility, $F(2,254)=7.67$, $p<.001$, between the stereotypical categories formed. In particular, the initiative was perceived as less environmentally friendly when it was pursued by a LCLW brand ($M=5.51$, $SD=1.16$) than when it was initiated by a LCHW brand ($M=5.91$, $SD=1.01$, $p<.05$) while its perceived environmental friendliness did not differ significantly from HCHW brands ($M=5.84$, $SD=1.20$, $p>.05$). Also, consumers perceived the brand pursuing the environmental CSR initiative as less responsible when the brand was a LCLW brand ($M=4.96$, $SD=1.31$) than when it was a LCHW brand ($M=5.65$, $SD=1.11$, $p<.001$). On the other hand, consumers did not view the brand pursuing the initiative as less environmentally responsible when it was LCLW brand compared to a HCHW brand ($M=5.31$, $SD=1.25$, $p>.05$). However, overall the CSR manipulation was successful for all brands and stereotypical categories.

5.1.5. Data Overview

To facilitate the understanding of the statistical analyses conducted in the next sections, Table 6 provides an overview of the descriptive statistics of the measured variables. It shows the mean values and standard deviations of all variables for the entire sample and for the three stereotypical categories.

Table 6: Descriptives of Dependent, Moderating, and Control Variables

	HCHW M (SD)	LCHW M (SD)	LCLW M (SD)	Total M (SD)
Before CSR				
BA	5.17 (1.19)	4.45 (1.05)	3.83 (1.30)	4.38 (1.29)
PI	4.48 (1.75)	3.44 (1.59)	2.81 (1.67)	3.44 (1.78)
pWOM	4.23 (1.48)	3.38 (1.35)	3.01 (1.33)	3.44 (1.45)
After CSR				
BA _{CSR}	5.13 (1.16)	4.89 (1.05)	4.12 (1.23)	4.64 (1.22)
PI _{CSR}	4.43 (1.80)	3.70 (1.60)	3.02 (1.70)	3.61 (1.77)
pWOM _{CSR}	4.60 (1.45)	4.04 (1.33)	3.41 (1.40)	3.93 (1.46)
Potential moderating and control variables				
CSR skepticism	3.70 (1.06)	3.38 (1.16)	4.11 (1.14)	3.74 (1.17)
BF	3.06 (0.85)	2.61 (0.91)	2.37 (0.95)	2.62 (0.94)
BO	2.29 (1.15)	1.80 (0.82)	1.64 (0.84)	1.86 (0.95)
PCI	4.65 (1.52)	4.69 (1.41)	4.39 (1.32)	4.56 (1.40)
BI	3.78 (1.31)	2.97 (1.16)	2.72 (1.32)	3.07 (1.32)
PBG	5.66 (0.91)	4.66 (1.20)	5.76 (0.84)	5.33 (1.12)
PBL	4.20 (1.16)	3.39 (1.26)	2.21 (1.08)	3.12 (1.41)
ER	3.94 (1.39)	3.63 (1.03)	2.80 (1.19)	3.38 (1.28)

Note: BA= brand attitude, PI=purchase intention, pWOM= positive word-of-mouth, BF= brand familiarity, BO= brand ownership, PCI= product category involvement, BI= brand involvement, PBG= perceived brand globalness, PBL= perceived brand localness, ER= perceived environmental responsibility of the brand prior to the CSR manipulation.

5.2. Main Analysis

The subsequent sections present the results of the statistical tests that were conducted to test the postulated hypotheses. Since this research addressed two different objectives, the results are also presented separately. First, the findings regarding the influence of environmental CSR on brand stereotypes are reported. Afterward, the second part deals with the underlying influence of brand warmth and competence after CSR on consumer responses to environmental CSR.

5.2.1. The Effect of Environmental CSR on Brand Stereotypes

The first goal of this research was to examine whether the level of perceived brand warmth and competence differed pre-post CSR. Furthermore, this research aimed at investigating whether the pre-post CSR difference in brand warmth and competence differed across stereotypical categories due to assimilation and contrast effects.

5.2.1.1. Pre-Post CSR Differences in Brand Warmth and Competence

Based on previous studies suggesting that environmental CSR is viewed as a signal of warmth and competence, it was expected that:

H1: a) The perceived warmth and b) perceived competence of a brand are higher after the brand's engagement in environmental CSR.

Two paired sample t-tests were used to test these hypotheses. Before conducting the actual tests, the statistical assumptions were evaluated. The variables that were compared measured respondents' perceived warmth and competence before and after CSR engagement. This represented a within-subject design; hence, observations were related, and a paired sample t-test was applicable. To test the second assumption of normality, the differences between the pre- and post-CSR scores were calculated for each dimension. This revealed a non-normal distribution of the differences (see Appendix D). However, according to the Central Limit Theorem, the violation of normality could be disregarded due to the large sample size of $N=257$ (Field, 2013).

The paired-sample t-tests revealed that, on average, brands were perceived as higher in warmth after engaging in CSR ($M=4.54$, $SD=1.01$) than before CSR engagement ($M=4.20$, $SD=0.97$). This difference was significant, $t(256)=7.05$, $p<.001$, and represented a medium effect ($r=.40$). It emerged that, on average, the perceived competence of brands was also significantly higher after engaging in CSR, $t(256)=3.56$, $p<.001$. The mean of brand competence before CSR was 4.96 ($SD=0.86$), which increased to a mean value of 5.11 ($SD=0.74$) after CSR. This represented a small effect ($r=.22$). Consistent with H1a and H1b, these results showed that CSR increased the perceived warmth and competence of a brand compared to its warmth and competence perception before CSR.

5.2.1.2. Pre-Post CSR Differences of Different Initial Brand Stereotypes

Even though it was expected that CSR would increase perceived brand warmth and competence overall (H1), it was hypothesized that the effect of CSR on brand perception would differ across stereotypical categories due to assimilation and contrast effects:

H2: The increase in a) perceived brand warmth and b) perceived brand competence through environmental CSR differs across stereotypical categories, such that:

- a) The increase in perceived brand warmth is larger for brands that are initially perceived as lower in warmth than for brands with a higher initial level of warmth.
- b) The increase in perceived brand competence is larger for brands that are initially perceived as lower in competence than for brands with a higher initial level of competence.

Two analyses of covariance (ANCOVA) were carried out to test whether the influence of CSR on perceived brand warmth and competence differed across stereotypical categories. ANCOVAs were chosen as the type of analysis because they allow comparing means across groups while controlling for the effect of covariates that influence the dependent variable even though they are not part of the experimental manipulation (Field, 2013). The statistical tests were run with the three stereotypical categories as a fixed factor and the pre-post CSR difference in perceived brand warmth and competence as the dependent variable, respectively.⁵ As discussed in Chapter 3.3., PCI, BI, ER, and socio-demographic variables were considered as potential covariates because they may influence the extent to which consumers adapt their brand stereotypes after receiving additional information about the CSR engagement of the brand. Moreover, CSR skepticism was added as a potential covariate since the extent to which consumers question the brand's intention behind the CSR initiative may also influence whether they adapt their brand stereotypes after CSR.

Before conducting the statistical tests to compare the pre-post CSR differences in brand warmth and competence across stereotypical groups, the statistical assumptions were tested. To be included as covariates, the covariates must be independent of the grouping variable (Field, 2013). To investigate whether covariates differed systematically across

⁵ Pre-post CSR differences in brand warmth and competence were already calculated to evaluate the statistical assumptions for the paired sample t-tests to test hypotheses H1a and H1b.

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the stereotypical categories, several one-way Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) were carried out with the covariates as dependent variables and stereotypical categories as the grouping factor. For the nominal and ordinal variables, Chi-Square tests were used. The results of these tests are presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Mean Comparison of Covariates Across Stereotypical Categories

Potential covariate	HCHW M (SD)	LCHW M (SD)	LCLW M (SD)	Mean comparisons
PCI	4.65 (1.52)	4.69 (1.41)	4.39 (1.32)	F(2,254)=1.26, p>.05
BI	3.78 (1.31)	2.97 (1.16)	2.72 (1.32)	F(1,254)=14.16, p<.001
ER	3.94 (1.39)	3.63 (1.03)	2.80 (1.19)	F(2,252)=20.82, p<.001
CSR skepticism	3.70 (1.06)	3.38 (1.16)	4.11 (1.14)	F(2,254)=10.15, p<.001
Age	28.00 (9.72)	30.28 (10.51)	33.23 (13.46)	F(2,252)=4.06, p<.05
Income	3.03 (1.47)	3.52 (1.42)	3.65 (1.37)	$\chi^2(8)=7.98, p>.05$
Gender	1.82 (0.39)	1.65 (0.48)	1.74 (0.45)	$\chi^2(8)=5.60, p>.05$

Note: PCI= product category involvement, BI= brand involvement, ER= perceived environmental responsibility of the brand prior to the CSR manipulation.

As can be seen in Table 7, the three stereotypical categories did not differ systematically concerning respondents' PCI, income, or gender. However, their means differed significantly regarding respondents BI, ER, CSR skepticism, and age. When the covariate is not independent of the grouping variable, it confounds with the effect of the grouping variable. Including these covariates reduces the variance that is explained by the grouping factor. Therefore, Field (2013) argued that covariates that are not independent of the grouping factor should not be considered as covariates when running an ANCOVA. Hence, BI, ER, CSR skepticism, and age were no longer considered as covariates.

Furthermore, covariates must have a significant correlation with the outcome variable. Bivariate correlations showed that neither income nor gender nor PCI was significantly correlated with the pre-post CSR differences in warmth and competence (see Appendix D). This suggests that the extent to which respondents adapted their brand warmth and competence perceptions did not differ across different levels of PCI or income or between men and women. Therefore, these covariates were also dropped from further analyses. Levene's test was non-significant for both dependent variables indicating homogeneity of variance (see Appendix D). The assumption of a normal distribution of the pre-post CSR difference scores within the three groups was violated (see Appendix D). Still, in accordance with the Central Limit Theorem, normality was assumed due to the large group sizes ($N>62$). Since no covariates had to be considered in the statistical analyses, two one-way ANOVAs (instead of ANCOVAs) were pursued to test the hypotheses.

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Table 8 displays the means and standard deviations of brand warmth and competence before and after CSR, as well as the pre-post CSR differences for the different stereotypical groups.

Table 8: Brand Warmth and Competence of Stereotypical Categories Pre-Post CSR

Stereotype	Before CSR M (SD)	After CSR M (SD)	Δ Pre-Post CSR M (SD)
<u>Warmth</u>			
HCHW	4.63 (0.82)	4.71 (1.02)	0.08 (0.75)
LCHW	4.55 (0.69)	4.94 (0.81)	0.39 (0.64)
LCLW	3.62 (0.98)	4.06 (0.98)	0.44 (0.84)
<u>Competence</u>			
HCHW	5.70 (0.69)	5.64 (0.65)	-0.06 (0.56)
LCHW	4.81 (0.71)	4.99 (0.69)	0.18 (0.65)
LCLW	4.63 (0.81)	4.89 (0.69)	0.26 (0.74)

The first ANOVA compared the pre-post CSR difference in brand warmth across stereotypical categories. This showed that there was a significant effect of stereotypical category on the increase in brand warmth through CSR, $F(2,254)=4.95$, $p<.01$, $\omega=.17$. These findings indicated that the perceived warmth of brands belonging to some stereotypical categories increased more through engaging in CSR than the perceived warmth of brands with another initial brand stereotype.

Planned contrasts were used to test whether the increase in perceived brand warmth was larger for those brands which were initially viewed as lower in warmth, i.e., LCLW brands, than those with a higher initial warmth level, i.e., HCHW and LCHW brands, as outlined in H2a. These revealed that the average increase in perceived brand warmth through CSR was significantly larger for LCLW brands than for HCHW brands, $t(254)=3.01$, $p<.01$, $r=.19$. On the other hand, the pre-post CSR difference in perceived warmth did not differ significantly between LCLW brands and LCHW brands, $t(254)=0.46$, $p>.05$, $r=.03$, despite having different initial levels of perceived warmth. Therefore, H2a was partially supported. Moreover, these results suggested that it did not only depend on the initial level of brand warmth but on the combination of initial brand warmth and competence, whether brand warmth increased through environmental CSR.

Additional paired sample t-tests showed that CSR eventually had no significant effect on the perceived warmth of HCHW brands, $t(61)=0.81$, $p>.05$, but it had significant medium to large effects on the warmth perception of LCLW, $t(100)=5.25$, $p<.001$, $r=.46$, and LCHW brands, $t(93)=5.96$, $p<.001$, $r=.52$. These results further emphasized that the

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increase in perceived warmth was not caused by assimilation or contrast with initial brand warmth. Instead, these results suggested that the pre-post CSR difference in warmth depended on the contrast with the initial stereotype as a combination of warmth and competence.

A second ANOVA was conducted to investigate the pre-post CSR difference in brand competence across stereotypical categories. This revealed significant differences between stereotypical categories, $F(2,254)=4.61$, $p<.05$, $\omega=.17$, suggesting that the extent to which CSR increased perceived brand competence also differed across stereotypical categories. Again, planned contrasts were used to test the directional hypothesis H2b that the increase in perceived brand competence would be larger for brands that were initially seen as lower in competence, i.e., LCHW and LCLW brands, than for brands with a higher initial competence level, i.e., HCHW brands. These showed that CSR had a significantly larger effect on the competence perception of LCHW than HCHW brands, $t(254)=2.20$, $p<.05$, $r=.14$. It emerged that the increase in perceived competence was also significantly larger for LCLW brands compared to HCHW brands, $t(254)=3.00$, $p<.01$, $r=.18$, thus supporting H2b.

Eventually, additional paired sample t-tests showed that, on average, there was no significant pre-post CSR difference in perceived competence for HCHW brands, $t(61)=-0.91$, $p>.05$. On the other hand, the perceived competence of LCLW, $t(100)=3.50$, $p<.05$, and LCHW brands, $t(93)=2.63$, $p<.05$, was significantly higher after CSR, indicating a medium ($r_{LCLW}=.33$) and small effect ($r_{LCHW}=.26$) respectively. These results were in line with the hypothesized assimilation and contrast effects, showing that the pre-post CSR difference in competence was larger for those brands whose initial competence level contrasted with the environmental initiative as a signal of competence.

5.2.2. The Effect of Brand Stereotypes on Consumer Responses to CSR

The second aim of this research was to examine whether brand stereotypes after CSR predict consumer responses to environmental CSR. Based on the literature review, it was expected that brand warmth and competence do not influence consumer behavior directly, but indirectly by eliciting affective responses. The results of the mediation analyses are presented in the subsequent section. Furthermore, it was predicted that CSR skepticism

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would influence the relationship between brand stereotypes and brand attitude after CSR. The results of the moderation analysis are also reported in the following sections.

5.2.2.1. Mediation Analyses

“Mediation refers to a situation when the relationship between a predictor variable and an outcome variable can be explained by their relationship to a third variable (the mediator)” (Field, 2013, p.408). The path diagram in Figure 6 illustrates the causal chain of mediation. Path c represents the direct effect of the predictor on the outcome variable. Furthermore, there is a path from the predictor to the mediator (path a) and from the mediator to the outcome variable (path b). The product of these two paths ($a \times b$) represents the indirect effect of the predictor on the outcome variable via the mediator.

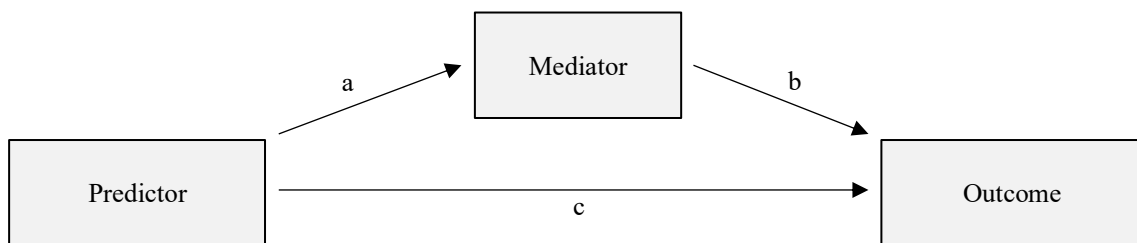


Figure 6: Mediation Diagram
Source: based on Zhao et al. (2010)

According to Zhao, Lynch, & Chen (2010), the indirect effect must be significant to establish mediation. A significant indirect effect can be concluded when the bootstrapped confidence interval of the indirect effect does not include 0. By estimating the coefficients (a, b, and c), the type of mediation can be classified. Here, Zhao et al. (2010) distinguished between five types of mediation:

- Complementary mediation: The indirect ($a \times b$) and direct effect (c) are significant and point in the same direction.
- Competitive mediation: The indirect ($a \times b$) and direct effect (c) are significant and point in opposite directions.
- Direct-only mediation: The indirect effect ($a \times b$) is significant, but the direct effect (c) is not significant.
- Direct-only non-mediation: The direct effect (c) is significant, but the indirect effect ($a \times b$) is not significant.
- No-effect non-mediation: Neither the direct (c) nor the indirect effect ($a \times b$) is significant.

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In the present research, the following indirect effects were hypothesized based on the cognition-affect-behavior sequence that has been observed in previous stereotyping literature:

H3: a) Brand warmth and b) brand competence after CSR have a positive effect on consumers' brand attitude, which then positively influences consumers' purchase intentions.

H4: a) Brand warmth and b) brand competence after CSR have a positive effect on consumers' brand attitude, which then positively influences consumers' pWOM.

The hypothesized paths were tested using the bootstrapping approach that was recommended by Zhao et al. (2010) to investigate the significance of indirect effects. Four mediation analyses were carried out to test the hypothesized mediation models using Preacher and Hayes' PROCESS command (Model 4; 5,000 bootstrap samples). To test H3a and H3b, two mediation analyses were conducted with purchase intention after CSR as the outcome variable, brand attitude after CSR as the mediator, and brand warmth or competence after CSR as the predictor. Two additional mediation analyses were run to test H4a and H4b with pWOM after CSR as the outcome variable while maintaining brand attitude after CSR as the mediator and brand warmth or competence after CSR as the predictor. As discussed in Chapter 3.3., BF, BO, PBG, PBL, BI, PCI, and socio-demographic variables were considered as potential covariates as well as the respective other dimension after CSR.

Before running the mediation analyses, the statistical assumptions were evaluated. The mediation analysis conducted by the PROCESS command consists of multiple linear regression analyses. Therefore, several assumptions had to be met (Field, 2013). All variables were continuous or dichotomous and had some variation in their values, meeting the requirements concerning variable type and non-zero variance. Furthermore, observations were independent because each respondent was assigned randomly to evaluate one brand only. Bivariate correlation analyses were used to test the assumption of additivity and linearity (see Appendix D). These revealed that the socio-demographic variables (age, gender, and income) were neither significantly related to the mediator nor the outcome variables purchase intention and pWOM. Therefore, these variables were no longer considered as covariates in the mediation analyses. All other variables were

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significantly related ($p < .05$) to the outcome variables indicating linear relationships (see Appendix D).

The values of the Durbin-Watson tests ranged from 1.89 to 2.04. Hence, all values were within the acceptable threshold between 1 and 3, indicating that residual terms were independent in all multiple linear regressions (Field, 2013). The variance inflation factor (VIF) and the tolerance statistic were used to test the assumption of no multicollinearity. Field (2013) suggested that a tolerance statistic below .1 indicates a serious problem and below .2 a potential problem. Furthermore, the VIF should not be larger than 10, and the average should not be substantially greater than 1. All values were within the acceptable thresholds so that it can be concluded that there was no multicollinearity within the data. Besides, it was evaluated whether the assumption of homoscedasticity was met by checking the ZRESID against ZPRED plots. These revealed no visible pattern; hence, the assumption of homoscedasticity was fulfilled for all multiple linear regressions (see Appendix D). Lastly, the normality of residuals was assessed by looking at the histogram and P-P plots. These showed that errors are distributed normally in all multiple linear regressions (see Appendix D). Hence, all statistical assumptions were met, and the mediation analyses were run as proposed.

Mediation with Purchase Intention after CSR as the Outcome Variable

The first pair of mediation analyses tested the influence of brand warmth and competence on purchase intention through brand attitude after CSR (H3a and H3b). The results are illustrated in Figure 7. Notably, all of the subsequently reported effects were found significant after controlling for the effects of BF, BO, PBG, PBL, BI, PCI, and the other stereotypical dimension after CSR (see Appendix D).

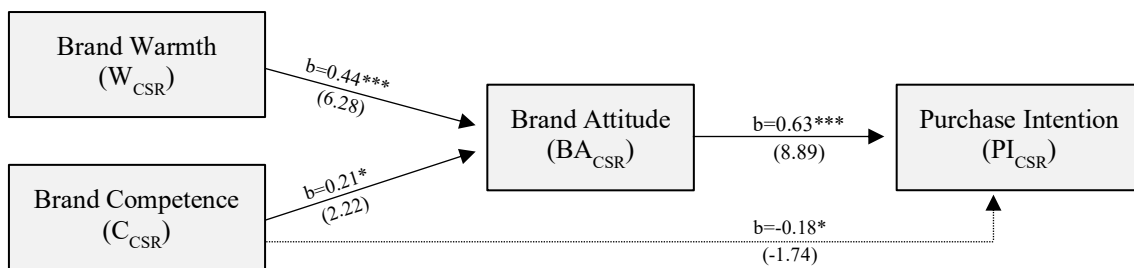


Figure 7: Effect of Brand Stereotypes on Purchase Intention after CSR

Note: Reported regression coefficients are unstandardized; *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

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As can be seen in Figure 7, brand warmth significantly predicted brand attitude, $b=0.44$, $t=6.28$, $p<.001$. Brand competence was also found to have a significant effect on brand attitude, $b=0.21$, $t=2.22$, $p<.05$. Both regression coefficients were positive, indicating a positive relationship, i.e., as brand warmth and brand competence increased, brand attitude also increased. The model including brand warmth, competence, and potential covariates (BF, BO, PBG, PBL, BI, PCI) accounted for 46.9% of the variability in respondents' brand attitude after CSR, $F(8,248)=27.36$, $p<.001$. Brand attitude, in turn, had a positive effect on respondents' intention to purchase the brand, $b=0.63$, $t=8.89$, $p<.001$, meaning that a more positive brand attitude subsequently led to higher purchase intentions after CSR.

Overall, brand warmth had a significant indirect effect on purchase intention through brand attitude after CSR, $b=0.27$, 95% CI [0.17, 0.38]. The mediation analyses also revealed a significant indirect effect of brand competence on purchase intention through brand attitude after CSR, $b=0.13$, 95% CI [0.02, 0.26]. Consistent with H3a and H3b, these results indicated that brand attitude mediated the relationship between both stereotypical dimensions and purchase intention after CSR.

Besides, the mediation analyses showed that there was no significant direct effect of brand warmth on purchase intention after CSR, $b=0.10$, $t=1.24$, $p>.05$, indicating that brand attitude fully mediated the effect of brand warmth on purchase intention after CSR. In contrast, there was a significant direct effect of brand competence on purchase intention after CSR, $b=-0.18$, $t=-1.74$, $p<.05$. The negative regression coefficient suggested that as perceived brand competence increased, purchase intention decreased. Hence, the indirect effect of brand competence on purchase intention indicated a positive relationship, but the direct effect of competence showed a negative relationship signaling competitive mediation. According to Zhao et al. (2010), this suggests that brand attitude mediated the relation between brand competence and purchase intention after CSR while the significant direct effect in the opposite direction "points to the possible existence of some omitted second mediator that can be pursued in future research" (p.201). Overall, the model tested explained 69% of the variability in respondents' intention to purchase a brand after the brand engaged in CSR, $F(9,247)=61.05$, $p<.001$.

Mediation with pWOM after CSR as the Outcome Variable

The second set of mediation analyses was conducted to investigate the influence of brand stereotypes on pWOM through brand attitude after CSR (H4a and H4b). The results are presented in Figure 8. Again, all the reported results were found after controlling for the influence of BF, BO, PBG, PBL, BI, PCI, and the other stereotypical dimension after CSR (see Appendix D).

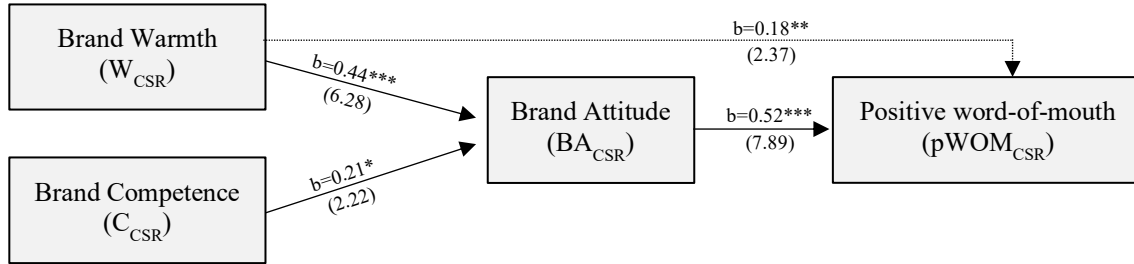


Figure 8: Effect of Brand Stereotypes on pWOM after CSR

Note: Reported regression coefficients are unstandardized; *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

Compared to the first set of mediation analyses, the outcome variable was changed from purchase intention to pWOM after CSR, while the predictors, mediator, and covariates remained the same. Therefore, the results of the first part of the mediation analyses (W_{CSR} and $C_{CSR} > BA_{CSR}$) were equivalent to the findings of the first set of mediation analyses indicating that brand warmth, $b=0.44$, $t=6.28$, $p < .001$, and competence, $b=0.21$, $t=2.22$, $p < .05$, both had a significant positive effect on brand attitude after CSR. Brand attitude subsequently had a significant effect on pWOM, $b=0.52$, $t=7.89$, $p < .001$. The regression coefficient was positive, suggesting that as brand attitude increased, respondents' willingness to talk positively about the brand also increased.

Regarding the hypothesized indirect effects of brand warmth and competence after CSR on pWOM after CSR through brand attitude, the results showed a significant indirect effect of warmth on pWOM, $b=0.23$, 95% CI [0.14, 0.32]. Brand competence also had a significant indirect effect on pWOM after CSR via brand attitude, $b=0.11$, 95% CI [0.02, 0.22], therefore supporting H4a and H4b.

Beyond the indirect effects of brand warmth and competence on pWOM after CSR, the mediation analyses revealed a significant direct effect of brand warmth after CSR on pWOM after CSR, $b=0.18$, $t=2.37$, $p < .01$. Hence, brand warmth had an impact on pWOM beyond its influence on favorable brand attitudes indicating complementary mediation. In contrast, the effect of brand competence was fully accounted for by brand attitude.

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Overall, the model accounted for 60.3% of the variability in respondents' intention to talk positively about the brand after CSR, $F(9,247)=41.61$, $p<.001$.

5.2.2.2. Moderation Analysis

A moderator is a variable that influences the strength and/or direction of the relationship between a predictor and outcome variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Similar to mediation, moderation can also be depicted as a path diagram (see Figure 9). The diagram contains three causal paths representing the effect of the predictor (path a), the moderator (path b), and the interaction of these two that refers to the product of the predictor and moderator (path c) on the outcome variable. Following Baron & Kenny (1986), the interaction effect must be significant to infer moderation. Also, there may be main effects of the predictor and/or moderator on the outcome variable. However, these are not directly relevant when testing moderation hypotheses.

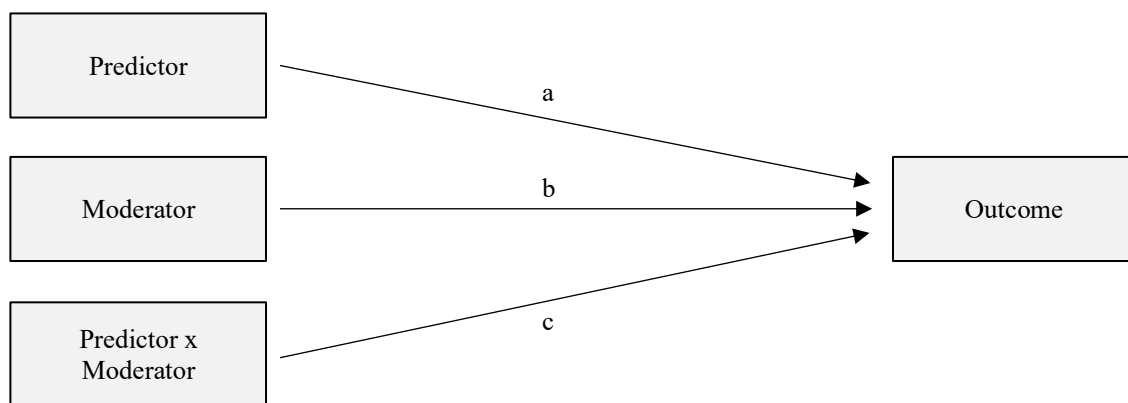


Figure 9: Moderation Diagram
Source: based on Baron& Kenny (1986)

In the present study, it was predicted that CSR skepticism would moderate the relationship between brand stereotypes after CSR and brand attitude after CSR:

H5: CSR skepticism reduces the positive effect of a) brand warmth and b) brand competence after CSR on brand attitude after CSR.

A multiple linear regression was conducted to test these hypotheses. The present study refrained from using the Preacher and Hayes' PROCESS command to carry out the moderation analyses because the PROCESS command only allows examining moderation models with one predictor. Instead, a multiple linear regression was run because it allowed investigating the potential moderating influence of CSR skepticism

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with two predictors simultaneously. Hence, brand warmth and brand competence were used as predictors, brand attitude as the outcome variable, and CSR skepticism as the moderator. Besides, BF, BO, PBG, PBL, BI, and PCI were included as covariates. Socio-demographic variables were not included as covariates because they were not related to brand attitude as the outcome variable (see Chapter 5.2.2.1).

Before running the multiple linear regression, the statistical assumptions were evaluated. The assumptions regarding the variable type, non-zero variance, independent observations, additivity, and linearity were already discussed in Chapter 5.2.2.1. The statistical assumptions concerning independent errors (Durbin Watson: 1.92) and no multicollinearity (all VIF<10 and tolerance statistics >.2) were also fulfilled after adding CSR skepticism to the model. The graphs showed that there was no heteroscedasticity and that errors were normally distributed. Hence, all statistical assumptions were met (see Appendix D). Besides, the moderator and predictors were mean-centered before the multiple linear regression was carried out. Mean-centering refers to the process of converting a variable into deviations around its mean by subtracting the variable mean from each observed score. According to Field (2013), mean-centering improves the interpretability of the interaction terms. Moreover, two interaction terms were calculated by multiplying the mean-centered moderator with the mean-centered brand warmth and competence variable, respectively.

The multiple linear regression was run in two steps. In the first step, both predictors, the moderating variable, and covariates were included. In the second step, the two interaction terms were entered into the model. The results of the multiple linear regression are reported in Table 9. After controlling for the effects of potential covariates, neither the interaction between warmth after CSR and CSR skepticism, $b=0.01$, $t=0.25$, $p>.05$, nor the interaction between competence after CSR and CSR skepticism, $b=0.02$, $t=0.20$, $p>.05$, was significant. Hence, H5a and H5b were rejected, which predicted that high CSR skepticism would reduce the effect of brand warmth and competence after CSR on brand attitude after CSR. However, there was a significant negative main effect of CSR skepticism, $b=-0.37$, $t=-6.77$, $p<.001$. This suggested that even though CSR skepticism did not moderate the relationship between brand stereotypes after CSR and brand attitude after CSR, it influenced brand attitude as an independent predictor variable. After

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including CSR skepticism into the model, the model accounted for 55% of the variability in respondents' brand attitudes after CSR, $F(11, 245)=27.75$, $p<.001$.

Table 9: Moderating Role of CSR Skepticism

	Step 1		Step 2	
	b	t-statistic	b	t-statistic
Constant	3.51***	9.60	3.50***	9.53
W_{CSR}	0.29***	4.33	0.30***	4.17
C_{CSR}	0.20*	2.35	0.21*	2.34
Moderator				
CSR Skepticism	-0.37***	-6.89	-0.37***	-6.77
Control variables				
BF	0.03	0.42	0.03	0.44
BO	0.15	1.93	0.15	1.91
PBG	0.04	0.82	0.05	0.87
PBL	0.08	1.85	0.08	1.79
PCI	-0.09*	-2.15	-0.08*	-2.12
BI	0.22***	4.38	0.22***	4.34
Interaction terms				
W_{CSR} *Skepticism			0.01	0.25
C_{CSR} * Skepticism			0.02	0.20
Model summary	$F(9, 247)=34.14$, $p<.001$, $R^2=.55$		$F(11, 245)=27.75$, $p<.001$, $\Delta R^2=.00$	

Dependent variable: Brand attitude after CSR (BA_{CSR})

Note: W_{CSR} = Warmth after CSR, C_{CSR} = Competence after CSR, BA= brand attitude, PI=purchase intention, pWOM= positive word-of-mouth, BF= brand familiarity, BO= brand ownership, PCI= product category involvement, BI= brand involvement, PBG= perceived brand globalness, PBL= perceived brand localness, ER= perceived environmental responsibility of the brand prior to the CSR manipulation.

Reported regression coefficients are unstandardized. *** $p<.001$, ** $p<.01$, * $p<.05$.

W_{CSR} , C_{CSR} , and CSR Skepticism were mean-centered.

5.2.2.3. Additional Analyses

Several analyses were carried out in addition to the analyses conducted to test the proposed framework. The objective of these additional analyses was to gain deeper statistical insights that extend the findings presented in the previous sections. First of all, this section presents the results of several paired sample t-tests comparing brand attitude, purchase intention, and pWOM before and after CSR. Moreover, it contains the results of additional mediation analyses examining the underlying influence of brand stereotypes on brand attitude and, through it, on purchase intention and pWOM before CSR.

Differences in Brand Attitude, Purchase Intention, and pWOM Pre-Post CSR

Three paired sample t-tests were run to test whether brand attitude, purchase intention, and pWOM were higher after CSR. Before conducting the actual tests, the statistical

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assumptions were evaluated. The variables that were compared measured respondents' brand attitude, purchase intention, and pWOM before and after CSR engagement. This represented a within-subject design; hence, observations were related, and paired-sample t-tests were applicable. To test the second assumption of normality, the differences between the pre- and post-CSR scores were calculated for each variable. This revealed a non-normal distribution of the differences (see Appendix D). However, according to the Central Limit Theorem, the violation of normality could be disregarded due to the large sample size of $N=257$ (Field, 2013).

Table 10: Brand Attitude, Purchase Intention, and pWOM Pre-Post CSR

Outcome variable	Before CSR M (SD)	After CSR M (SD)	Δ Pre-Post CSR M (SD)
Brand attitude	4.38 (1.29)	4.64 (1.22)	0.27 (0.92)
Purchase intention	3.44 (1.78)	3.61 (1.77)	0.17 (0.80)
pWOM	3.44 (1.45)	3.93 (1.46)	0.49 (0.94)

Table 10 shows the means and standard variations of the three variables before and after CSR, as well as their pre-post CSR difference. The results indicate that, on average, consumers' brand attitude was significantly higher after CSR, $t(256)=4.62$, $p<.001$, $r=.28$. Also, consumers indicated significantly higher intentions to purchase the brand, $t(256)=8.24$, $p<.001$, $r=.21$, and talk positively about the brand after CSR, $t(256)=3.37$, $p<.001$, $r=.46$. The effect sizes indicate that environmental CSR had a larger positive effect on pWOM than on brand attitude and purchase intention. Overall, these results suggest that environmental CSR enhanced consumers' brand attitudes and behavioral responses. However, additional paired sample t-tests for each stereotypical category showed that the effect of environmental CSR on brand attitude, purchase intention, and pWOM differed between brands with different initial stereotypes.

Before the additional paired sample t-tests for each stereotypical category were run, the statistical assumptions were evaluated. Again, the variables that were compared were measured before and after CSR, meaning that observations were related, and paired-sample t-tests were applicable. The pre-post CSR differences were not normally distributed, therefore violating the second assumption of normality. According to the Central Limit Theorem, this violation could be disregarded since all samples contained more than 62 respondents. The means and standard deviations of brand attitude, purchase

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intention, and pWOM before and after CSR and their pre-post CSR difference for all three stereotypes are displayed in Table 11.

Table 11: Brand Attitude, Purchase Intention, and pWOM Pre-Post CSR of Stereotypical Categories

Outcome variable per stereotype	Before CSR M (SD)	After CSR M (SD)	Δ Pre-Post CSR M (SD)
<u>Brand attitude</u>			
HCHW	5.17 (1.19)	5.13 (1.16)	-0.04 (0.76)
LCHW	4.45 (1.05)	4.89 (1.05)	0.44 (1.00)
LCLW	3.83 (1.30)	4.12 (1.23)	0.29 (0.90)
<u>Purchase intention</u>			
HCHW	4.48 (1.75)	4.43 (1.80)	-0.04 (0.63)
LCHW	3.44 (1.59)	3.70 (1.60)	0.26 (0.94)
LCLW	2.81 (1.67)	3.02 (1.70)	0.21 (0.73)
<u>pWOM</u>			
HCHW	4.23 (1.48)	4.60 (1.45)	0.37 (0.70)
LCHW	3.38 (1.35)	4.04 (1.33)	0.66 (1.18)
LCLW	3.01 (1.33)	3.41 (1.40)	0.39 (0.80)

The results showed that regarding LCLW brands, consumers' brand attitude, $t(100)=3.26$, $p<.01$, $r=.31$, purchase intention, $t(100)=2.89$, $p<.01$, $r=.28$, and pWOM, $t(100)=4.96$, $p<.001$, $r=.44$, were significantly higher after CSR. Similar results were observed for LCHW brands. Consumers' brand attitude, $t(93)=4.26$, $p<.001$, $r=.40$, purchase intention $t(93)=2.73$, $p<.001$, $r=.27$, and willingness to talk positively about these brands, $t(93)=5.43$, $p<.001$, $r=.49$, also increased significantly after the brand engaged in CSR. In contrast, consumers' brand attitude, $t(61)=-0.42$, $p>.05$, $r=.05$, and intention to purchase HCHW brands did not differ pre-post CSR, $t(61)=-0.55$, $p>.05$, $r=.07$. Only consumers' intention to talk positively about HCHW brands increased after the brand's engagement in CSR, $t(61)=4.14$, $p<.001$, $r=.46$.

Overall, these results imply that not only the extent to which environmental CSR enhanced consumers' brand stereotypes differed between initial stereotypical categories but also the extent to which CSR enhanced consumers' brand attitude and behavioral responses. The results emphasize that, in particular, LCLW and LCHW brands benefit from engaging in environmental CSR through improved brand stereotypes and more favorable consumer responses.

Mediation Analyses before CSR

The paired sample t-tests showed that overall brand attitude, purchase intention, and pWOM were higher after CSR. Additional mediation analyses were run to examine whether the impact of brand warmth and competence on brand attitude and the mediation coefficients of brand attitude differed pre-post CSR explaining higher brand attitudes, purchase intentions, and pWOM after CSR. Therefore, four additional mediation analyses were conducted, which were equivalent to those in Chapter 5.2.2.1., with the corresponding measures before CSR. Hence, two mediation analyses were run with purchase intention before CSR as the outcome variable and two with pWOM before CSR as the outcome variable. All analyses used brand attitude before CSR as the mediator, while two analyses used brand warmth before CSR and two analyses brand competence before CSR as the predictor. Following previous literature, BF, BO, PBG, PBL, BI, PCI, and socio-demographic variables were considered as potential covariates. Besides, the other respective dimension before CSR was included as a covariate.

Before running the mediation analyses using the PROCESS command by Preacher and Hayes (Model 4; 5,000 bootstrap samples), the statistical assumptions were evaluated. All variables were continuous or dichotomous and had some variation in their values, hence, meeting the requirements regarding variable type and non-zero variance. Furthermore, all observations were independent. A look at the bivariate correlations revealed that the socio-demographic variables (age, gender, and income) were not significantly related to the different outcome variables before CSR (see Appendix D). These findings are in line with the findings after CSR. As a result, these variables were not included as covariates in further analyses to examine the influence of brand stereotypes on consumer behavior before CSR. Again, all other variables were significantly related ($p < .05$) to the outcome variables indicating linear relationships and, thus, included in the mediation analyses. The values of the Durbin-Watson tests ranged from 1.80 to 2.16, indicating that residual terms were independent in all multiple linear regressions. The values of the VIF (all < 10) and tolerance statistic (all $> .2$) were within the acceptable thresholds in all multiple linear regression models. Also, the ZRESID against ZPRED plots showed no visible pattern. Thus, the assumption of homoscedasticity was fulfilled for all multiple linear regressions (see Appendix D). Finally, a look at the histograms and P-P plots showed that errors were normally

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distributed in all multiple linear regressions (see Appendix D). Therefore, all statistical assumptions were met, and the mediation analyses were run as proposed. The results of the mediation analyses are summarized in Table 12. The table also contains the values of the mediation analyses after CSR to facilitate comparisons.

Table 12: Mediating Role of Brand Attitude Before vs. After CSR

Before CSR	Brand attitude		Purchase intention		pWOM	
	b	t-statistic	b	t-statistic	b	t-statistic
Constant	0.05	0.11	-2.47***	-4.80	-1.40**	-2.95
W	0.50***	6.98	0.12	1.32	0.11	1.29
C	0.20**	2.53	-0.19*	-2.09	-0.11	-1.28
BA			0.44***	6.02	0.39***	5.82
Control variables						
BF	-0.05	-0.66	0.11	1.22	-0.03	-0.34
BO	0.04	0.50	0.67***	7.14	0.49***	5.58
PBG	0.01	0.21	0.30***	4.66	0.23***	3.85
PBL	0.07	1.59	0.17**	3.21	0.16**	3.20
PCI	-0.05	-1.15	0.01	0.26	0.05	1.03
BI	0.39***	7.04	0.24**	3.52	0.15*	2.42
Model summary	F(8,248)=37.29, p<.001, R ² =.55		F(9,247)=61.00, p<.001, R ² =.69		F(9,247)=41.09, p<.001, R ² =.60	
After CSR	Brand attitude		Purchase intention		pWOM	
	b	t-statistic	b	t-statistic	b	t-statistic
Constant	0.32	0.65	-2.50***	-4.57	-1.57**	-3.07
W _{CSR}	0.44***	6.28	0.10	1.24	0.18**	2.37
C _{CSR}	0.21*	2.22	-0.18	-1.74	-0.06	-0.58
BA _{CSR}			0.63***	8.89	0.52***	7.89
Control variables						
BF	0.03	0.42	0.07	0.83	0.04	0.49
BO	0.05	0.56	0.58***	6.21	0.33***	3.87
PBG	0.01	0.10	0.27***	4.15	0.17**	2.80
PBL	0.12**	2.60	0.15**	2.76	0.11*	2.27
PCI	-0.04	-0.96	-0.04	-0.89	0.03	0.70
BI	0.29***	5.26	0.24***	3.74	0.15*	2.46
Model summary	F(8,248)=27.36, p<.001, R ² =.47		F(9,247)=61.05, p<.001, R ² =.69		F(9,247)=41.61, p<.001, R ² =.60	

Note: W= Warmth, C= Competence, BA= brand attitude, PI=purchase intention, pWOM= positive word-of-mouth, BF= brand familiarity, BO= brand ownership, PCI= product category involvement, BI= brand involvement, PBG= perceived brand globalness, PBL= perceived brand localness, ER= perceived environmental responsibility of the brand prior to the CSR manipulation.

Reported regression coefficients are unstandardized; ***p<.001, ** p<.01, * p<.05.

After controlling for the influence of potential covariates, brand warmth, b=.50, t=6.98, p<.001, and brand competence, b=0.20, t=2.53, p<.01, had significant positive effects on brand attitude before CSR. This indicated that similar to the findings after CSR, higher brand warmth and competence led to more favorable brand attitudes. Together, brand warmth, competence, and potential covariates explained 55% of the variability in respondents' brand attitudes before CSR, F(8,248)=37.29, p<.001. Moreover, brand attitude also had a positive effect on purchase intentions, b=0.44, t=6.02, p<.001, and pWOM, b=0.39, t=5.82, p<.001, before CSR. The models tested accounted for 69% of

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the variability in respondents' purchase intention, $F(9,247)=61.00$, $p<.001$, and 60% of the variability in pWOM before CSR, $F(9,247)=41.09$, $p<.001$.

The regression coefficients for brand warmth and competence were similar before and after CSR, indicating that the effect of brand warmth and competence on brand attitude did not differ at different points in time. Regarding the effect of brand attitude on behavioral intentions, the regression coefficients were larger after CSR than before CSR, suggesting that positive brand attitudes had a stronger effect on respondents' purchase intention and pWOM after CSR.

Overall, brand warmth, $b=0.22$, 95% CI [0.13, 0.33], and brand competence, $b=0.09$, 95% CI [0.02, 0.18], both had a significant indirect effect on purchase intention before CSR. Brand warmth, $b=0.20$, 95% CI [0.12, 0.29], and competence, $b=0.08$, 95% CI [0.02, 0.22], also had a significant indirect effect on pWOM before CSR. The positive coefficients indicated a positive relationship, which was in line with the findings after CSR. Comparing the regression coefficients of the indirect effects suggested that the effects of brand warmth and competence on purchase intention and pWOM via brand attitude before CSR were similar to the effects after CSR.

In line with the statistical analyses with purchase intention after CSR as the outcome variable, the analysis before CSR found a significant direct negative effect of brand competence on purchase intention, $b=-0.19$, $t=-2.09$, $p<.05$. As competence had a positive indirect effect on purchase intention before CSR, this signals competitive mediation meaning that brand attitude mediated the relation between competence before CSR and purchase intention before CSR, but that there may be another potential mediator that can be examined in future studies (Zhao et al., 2010). Regarding brand warmth, no direct effect was observed, indicating that the effect of brand warmth on purchase intention before CSR was fully accounted for by brand attitude. This finding was in accordance with the observed relationship after CSR.

Opposed to the mediation analyses after CSR, brand warmth had no significant direct effect on pWOM before CSR, $b=0.11$, $t=1.29$, $p>.05$, suggesting that brand attitude fully mediated the effect of brand warmth on pWOM before CSR. Similar to the findings after CSR, competence had no direct effect on pWOM before CSR, $b=-.11$, 95% CI [-.28, .06],

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which indicated that brand attitude fully mediated the effect of competence on pWOM before and after CSR.

Overall, these mediation analyses showed that the impact of brand warmth and competence on brand attitude did not differ pre-post CSR. Therefore, higher brand attitudes after CSR result solely from the increase in brand warmth and competence after CSR. The mediation coefficients of brand attitude were higher after CSR, meaning that positive brand attitudes had a larger positive effect on purchase intention and pWOM after CSR. Furthermore, perceived brand warmth had a positive direct effect on pWOM after CSR, whereas the additional analyses only found an indirect effect of brand warmth on pWOM before CSR. Consequently, higher purchase intention and pWOM after CSR can be attributed to higher levels of warmth and competence after CSR leading to higher brand attitudes after CSR, a stronger mediation effect of brand attitude after CSR, and the additional direct effect of brand warmth on pWOM after CSR.

6. Discussion

The previous chapter contained all the statistical analyses conducted to test the postulated hypotheses. Table 13 summarizes the results of the hypotheses testing which are discussed and interpreted in the subsequent sections.

Table 13: Summary of Hypotheses

Hypotheses		Result
Influence of environmental CSR on brand stereotypes		
H1a&b	The perceived warmth and b) perceived competence of a brand are higher after the brand's engagement in environmental CSR.	✓
H2a&b	The increase in a) perceived brand warmth and b) perceived brand competence through environmental CSR differs across stereotypical categories, such that:	
	a) The increase in perceived brand warmth is larger for brands that are initially perceived as lower in warmth than for brands with a higher initial level of warmth.	partially ✓
	b) The increase in perceived brand competence is larger for brands that are initially perceived as lower in competence than for brands with a higher initial level of competence.	✓
Effect of brand stereotypes on consumer responses to environmental CSR		
H3a&b	H3: a) Brand warmth and b) brand competence after CSR have a positive effect on consumers' brand attitude, which then positively influences consumers' purchase intentions.	✓
H4a&b	H4: a) Brand warmth and b) brand competence after CSR have a positive effect on consumers' brand attitude, which then positively influences consumers' pWOM.	✓
H5a&b	CSR skepticism reduces the positive effect of a) brand warmth and b) brand competence after CSR on brand attitude after CSR.	x
Note: ✓ = Hypothesis supported; x = Hypothesis not supported		

This research addressed two different shortcomings of previous research. The first aim of this research was to investigate whether the engagement in environmental CSR enhances perceived brand warmth and competence leading to higher perceived warmth and competence after CSR. The results showed that overall the perceived warmth and competence of brands were higher after CSR engagement, indicating that CSR improves brand stereotypes.

The observed increase in brand warmth after CSR generally supports previous literature suggesting that CSR is a signal of warmth and that organizations with CSR engagement are perceived as warmer than organizations without CSR engagement (Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Shea & Hawn, 2019). While previous research uniformly found a positive effect of

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CSR on perceived warmth, the findings were inconsistent regarding the influence of CSR on competence. Shea & Hawn (2019) found that engagement in social CSR had no direct impact on perceived competence. However, they suggested that CSR initiatives that are seen as more competent than the social initiative in their study may also increase perceived competence. Other studies indicated that it does not only depend on the distinction between social and environmental CSR, but also on the type of CSR initiative, i.e., philanthropic, business-practice, or product-related CSR, whether CSR is viewed as a signal competence (Bhardwaj et al., 2018; Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Du et al., 2007). In particular, it was expected that business-practice and product-related environmental CSR are viewed as an indicator of competence as a firm must be capable to align their processes and people to become more environmentally friendly (Dangelico et al., 2013; Hofmann et al., 2012).

The results showed that the environmental business-practice and product-related CSR initiative in the present study, i.e., the introduction of a sustainable product line, increased perceived brand warmth and competence after CSR. Considering the proposition of Shea & Hawn (2019), this suggests that this type of CSR is not only viewed as a signal of warmth but also perceived as a competent form of CSR, therefore increasing perceived warmth and competence after CSR. Hence, these findings support the argument that it depends on the type of CSR initiative, but that CSR can not only enhance perceived warmth but also perceived competence.

Moreover, the data analyses showed that the increase in perceived brand warmth and competence through environmental CSR differed across brands depending upon their initial level of brand warmth and competence. More specifically, it emerged that the pre-post CSR difference in brand warmth and competence was larger for LCLW and LCHW brands than for HCHW brands.

This observation generally supports the findings of previous research in the context of social stereotypes that the extent to which stereotypes are adapted after receiving additional information differs due to assimilation and contrast effects (Cuddy et al., 2004). This means that depending upon the initial level of perceived warmth (competence), additional information can either strengthen the previous perception through assimilation or lead to an adaptation of stereotype content when it contrasts with the initial stereotype (Biernat, 2006). Based on these previous findings, it was expected

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that the increase in perceived brand warmth (competence) would be larger for those brands whose initial brand stereotype contrasts with CSR as a warm (competent) activity, i.e., brands that were initially perceived as low in warmth (competence).

The observed pre-post CSR difference in brand competence across stereotypical categories was in line with assimilation and contrast effects, indicating that those brands benefitted from a larger increase in competence after engaging in CSR that were initially perceived as lower in competence, i.e., LCHW and LCLW brands. Hence, the CSR initiative as a signal of competence contrasted with consumers' initial perception of these brands as incompetent. This contrast caused them to re-consider the accuracy of their initial perception and led to an adaptation of stereotype content, i.e., higher perceived competence after CSR.

On the other hand, the effect on warmth was not as straightforward. The results showed that the increase in warmth did not differ between LCLW and LCHW brands despite different initial levels of warmth. The pre-post CSR difference in warmth was significantly larger for both stereotype categories as opposed to the HCHW category. This means that perceived warmth did not only increase significantly after CSR for brands that were initially perceived as low in warmth, but also for brands with a high initial warmth level when their high warmth was combined with low competence. These findings dispute with the hypothesized assimilation and contrast effects. Instead, they suggest that not only the initial level of warmth influences whether CSR increases perceived brand warmth but the combination of initial warmth and competence. This observation proposes that the environmental initiative in the present study was perceived as a particularly strong signal of competence. Consequently, the contrast between the CSR initiative and the initial competence level of a brand influenced not only the pre-post CSR difference in competence but also the pre-post CSR difference in perceived warmth.

Overall, these findings imply that brand warmth and competence increase after CSR when the CSR initiative contrasts with the initial brand stereotype. While the increase in perceived competence depends on the contrast with the initial competence of the brand pursuing the initiative, the increase in warmth is caused by the contrast with the initial combination of warmth and competence. Moreover, additional analyses showed that the extent to which brands generated more favorable consumer responses after CSR also

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differed between stereotypical categories. Even though consumers' brand attitude, purchase intention, and pWOM was overall higher after CSR, a closer look at the different stereotypical categories revealed that LCLW and LCHW brands benefitted from higher brand attitudes, purchase intention, and pWOM after CSR. In contrast, neither consumers' brand stereotypes nor brand attitude, nor purchase intention was higher after CSR for HCHW brands, but only consumers' pWOM increased after CSR for these brands. Herewith, these findings are in line with previous research suggesting that popular, successful firms benefit less from engaging in CSR due to ceiling effects (Du et al., 2011; van Doorn et al., 2017). According to Kervyn et al. (2012), HCHW brands represent popular brands. Consumers' brand stereotypes and responses toward these brands are already positive before CSR engagement; therefore, there is little potential for HCHW brands to enhance brand perception or consumer responses through CSR.

The second aim of this research was to examine the underlying influence of brand stereotypes after CSR by examining their influence on brand attitude and through it on consumer responses to environmental CSR. The results revealed that brand warmth and competence both had a positive impact on behavioral intentions after CSR via brand attitude as a mediator. Hence, high levels of brand warmth and competence after CSR increased brand attitude, which, in turn, increased purchase intention and pWOM after CSR. Also, CSR skepticism was considered as a potential moderator of the relationship between brand stereotypes after CSR and brand attitude after CSR. However, it turned out that CSR skepticism had no influence on the respective relationship.

The underlying influence of brand warmth and competence on brand attitude and through it as predictors of consumer behavior is in accordance with previous findings from branding literature while these suggested that the relative importance of brand warmth and competence depends on the particular context (Davvetas & Halkias, 2019; Ivens et al., 2015; Kervyn et al., 2012; Kolbl et al., 2019). Previous studies in the CSR context found that warmth after CSR predicted consumer responses, while findings regarding the underlying influence of competence were inconsistent (Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Shea & Hawn, 2019). Shea & Hawn (2019) found that social CSR had no direct influence on perceived competence and, respectively, competence did not mediate the effect of CSR on company reputation and purchase intention. On the other hand, the research of Bolton & Mattila (2015) showed that, depending on the type of environmental CSR, CSR could

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improve customer satisfaction and loyalty after a service failure through higher competence after CSR. Even though the present research found a larger effect of brand warmth, brand competence also emerged as a significant predictor of consumer responses to environmental CSR. Hence, the present study supports the finding by Bolton & Mattila (2015) that both dimensions have an underlying positive influence on consumer responses to environmental CSR. Furthermore, these findings emphasize that the underlying influence of brand stereotypes after CSR depends on the particular context. More specifically, the results propose that the underlying influence of brand stereotypes (in particular, brand competence) on consumer responses to CSR differs between different types of CSR. Whereas solely warmth influenced consumer responses to social CSR (Shea & Hawn, 2019), perceived brand warmth and competence after CSR both influence consumer responses to a business-practice and product-related environmental CSR initiative.

Besides, this research showed that brand stereotypes after CSR influence consumers' behavioral responses through brand attitude. Except for the additional direct effect of brand warmth on pWOM after CSR, the influence of brand stereotypes on consumers' behavioral intentions was fully accounted for by brand attitude, which is in line with the cognition-affect-behavior sequence observed in previous stereotyping literature (Cuddy et al., 2007; Diamantopoulos et al., 2017; Halkias et al., 2016). This implies that consumer responses to environmental CSR cannot be predicted directly from brand stereotypes after CSR, but only indirectly considering their influence on brand attitude.

Moreover, additional mediation analyses were conducted examining the corresponding relationships before CSR to explore whether stronger effects of brand warmth, competence, and brand attitude after CSR explain more favorable consumer responses after CSR. These analyses revealed that the impact of brand warmth and competence did not change after CSR, meaning that consumers' higher brand attitudes after CSR resulted solely from higher warmth and competence perception after CSR. Respectively, higher brand attitudes after CSR led to higher purchase intentions and pWOM after CSR. Furthermore, brand attitude had a stronger effect on purchase intention and pWOM after CSR, which also explains higher purchase intentions and pWOM after CSR. In addition, warmth had a direct effect on pWOM after CSR, which was not observed before CSR. This suggests that the CSR initiative particularly promoted the warmth of brands or

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increased the relative importance of warmth. Besides, this additional direct effect explains why the pre-post CSR difference in pWOM was larger than the increase in consumers' brand attitude and purchase intention after CSR.

Overall, these results suggest that warmth and competence after CSR represent underlying mechanisms that can be used to predict and explain different consumer responses to environmental CSR. Hence, high (low) levels of perceived brand warmth and competence lead to positive (negative) consumer responses to environmental CSR. Moreover, it emerges that more favorable consumer responses after CSR result from an increase in brand warmth and competence after CSR and a stronger effect of brand attitude on behavioral variables after CSR. Considering that not all brands benefit equally from higher warmth and competence after CSR, these findings explain why some brands benefit more from engaging in CSR than others: Perceived warmth and competence increased for LCLW and LCHW brands leading to higher brand attitudes, and consequently also higher purchase intention and pWOM after CSR. In contrast, HCHW brands did not benefit from enhanced stereotypes after CSR and, therefore, also not from more favorable brand attitudes or purchase intention after CSR. Only consumers' willingness to talk positively about HCHW brands increased after CSR, which can be attributed to the additional direct effect of warmth on pWOM after CSR. This implies that brand stereotype adaptation after CSR determines whether brands benefit from positive consumer responses after CSR, therefore explaining why consumer responses after CSR differ across brands.

Furthermore, it was expected that high levels of CSR skepticism, which is caused by the attribution of CSR to negative motives, would reduce the positive effect of perceived brand warmth and competence after CSR on brand attitude (Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Du et al., 2007; Romani et al., 2016; Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013). It emerged that CSR skepticism did not moderate the relationship meaning that high levels of brand warmth and competence after CSR increase brand attitude regardless of the level of CSR skepticism. Instead, CSR skepticism only had a direct effect on brand attitude, suggesting that high levels of CSR skepticism have a negative influence on brand attitude regardless of the level of perceived brand warmth and competence after CSR. Even though the results did not support the hypothesized moderating influence of CSR skepticism, integrating CSR skepticism into the model improved the fit of the model so that it

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explained more variability in consumers' brand attitude after CSR ($\Delta R^2=.08$). Opposed to their brand attitude after CSR, it emerges that consumers' CSR skepticism does not influence their brand stereotype adaptation after CSR. The results indicated that consumers' brand stereotypes of LCLW brands improved similarly as their brand perception of LCHW brands even though consumers showed significantly higher levels of CSR skepticism toward LCLW brands as opposed to LCHW brands.

The results discussed were obtained after controlling for the effects of potential covariates that were included in the statistical analyses because it emerged from previous literature that they may influence consumer responses regardless of the experimental manipulation. BF and BO were included to control for the influence of prior brand experiences (Diamantopoulos et al., 2017; Halkias et al., 2016; Kolbl et al., 2019). Whereas the extent to which respondents were familiar with the particular brand did not influence their behavioral intentions, BO had a positive influence on purchase intention and pWOM. This implies that regardless of their stereotypical perception, consumers showed more favorable responses when they had purchased the brand in the past.

In line with previous literature, PBG and PBL were also considered as covariates when examining the influence of brand stereotypes on consumer behavior (Davvetas & Halkias, 2019; Kolbl et al., 2019). It emerged that PBG and PBL both had a positive influence on purchase intention and pWOM. Hence, consumers were more willing to purchase or talk positively about those brands which they viewed as being global and marketed around the world. Furthermore, brands generated more positive consumer responses when they were perceived as local brands that adapt their strategy to the needs of the local market.

Moreover, the statistical analyses controlled for the influence of consumer involvement, which was assessed through BI and PCI. Following previous research, BI was positively related to brand attitude, purchase intention, and pWOM, suggesting that respondents' brand attitude and behavioral intentions were more favorable when the respondent was interested in the particular brand (Hollebeek et al., 2014). Also, it was controlled for PCI because the present study investigated only one product category (fashion), and respondents' interest in the particular product category was likely to differ. It emerged that respondents' interest in fashion did not influence the extent to which they adapted their stereotypes after CSR. However, the moderation analysis revealed a negative influence of PCI on brand attitude, meaning that respondents who were interested in

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fashion showed less favorable brand attitudes. This contradicts with the results of previous research finding more favorable brand attitudes and behavioral intentions of consumers with high PCI as opposed to low PCI consumers (Dens & De Pelsmacker, 2010).

Socio-demographic characteristics were also considered as potential control variables. They were not significantly related to any dependent variable suggesting that age, gender, income, and occupation did not influence consumers' stereotype adaptation or behavioral responses to environmental CSR. These findings are following previous results that socio-demographic variables cannot be used to characterize environmentally conscious consumers (Auger et al., 2008; Diamantopoulos et al., 2003).

7. Conclusion

The aim of this research was two-fold. On the one hand, it examined whether environmental CSR enhances consumers' brand stereotypes and whether this pre-post CSR difference in brand warmth and competence differs between brands with different initial stereotypes. On the other hand, it investigated whether brand stereotypes after CSR influence consumers' brand attitudes and, through it, their behavioral responses and whether this effect is moderated by CSR skepticism.

An empirical study was conducted to answer these research questions. The study was designed to measure respondents' brand stereotypes and behavioral intentions toward a fashion brand before and after receiving additional information about the brand's initiative of introducing a sustainable product line. Drawing on the results of this study, it can be concluded that overall environmental CSR enhances the perceived warmth and competence of a brand. However, the results indicate that the increase in brand warmth and competence through CSR differs across brands depending upon assimilation or contrast between their initial brand stereotype and the CSR initiative as a signal of warmth and competence. In particular, the findings suggested that those brands benefit from a larger increase in brand competence after CSR, whose initial low level of brand competence contrasts with CSR as a competent activity. On the other hand, brand warmth after CSR increased not only for brands with an initial low level of warmth but also for warm brands with a low competence level. This indicates that warmth not only increases through the contrast of CSR with low initial warmth but also through contrast with initial competence when the CSR initiative, such as the business-practice and product-related environmental initiative in the present study, is viewed as a strong signal of competence.

Regarding the underlying influence of brand stereotypes after CSR, the results propose that brand warmth and competence after CSR both have a positive effect on consumers' behavioral responses through brand attitude as a mediator. This implies that high perceived brand warmth and competence after CSR lead to favorable brand attitudes, which, in turn, cause positive consumer responses. Also, this effect is not moderated by consumers' CSR skepticism, but skepticism has a direct effect on consumers' brand attitude regardless of perceived brand warmth and competence after CSR. Moreover, this study showed that more favorable consumer responses after CSR result from a higher level of warmth and competence after CSR leading to higher brand attitudes after CSR

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and through it to higher purchase intention and pWOM. Considering that not all brands benefit from an increase in warmth and competence after CSR, brand stereotype adaptation after CSR explains why not all brands benefit equally from positive consumer responses after CSR.

The subsequent sections round off this research by discussing its implications for international marketing theory and practice. The last section highlights some of the limitations of the present research while providing recommendations for future research.

7.1. Theoretical Contributions

By linking the concepts of brand stereotypes and CSR, the present study contributes in several ways to current research in both fields. First of all, this study extends research on the influence of CSR on stereotypes by being (to the best of the author's knowledge) the first research that examines the effect at the brand level and uses a within-subjects design to examine the impact of CSR on brand stereotypes. Previous researchers used between-subjects designs that compared the perception of firms with CSR engagement to brands without CSR engagement. They found that firms with CSR engagement are perceived as warmer (Aaker et al., 2010; Shea & Hawn, 2019) and eventually also more competent (Bolton & Mattila, 2015). By measuring brand stereotypes before and after CSR, the present research investigated whether CSR changes the stereotypical perception of a brand. The results suggested that environmental CSR has the power to change brand stereotypes so that brands are perceived as warmer and more competent after CSR.

Moreover, this study extends current literature by showing that not all brands are viewed as warmer and more competent when they engage in CSR. Instead, it showed that the extent to which CSR increases brand warmth and competence depends upon whether CSR, as a signal of warmth and competence, (mis) matches the initial stereotype of the brand. This observation is in accordance with assimilation and contrast effects that were previously observed in the context of social (Cuddy et al., 2004) and organizational stereotypes (Shea & Hawn, 2019). Hence, this research also enhances research on assimilation and contrast effects by showing that additional information influences brand stereotype content in a similar way as social and organizational stereotypes. Furthermore, this study showed that through higher warmth and competence after CSR, brands generate more positive affective and behavioral responses and that those brands whose brand

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stereotypes are not enhanced through CSR, consequently, also do not generate more positive consumer responses. Herewith, this research provides an answer to the question of why positive consumer responses to CSR differ across brands (van Doorn et al., 2017).

Besides, this research offers valuable insights regarding the underlying mechanisms of consumer responses to CSR, which have received little attention in the past. In particular, this research showed that brand warmth and competence after CSR both positively influence consumer responses to environmental CSR via brand attitude. Herewith, the present study confirms the importance of brand stereotypes as an underlying influence on consumer responses to CSR and emphasizes that the influence of warmth and competence on consumer responses differs for different types of CSR (Bolton & Mattila, 2015; Shea & Hawn, 2019). Moreover, this research showed that brand attitude should be considered as a mediator when using brand stereotypes after CSR to predict consumer responses to CSR because it accounted almost entirely for the positive effect of brand warmth and competence on purchase intention and pWOM after CSR. Besides, this research showed that consumers' CSR skepticism does not moderate the effect of brand stereotypes after CSR as underlying mechanisms on consumers' brand attitudes after CSR.

Overall, the observed influence of brand stereotypes on consumer responses before and after CSR is following previous branding literature that identified brand warmth and competence as predictors of consumer behavior. However, researchers have argued about the relative importance of both stereotypical dimensions. On the one hand, previous research found that competence was more important, and eventually, warmth had no direct effect on consumer behavior (Aaker et al., 2010; Chen et al., 2014; Halkias et al., 2016). On the other hand, researchers found that perceived warmth determined consumers' decisions in spontaneous decision contexts (Diamantopoulos et al., 2017), increased consumers' identification with a brand yielding long-term relational rewards (Kolbl et al., 2019) and also reduced negative consumer responses in case of a crisis (Barbarossa et al., 2016; Bolton & Mattila, 2015). This research found that perceived brand warmth had a larger influence on consumer behavior than brand competence. Hence, it provides further support for the argument that the importance of warmth must not be underrated.

7.2. Managerial Implications

Due to normative reasons and the rising pressure to assume their environmental responsibilities, many brands have launched sustainability initiatives in recent years. Therefore, this research also provides valuable insights for marketing practice how these environmental initiatives influence consumers' brand perception and brand-related behavior. These insights can aid managers with the decision as to whether engaging in and communicating environmental CSR is an option to improve consumers' brand perception and, through it, consumers' brand-related behavior.

The results suggest that brand managers can enhance the perception of their brand by engaging in environmental CSR. In turn, higher levels of perceived brand warmth and competence lead to more favorable consumer responses after CSR. This implies that managers can improve the performance of their brand by engaging in environmental CSR. However, this implication must be treated with caution as the results also showed that not all brands benefitted from an increase in perceived brand warmth and competence, and consequently, more favorable consumer responses after engaging in environmental CSR. In particular, it emerged that environmental CSR may be a feasible option for brands that are regarded as low in warmth and/or competence to improve their brand perception and generate positive consumer responses.

In contrast, the results showed that environmental CSR neither improved brand stereotypes nor consumer responses toward brands that were already perceived as warm and competent before their CSR engagement. This does not imply that those brands should not engage in CSR because, nevertheless, it is the right thing to do. However, instead of communicating their CSR engagement, managers may communicate other aspects to increase the perceived warmth or competence of their brand, e.g., the brand's global or local focus (Davvetas & Halkias, 2019; Kolbl et al., 2019), durability, reliability, or quality (Kervyn et al., 2012).

On the other hand, managers should explicitly communicate their CSR engagement to ensure that consumers are aware of their initiative when they are trying to improve consumers' stereotypical perceptions and behavioral responses through CSR. Otherwise, consumers may not be aware of the CSR initiative and, due to the lack of awareness, do not consider it in their affective and behavioral responses (Du et al., 2007; Öberseder et

al., 2011). Here managers have to consider carefully how they communicate their brand's CSR engagement because the type of communication, e.g., message content and channel, also influence consumer responses to CSR (Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen, 2010). However, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to provide recommendations for effective CSR communication.⁶

7.3. Limitations and Future Research

The results of the present research have to be viewed in the light of several limitations. At the same time, these limitations provide recommendations and opportunities for future research. A first concern is related to the generalizability of the results. This study used snowball sampling to reach a large number of respondents at a low cost and within a short time period. Even though this was a convenient method for the purpose of this study, these samples are often biased and not representative of the population (Babin & Zikmund, 2016). In the present study, young, female respondents were overrepresented who may perceive and respond differently to the environmental initiative of a fashion brand than older or male respondents. Therefore, it is difficult to generalize the findings beyond the sample drawn. Further research is needed to establish the generalizability of these findings by using a sample in which the age and gender distribution is representative of the German population.

Moreover, the findings of the present study are highly specific to one product category and type of CSR, which also limits the generalizability of the results. In particular, since the literature review showed that consumer responses to CSR differ across product categories and types of CSR, one must be careful to generalize the findings across different product categories and types of (environmental) CSR (Essoussi & Linton, 2010; Luchs et al., 2010). At the same time, this offers numerous opportunities for future research.

Previous research showed that environmental initiatives might have a positive (negative) influence on the perceived quality of a product, which results in positive (negative) consumer responses. Whether the initiative had a positive or negative effect differed

⁶ For a review of factors that influence the effectiveness of CSR communication see Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen (2010).

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depending upon the benefits sought (Luchs et al., 2010) or functional risk associated with the particular product category (Essoussi & Linton, 2010). Since quality can be viewed as an indicator of competence, this suggests that the influence of an environmental initiative on perceived competence may differ depending upon the brand's product category. Hence, it would be interesting to conduct further research to examine whether the observed effects of environmental CSR on brand stereotypes (particularly brand competence) differ depending upon the benefits sought or functional risk associated with a brand's product category.

Furthermore, the replication of the study in the context of social CSR represents an avenue for future research. The study of Shea & Hawn (2019) investigated the direct influence of stereotypes on consumer responses to CSR, finding no effect of competence. In line with other studies, this research found that brand stereotypes mostly influence consumer responses through an affective variable, such as brand attitude (Cuddy et al., 2007; Diamantopoulos et al., 2017; Halkias et al., 2016). Therefore, it would be interesting whether competence also influences consumer responses after social CSR when considering brand attitude as a mediator of the relationship. Besides, it would be interesting to conduct a study that contrasts social and environmental CSR in the context of brand stereotypes to examine the proposition that the effect on brand stereotype content and their influence on consumer reactions after CSR differs depending upon the type of CSR initiative.

A further limitation results from the choice of using real brands. A pre-test had been conducted to identify real brands that represented the four different stereotypical categories. However, the respondents in the main study perceived the selected brands differently than the respondents in the pre-test. It emerged that, in particular, those brands differed in their brand perception that respondents in the pre-test were least familiar with. However, they were selected for the main study despite their low familiarity since they were the only suitable brands that fulfilled the criteria to be used in the main study (see Chapter 4.2.4.). Previous research suggested that it is difficult for respondents to state their brand perception when they are not familiar with a brand (Ivens et al., 2015). Considering that the main study used a different sample than the pre-test and, in both studies, respondents indicated low familiarity with these brands, it is likely that the deviation in brand perception can be attributed to low brand familiarity. Moreover, the

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deviation in brand perception may be attributed to the use of different scales to measure brand stereotypes in the pre-test (Halkias et al., 2016) and the main study (Halkias & Diamantopoulos, 2020). Also, the pre-test used only one item for each dimension to reduce the length of the questionnaire, whereas the main study used a multi-item measure to assess each dimension. Multi-item measures are more valid and reliable for evaluating underlying constructs than single-item measures (Babin & Zikmund, 2016). Thus, the use of different brand stereotype measurements is a second potential explanation for differences in brand perception between the pre-test and the main study.

As a result of the different brand perception of respondents in the main study, no brands represented the HCLW category in the main study. Therefore, the influence of environmental CSR on brand stereotype content could only be compared across three stereotypical categories (HCHW, LCHW, LCLW). It could not be tested whether the perception of HCLW brands is enhanced through the contrast between their initial stereotype and environmental CSR, similarly as the perception of LCHW and LCLW brands. Hence, further research is recommended to investigate whether contrast effects also apply to the perception of HCLW brands. Here it is recommended to use fictitious brands with different stereotypes in the future to ensure that each stereotypical category is represented.

Also, the present research has only considered the potential moderating influence of CSR skepticism, whereas previous research has identified many other moderating factors (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004; Sen et al., 2016). This should not be viewed as a major shortcoming of this research as it is nearly impossible to consider all potentially moderating variables in one conceptual model. However, the integration of additional moderators represents an opportunity to enrich the findings of this research through further research. For instance, future research could examine the influence of different aspects of communication on consumers' brand stereotype adaptation to enlarge managers' understanding of how they need to communicate their CSR engagement to enhance their brand's stereotype through CSR (Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen, 2010).

Ultimately, the replication of the present study in the context of environmental CSI represents an avenue for future research. CSR and CSI are two closely related concepts. Some researchers view CSR and CSI as two sides of one medal, while others view CSI

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as the bottom line of CSR (Lin-Hi & Müller, 2013). Therefore, it would be interesting for future research to examine whether irresponsible behavior has the opposite, i.e., diminishing effects on consumers' brand perception and whether brand stereotypes also predict consumer responses to CSI.

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Appendix A: Pre-Test Questionnaire

Introduction

Die nachfolgende Studie wird vom Lehrstuhl für Internationales Marketing an der Universität Wien durchgeführt.

Der Fokus der Studie liegt darauf zu untersuchen wie Sie 19 verschiedene Textilmarken wahrnehmen.

Die Studie verfolgt keine kommerziellen Interessen, sondern dient ausschließlich wissenschaftlichen Zwecken und hilft mir sehr bei dem Verfassen meiner Masterarbeit.

Das Ausfüllen des Fragebogens wird ca. 12 Minuten Ihrer Zeit in Anspruch nehmen.

- Es ist wichtig, dass Sie sich die Fragen genau durchlesen und den Angaben genau folgen.
Bitte beantworten Sie alle Fragen ehrlich und spontan. Es gibt keine richtigen oder falschen Antworten.
- Es gibt kein Zeitlimit für diesen Fragebogen. Bitte nehmen Sie sich Zeit beim Ausfüllen.

Alle von Ihnen angegebenen Informationen werden vertraulich und anonym behandelt. Sollten Sie Fragen zu der Studie oder den Ergebnissen haben, können Sie mich gerne kontaktieren.

Vielen Dank für Ihre Teilnahme!

Isabel Nienhoff

i.nienhoff@gmail.com

Questions (repeated for all 19 brands)

Bitte denken Sie nun an die Marke ZARA.



Wie vertraut sind Sie mit den Produkten der Marke ZARA?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• gar nicht• ein bisschen• mittelmäßig• sehr• extrem

Ihrer Meinung nach, wie würden die meisten Menschen in Deutschland die Marke ZARA sehen?	
<u>herzlich</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• gar nicht• ein bisschen• mittelmäßig• sehr• extrem	<u>kompetent</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• gar nicht• ein bisschen• mittelmäßig• sehr• extrem

CSR manipulation

Bitte lesen Sie den folgenden Artikel und beantworten Sie anschließend die zwei darauffolgenden Fragen.

TEXTILINDUSTRIE

Modelabels sind sich einig. es ist Zeit für eine Veränderung: Nachhaltigkeit in der Textilindustrie

P. Müller

10. Januar 2020 - 11:27AM – [Kommentieren](#)– [Beitrag teilen](#)

Nachhaltigkeit ist bei weitem kein neues Thema, dennoch war es noch nie zuvor von größerer Bedeutung für Unternehmen als heute.

Viele der großen Modemarken haben in den vergangenen Monaten Umweltinitiativen ins Leben gerufen, um ihren ökologischen Fußabdruck zu reduzieren und Kunden aufzufordern, durch die bewusste Wahl nachhaltiger Mode, ebenfalls Achtsamkeit zu zeigen. Im Rahmen ihrer Initiative haben viele Marken, neben ihren bestehenden Kollektionen, eine neue Produktlinie eingeführt, deren Produkte ausschließlich aus nachhaltigen Materialien bestehen. Bio-Baumwolle, Bio-Leinen und Bio-Seide sind umweltfreundlicher, da ihr Anbau weniger Wasser und keiner Chemikalien oder Pestizide bedarf. Kunstfasern wie Polyester und Nylon werden ebenfalls durch eine nachhaltige Alternative ersetzt, indem das Garn aus recyceltem Kunststoff wie eingeschmolzenen PET-Flaschen und Fischernetzen hergestellt wird. Um Wasserverbrauch und -verschmutzung zu reduzieren, wird bei der Produktion dieser Textilien auf Chemikalien wie Färbe- und Bleichmittel verzichtet. Stattdessen werden rein natürliche Färbemittel verwendet.



Inwieweit stimmen Sie den folgenden Aussagen zu?

Das Verhalten dieser Marken gegenüber der Umwelt ist...
unverantwortlich - verantwortlich.

Diese Initiative ist...
nicht umweltfreundlich - umweltfreundlich.

Demographics

Bitte beantworten Sie abschließend noch ein paar Fragen zu Ihrer Person.

Geschlecht
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Männlich• Weiblich• Hierzu möchte ich keine Angabe machen.

Alter
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 18-25• 26-35• 36-45• 46-55• 56+

Tätigkeit
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schüler/In• Student/In• Arbeitnehmer/In• Selbstständig• Nicht erwerbstätig• Pensionist/In• Sonstige

Wie lange leben Sie schon in Deutschland?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ich bin in Deutschland geboren.• Mehr als fünf Jahre.• Weniger als fünf Jahre.

Appendix B: Pre-Test Results

1. Brand Selection

1.1. Mean warmth and competence of all brands

Brand	<u>Warmth</u>		<u>Competence</u>		Categorization according to grand mean
	M	SD	M	SD	
adidas	3.58	1.12	4.35	0.65	HCHW
Jack Wolfskin (JW)	3.42	1.07	4.16	1.02	HCHW
Levi's	3.35	1.09	3.93	0.86	HCHW
PUMA	3.02	0.96	3.56	0.83	HCHW
Marc O'Polo	3.00	1.09	3.86	0.74	HCHW
Nike	3.07	1.06	4.07	0.59	HCHW
Armani	2.23	1.04	3.51	0.80	HCLW
BOSS	2.63	1.07	4.00	0.85	HCLW
Chanel	2.23	1.07	3.70	1.06	HCLW
Tommy Hilfiger (TH)	2.84	1.02	3.86	0.74	HCLW
Desigual	2.93	0.99	2.58	0.91	LCHW
Esprit	3.21	0.91	3.35	0.78	LCHW
United Colors of Benetton (UCOB)	3.14	0.99	3.40	0.79	LCHW
Tom Tailor (TT)	2.91	1.07	3.07	1.01	LCHW
s.Oliver	3.16	1.09	3.19	0.93	LCHW
FILA	2.60	0.79	2.93	0.86	LCLW
C&A	2.70	1.04	2.63	0.95	LCLW
Champion	2.49	1.12	2.81	0.91	LCLW
ZARA	2.40	0.96	2.58	0.93	LCLW
Grand mean	2.89	0.61	3.45	0.45	

Since there were several HCHW brands, it was decided to move forward only with the three brands that were highest in warmth and competence: adidas, Levi's and Jack Wolfskin.

Brand familiarity					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	M	SD
Armani	43	1	5	1.79	1.01
Desigual	43	1	4	1.84	0.95
Chanel	43	1	5	1.88	1.03
Champion	43	1	5	2.12	1.10
FILA	43	1	5	2.28	0.91
United Colors of Benetton	43	1	4	2.35	1.13
BOSS	43	1	5	2.49	1.26
Tom Tailor	43	1	5	2.65	1.23
Jack Wolfskin	43	1	5	2.84	1.17
C&A	43	1	5	2.84	1.29
Marc O'Polo	43	1	5	2.91	1.13
s.Oliver	43	1	5	2.93	1.20
Tommy Hilfiger	43	1	5	3.00	1.02
PUMA	43	1	5	3.07	1.03
Esprit	43	1	5	3.16	1.17
ZARA	43	1	5	3.47	1.30
Levi's	43	2	5	3.47	0.91
Nike	43	1	5	3.98	0.94
adidas	43	2	5	4.30	0.77

1.2. Paired sample t-tests to test criteria

1.2.1. Differences within quadrants

To be suitable for the main study, the two brands that represent one quadrant must not differ significantly on perceived brand warmth and competence.

HCLW

		Paired Samples Test							
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Armani W - BOSS W	-0.395	1.094	0.167	-0.732	-0.059	-2.369	42	0.022
Pair 2	BOSS W - Chanel W	0.395	1.237	0.189	0.015	0.776	2.096	42	0.042
Pair 3	Chanel W - Armani W	0.000	1.215	0.185	-0.374	0.374	0.000	42	1
Pair 4	Armani W - TH W	-0.605	1.330	0.203	-1.014	-0.195	-2.981	42	0.005
Pair 5	TH W- BOSS W	0.209	1.166	0.178	-0.150	0.568	1.177	42	0.246
Pair 6	Chanel W- TH W	-0.605	1.116	0.170	-0.948	-0.261	-3.554	42	0.001
Pair 7	TH C - Chanel C	0.163	1.090	0.166	-0.173	0.498	0.980	42	0.333
Pair 8	Chanel C - BOSS C	-0.302	1.013	0.154	-0.614	0.009	-1.958	42	0.057
Pair 9	BOSS C - Armani C	0.488	0.985	0.150	0.185	0.791	3.251	42	0.002
Pair 10	Armani C - Chanel C	-0.186	1.118	0.171	-0.530	0.158	-1.091	42	0.281
Pair 11	Armani C - TH C	-0.349	0.897	0.137	-0.625	-0.073	-2.551	42	0.014
Pair 12	TH C - BOSS C	-0.140	0.861	0.131	-0.405	0.126	-1.062	42	0.294

HCHW

Paired Samples Test									
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	adidas W – JW W	0.163	1.194	0.182	-0.205	0.530	0.894	42	0.376
Pair 2	JW W - Levi's W	0.070	1.352	0.206	-0.346	0.486	0.338	42	0.737
Pair 3	Levi's W- adidas W	-0.233	1.151	0.176	-0.587	0.122	-1.325	42	0.192
Pair 4	adidas C - JW C	0.186	1.075	0.164	-0.145	0.517	1.135	42	0.263
Pair 5	JW C - Levi's C	0.233	1.109	0.169	-0.109	0.574	1.375	42	0.176
Pair 6	Levi's C - adidas C	-0.419	0.906	0.138	-0.697	-0.140	-3.030	42	0.004

LCLW

		Paired Samples Test							
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	FILA W - C&A W	-0.093	1.130	0.172	-0.441	0.255	-0.540	42	0.592
Pair 2	C&A W - Champion W	0.209	1.245	0.190	-0.174	0.593	1.102	42	0.277
Pair 3	Champion W - ZARA W	0.093	1.250	0.191	-0.292	0.478	0.488	42	0.628
Pair 4	ZARA W - C&A W	-0.302	1.059	0.161	-0.628	0.023	-1.873	42	0.068
Pair 5	Champion W - FILA W	-0.116	1.028	0.157	-0.433	0.200	-0.741	42	0.463
Pair 6	FILA W - ZARA W	0.209	1.013	0.155	-0.103	0.521	1.355	42	0.183
Pair 7	FILA C - C&A C	0.302	1.301	0.198	-0.098	0.703	1.524	42	0.135
Pair 8	C&A C - Champion C	-0.186	1.332	0.203	-0.596	0.224	-0.916	42	0.365
Pair 9	Champion C - ZARA C	0.233	1.088	0.166	-0.102	0.567	1.402	42	0.168
Pair 10	ZARA C - C&A C	-0.047	1.214	0.185	-0.420	0.327	-0.251	42	0.803
Pair 11	Champion C - FILA C	-0.116	1.005	0.153	-0.426	0.193	-0.759	42	0.452
Pair 12	FILA C - ZARA C	0.349	1.307	0.199	-0.053	0.751	1.750	42	0.087

LCHW

Paired Samples Test									
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Esprit W - UCOB W	0.070	1.100	0.168	-0.269	0.408	0.416	42	0.680
Pair 2	UCOB W - s.Oliver W	-0.023	1.336	0.204	-0.434	0.388	-0.114	42	0.910
Pair 3	s.Oliver W - Esprit W	-0.047	1.045	0.159	-0.368	0.275	-0.292	42	0.772
Pair 4	Desigual W - Esprit W	-0.279	1.278	0.195	-0.673	0.114	-1.431	42	0.160
Pair 5	Desigual W - s.Oliver W	-0.233	1.411	0.215	-0.667	0.202	-1.080	42	0.286
Pair 6	Desigual W - UCOB W	-0.209	1.186	0.181	-0.574	0.156	-1.157	42	0.254
Pair 7	Desigual W - TT W	0.023	1.406	0.214	-0.409	0.456	0.108	42	0.914
Pair 8	TT W - Esprit W	-0.302	1.124	0.171	-0.648	0.044	-1.764	42	0.085
Pair 9	TT W - UCOB W	-0.233	1.477	0.225	-0.687	0.222	-1.032	42	0.308
Pair 10	TT W - s.Oliver W	-0.256	0.875	0.133	-0.525	0.014	-1.916	42	0.062
Pair 11	Esprit C - UCOB C	-0.047	0.925	0.141	-0.331	0.238	-0.33	42	0.743
Pair 12	UCOB C - s.Oliver C	0.209	1.103	0.168	-0.130	0.549	1.244	42	0.220
Pair 13	s.Oliver C - Esprit C	-0.163	0.843	0.129	-0.422	0.097	-1.266	42	0.212
Pair 14	Desigual C - Esprit C	-0.767	1.130	0.172	-1.115	-0.420	-4.452	42	0.000
Pair 15	Desigual C - s.Oliver C	-0.605	1.275	0.194	-0.997	-0.212	-3.110	42	0.003
Pair 16	Desigual C - UCOB C	-0.814	1.160	0.177	-1.171	-0.457	-4.601	42	0.000
Pair 17	Desigual C - TT C	-0.488	1.203	0.183	-0.858	-0.118	-2.663	42	0.011
Pair 18	TT C - Esprit C	-0.279	1.031	0.157	-0.596	0.038	-1.775	42	0.083
Pair 19	TT C - UCOB C	-0.326	1.063	0.162	-0.653	0.002	-2.009	42	0.051
Pair 20	TT C - s.Oliver C	-0.116	0.931	0.142	-0.403	0.170	-0.819	42	0.418

Overview: Differences within quadrants

- HCLW: only two brand combinations could represent this quadrant (BOSS+TH or Chanel+ Armani)
- HCHW: only two brand combinations could represent this quadrant (JW+ adidas or JW+ Levi's)
- LCHW: Desigual was excluded from further analysis because it differed significantly from all other LCHW brands, all of the remaining brands could be combined to represent this quadrant
- LCLW: all brands could be combined to represent this quadrant

1.2.1. Differences between quadrants

To be suitable for the main study, the two brands representing one quadrant must differ significantly from the other quadrants, e.g., HCLW must be significantly lower in warmth than HCHW and LCHW brands.

Competence: HCLW - LCLW

Paired Samples Test									
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Armani C - C&A C	0.884	1.295	0.197	0.485	1.282	4.475	42	0.000
Pair 2	Chanel C - C&A C	1.070	1.421	0.217	0.632	1.507	4.937	42	0.000
Pair 3	BOSS C - C&A C	1.372	1.363	0.208	0.953	1.792	6.660	42	0.000
Pair 4	TH C - C&A C	1.233	1.130	0.172	0.885	1.58	7.150	42	0.000
Pair 5	Chanel C - ZARA C	1.116	1.258	0.192	0.729	1.503	5.821	42	0.000
Pair 6	Armani C - ZARA C	0.930	1.078	0.164	0.599	1.262	5.660	42	0.000
Pair 7	BOSS C - ZARA C	1.419	1.200	0.183	1.049	1.788	7.753	42	0.000
Pair 8	TH C - ZARA C	1.279	0.908	0.139	1	1.559	9.234	42	0.000
Pair 9	Armani C - FILA C	0.581	1.052	0.160	0.258	0.905	3.625	42	0.001
Pair 10	Chanel C - FILA C	0.767	1.411	0.215	0.333	1.202	3.565	42	0.001
Pair 11	BOSS C - FILA C	1.070	1.183	0.180	0.706	1.434	5.929	42	0.000
Pair 12	TH C - FILA C	0.930	1.078	0.164	0.599	1.262	5.660	42	0.000
Pair 13	Armani C - Champion C	0.698	0.939	0.143	0.409	0.987	4.870	42	0.000
Pair 14	Chanel C - Champion C	0.884	1.179	0.180	0.521	1.247	4.914	42	0.000
Pair 15	BOSS C - Champion C	1.186	1.052	0.160	0.862	1.510	7.391	42	0.000
Pair 16	TH C - Champion C	1.047	1.045	0.159	0.725	1.368	6.564	42	0.000

Competence: HCLW – LCHW

Paired Samples Test									
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Armani C - Esprit C	0.163	0.924	0.141	-0.122	0.447	1.155	42	0.255
Pair 2	Chanel C - Esprit C	0.349	1.232	0.188	-0.030	0.728	1.856	42	0.070
Pair 3	BOSS C - Esprit C	0.651	1.110	0.169	0.309	0.993	3.846	42	0.000
Pair 4	TH C - Esprit C	0.512	1.032	0.157	0.194	0.829	3.250	42	0.002
Pair 5	Chanel C - TT C	0.628	1.024	0.156	0.313	0.943	4.021	42	0.000
Pair 6	Armani C - TT C	0.442	1.140	0.174	0.091	0.793	2.541	42	0.015
Pair 7	BOSS C - TT C	0.930	1.100	0.168	0.592	1.269	5.547	42	0.000
Pair 8	TH C - TT C	0.791	0.940	0.143	0.501	1.080	5.516	42	0.000
Pair 9	Armani C - UCOB C	0.116	0.793	0.121	-0.128	0.360	0.961	42	0.342
Pair 10	Chanel C - UCOB C	0.302	1.166	0.178	-0.056	0.661	1.701	42	0.096
Pair 11	BOSS C - UCOB C	0.605	0.877	0.134	0.335	0.874	4.523	42	0.000
Pair 12	TH C - UCOB C	0.465	0.735	0.112	0.239	0.691	4.149	42	0.000
Pair 13	Armani C - s.Oliver C	0.326	0.969	0.148	0.027	0.624	2.203	42	0.033
Pair 14	Chanel C - s.Oliver C	0.512	1.222	0.186	0.135	0.888	2.745	42	0.009
Pair 15	BOSS C - s.Oliver C	0.814	1.258	0.192	0.427	1.201	4.241	42	0.000
Pair 16	TH C - s.Oliver C	0.674	1.017	0.155	0.361	0.987	4.348	42	0.000

Competence: HCHW – LCLW

Paired Samples Test									
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	adidas C - C&A C	1.721	1.221	0.186	1.345	2.097	9.240	42	0.000
Pair 2	JW C - C&A C	1.535	1.202	0.183	1.165	1.905	8.372	42	0.000
Pair 3	Levi's C - C&A C	1.302	1.301	0.198	0.902	1.703	6.565	42	0.000
Pair 4	adidas C - FILA C	1.419	0.957	0.146	1.124	1.713	9.720	42	0.000
Pair 5	JW C - FILA C	1.233	1.288	0.196	0.836	1.629	6.275	42	0.000
Pair 6	Levi's C - FILA C	1	0.900	0.137	0.723	1.277	7.288	42	0.000
Pair 7	adidas C - Champion C	1.535	1.054	0.161	1.210	1.859	9.545	42	0.000
Pair 8	JW C - Champion C	1.349	1.251	0.191	0.964	1.734	7.068	42	0.000
Pair 9	Levi's C - Champion C	1.116	1.005	0.153	0.807	1.426	7.284	42	0.000
Pair 10	adidas C - ZARA C	1.767	1.109	0.169	1.426	2.109	10.449	42	0.000
Pair 11	JW C - ZARA C	1.581	1.200	0.183	1.212	1.951	8.643	42	0.000
Pair 12	Levi's C - ZARA C	1.349	1.066	0.163	1.021	1.677	8.294	42	0.000

Competence: HCHW – LCHW

Paired Samples Test									
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	adidas C - Esprit C	1	1.047	0.160	0.678	1.322	6.266	42	0.000
Pair 2	JW C - Esprit C	0.814	1.180	0.180	0.451	1.177	4.522	42	0.000
Pair 3	Levi's C - Esprit C	0.581	1.180	0.180	0.218	0.944	3.231	42	0.002
Pair 4	adidas C - UCOB C	0.953	0.950	0.145	0.661	1.246	6.581	42	0.000
Pair 5	JW C - UCOB C	0.767	1.065	0.162	0.440	1.095	4.723	42	0.000
Pair 6	Levi's C - UCOB C	0.535	1.008	0.154	0.225	0.845	3.479	42	0.001
Pair 7	adidas C - s.Oliver C	1.163	1.090	0.166	0.827	1.498	6.998	42	0.000
Pair 8	JW C - s.Oliver C	0.977	1.123	0.171	0.631	1.322	5.703	42	0.000
Pair 9	Levi's C - TT C	0.860	1.104	0.168	0.521	1.200	5.112	42	0.000
Pair 10	adidas C - TT C	1.279	1.120	0.171	0.934	1.624	7.491	42	0.000
Pair 11	JW C - TT C	1.093	0.781	0.119	0.853	1.333	9.176	42	0.000
Pair 12	Levi's C - s.Oliver C	0.744	1.071	0.163	0.415	1.074	4.556	42	0.000

Warmth: HCHW – HCLW

Paired Samples Test									
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Armani W - adidas W	-1.349	1.270	0.194	-1.740	-0.958	-6.963	42	0.000
Pair 2	Chanel W - adidas W	-1.349	1.173	0.179	-1.710	-0.988	-7.542	42	0.000
Pair 3	TH W - adidas W	-0.744	1.217	0.186	-1.119	-0.370	-4.010	42	0.000
Pair 4	BOSS W - adidas W	-0.953	1.214	0.185	-1.327	-0.580	-5.150	42	0.000
Pair 5	Chanel W - JW W	-1.186	1.097	0.167	-1.524	-0.849	-7.092	42	0.000
Pair 6	Armani W - JW W	-1.186	1.277	0.195	-1.579	-0.793	-6.089	42	0.000
Pair 7	TH W - JW W	-0.581	1.118	0.170	-0.925	-0.237	-3.411	42	0.001
Pair 8	BOSS W - JW W	-0.791	1.301	0.198	-1.191	-0.390	-3.985	42	0.000
Pair 9	Armani W - Levi's W	-1.116	1.179	0.180	-1.479	-0.753	-6.207	42	0.000
Pair 10	Chanel W - Levi's W	-1.116	1.276	0.195	-1.509	-0.723	-5.735	42	0.000
Pair 11	TH W - Levi's W	-0.512	1.279	0.195	-0.905	-0.118	-2.622	42	0.000
Pair 12	BOSS W - Levi's W	-0.721	1.260	0.192	-1.109	-0.333	-3.753	42	0.001

Warmth: HCHW – LCLW

Paired Samples Test									
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	adidas W - FILA W	0.977	1.080	0.165	0.644	1.309	5.931	42	0.000
Pair 2	JW W - FILA W	0.814	1.296	0.198	0.415	1.213	4.119	42	0.000
Pair 3	Levi's W - FILA W	0.744	0.902	0.138	0.467	1.022	5.409	42	0.000
Pair 4	adidas W - C&A W	0.884	1.219	0.186	0.509	1.259	4.754	42	0.000
Pair 5	JW W - C&A W	0.721	1.182	0.180	0.357	1.085	4	42	0.000
Pair 6	Levi's W - C&A W	0.651	1.173	0.179	0.290	1.012	3.641	42	0.001
Pair 7	adidas W - Champion W	1.093	1.171	0.179	0.733	1.454	6.119	42	0.000
Pair 8	JW W - Champion W	0.930	1.370	0.209	0.509	1.352	4.454	42	0.000
Pair 9	Levi's W - Champion W	0.860	1.037	0.158	0.541	1.180	5.441	42	0.000
Pair 10	adidas W - ZARA W	1.186	1.200	0.183	0.817	1.555	6.479	42	0.000
Pair 11	JW W - ZARA W	1.023	1.102	0.168	0.684	1.362	6.091	42	0.000
Pair 12	Levi's W - ZARA W	0.953	1.045	0.159	0.632	1.275	5.980	42	0.000

Warmth: LCHW – LCLW

Paired Samples Test									
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Esprit W - FILA W	0.605	1.137	0.173	0.255	0.955	3.488	42	0.001
Pair 2	Esprit W - C&A W	0.512	1.183	0.180	0.148	0.876	2.837	42	0.007
Pair 3	Esprit W - Champion W	0.721	1.120	0.171	0.376	1.066	4.222	42	0.000
Pair 4	Esprit W - ZARA W	0.814	1.277	0.195	0.421	1.207	4.179	42	0.000
Pair 5	s.Oliver W - FILA W	0.558	1.119	0.171	0.214	0.903	3.270	42	0.002
Pair 6	s.Oliver W - C&A W	0.465	0.960	0.146	0.170	0.761	3.177	42	0.003
Pair 7	s.Oliver W - Champion W	0.674	1.040	0.159	0.354	0.995	4.252	42	0.000
Pair 8	s.Oliver W - ZARA W	0.767	1.151	0.176	0.413	1.122	4.371	42	0.000
Pair 9	TT W - Champion W	0.419	1.332	0.203	0.009	0.828	2.062	42	0.045
Pair 10	TT W - FILA W	0.302	1.206	0.184	-0.069	0.673	1.644	42	0.108
Pair 11	TT W - C&A W	0.209	1.103	0.168	-0.130	0.549	1.244	42	0.220
Pair 12	TT W - ZARA W	0.512	1.077	0.164	0.180	0.843	3.114	42	0.003
Pair 13	UCOB W - ZARA W	0.744	1.293	0.197	0.346	1.142	3.775	42	0.000
Pair 14	UCOB W - Champion W	0.651	1.213	0.185	0.278	1.024	3.521	42	0.001
Pair 15	UCOB W - FILA W	0.535	0.960	0.146	0.239	0.830	3.654	42	0.001
Pair 16	UCOB W - C&A W	0.442	1.259	0.192	0.054	0.829	2.301	42	0.026

Warmth: LCHW – HCLW

Paired Samples Test									
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Esprit W - Armani W	0.977	1.282	0.195	0.582	1.371	4.998	42	0.000
Pair 2	Esprit W - BOSS W	0.581	1.384	0.211	0.155	1.007	2.754	42	0.009
Pair 3	Esprit W - TH W	0.372	1.215	0.185	-0.002	0.746	2.007	42	0.051
Pair 4	Esprit W - Chanel W	0.977	1.300	0.198	0.577	1.377	4.927	42	0.000
Pair 5	s.Oliver W - Armani W	0.930	1.163	0.177	0.572	1.288	5.246	42	0.000
Pair 6	s.Oliver W - BOSS W	0.535	1.297	0.198	0.136	0.934	2.703	42	0.010
Pair 7	s.Oliver W - TH W	0.326	1.267	0.193	-0.064	0.716	1.685	42	0.099
Pair 8	s.Oliver W - Chanel W	0.930	1.183	0.180	0.566	1.294	5.156	42	0.000
Pair 9	TT W - TH W	0.070	1.183	0.180	-0.294	0.434	0.387	42	0.701
Pair 10	TT W - Armani W	0.674	1.169	0.178	0.315	1.034	3.782	42	0.000
Pair 11	TT W - BOSS W	0.279	1.182	0.180	-0.085	0.643	1.549	42	0.129
Pair 12	TT W - Chanel W	0.674	0.944	0.144	0.384	0.965	4.684	42	0.000
Pair 13	UCOB W - Chanel W	0.907	1.250	0.191	0.522	1.292	4.758	42	0.000
Pair 14	UCOB W - TH W	0.302	1.059	0.161	-0.023	0.628	1.873	42	0.068
Pair 15	UCOB W - Armani W	0.907	1.324	0.202	0.500	1.314	4.492	42	0.000
Pair 16	UCOB W - BOSS W	0.512	1.352	0.206	0.096	0.928	2.482	42	0.017

Overview: Differences between quadrants

- HCLW: TH did not differ significantly from any LCHW brand. BOSS could only be combined with TH to represent this quadrant. Armani and Chanel were chosen to represent the HCLW quadrant.
- LCHW: Only Armani and Chanel could represent the HCLW quadrant. Thus, TT and s.Oliver must represent the LCHW quadrant because Esprit and UCOB did not differ significantly from HCLW.
- LCLW: Only TT and s.Oliver could represent the LCHW quadrant. Thus, ZARA and Champion represented the LCLW quadrant because FILA and C&A did not differ significantly from TT.
- HCHW: Both combinations (JW+ adidas or JW + Levi's) were suitable for the main study. It was decided to work with adidas and JW as the two highest brands in warmth and competence.

2. Demographics

Gender				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
male	18	41.9	41.9	41.9
female	25	58.1	58.1	100.0
Total	43	100.0	100.0	

Age				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
18-25	18	41.9	41.9	41.9
26-35	17	39.5	39.5	81.4
36-45	1	2.3	2.3	83.7
46-55	6	14.0	14.0	97.7
56+	1	2.3	2.3	100.0
Total	43	100.0	100.0	

Occupation				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Employed	21	48.8	48.8	48.8
Self-employed	1	2.3	2.3	51.2
Student	21	48.8	48.8	100.0
Total	43	100.0	100.0	

Residence				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
I was born in Germany.	42	97.7	97.7	97.7
I live in Germany for more than 5 years.	1	2.3	2.3	100.0
Total	43	100.0	100.0	

Appendix C: Main Study Scales and Translations

Brand stereotypes (Halkias&Diamantopoulos, 2020)	
As viewed by society, how ... is [Brand]?	Ihrer Meinung nach, wie würden die meisten Menschen in Deutschland [Marke] sehen?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • friendly • kind • likeable • nice • capable • competent • efficient • intelligent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • freundlich • gutmütig • sympathisch • nett • fähig • kompetent • effizient • erfahren

Brand attitude (Sweetin et al., 2013)	
My overall impression of [Brand] is...	Mein Gesamteindruck von [Marke] ist...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bad - good. • unfavorable – favorable. • unsatisfactory – satisfactory. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • schlecht – gut. • ungünstig – günstig. • unbefriedigend – zufriedenstellend.

Purchase intention (Dodds et al., 1991)	
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	Inwieweit stimmen Sie den folgenden Aussagen zu bzw. nicht zu?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is very likely that I will buy this brand. • I will definitely try this brand. • The probability that I will purchase this brand is very high. • I am willing to buy this brand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Es ist sehr wahrscheinlich, dass ich diese [Marke] Produkte kaufen werde. • Ich werde auf jeden Fall [Marke] Produkte ausprobieren. • Die Wahrscheinlichkeit, dass ich [Marke] Produkte kaufen werde, ist sehr hoch. • Ich bin bereit [Marke] Produkte zu kaufen.

Positive word-of-mouth (Alexandrov et al., 2013)	
How likely would you be to do any of the following?	Wie wahrscheinlich ist es, dass Sie folgendes tun würden...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say positive things about [brand]. • Recommend [brand] to others. • Recommend [brand] to someone else who seeks my advice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • positiv über [Marke] sprechen. • [Marke] Anderen weiterempfehlen. • [Marke] Jemandem weiterempfehlen, der mich um Rat bittet.

CSR skepticism (Skarmas& Leonidou, 2013)	
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about [brand]?	Inwieweit stimmen Sie den folgenden Aussagen über [Marke] zu bzw. nicht zu?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is doubtless that this is an environmentally responsible brand. • It is certain that this brand is concerned to reduce their environmental impact. • It is certain that this brand follows high environmental standards. • It is unquestionable that this brand acts in an environmentally responsible way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diese Marke ist zweifellos eine umweltbewusste Marke. • Es ist eindeutig, dass diese Marke bemüht ist, ihren ökologischen Fußabdruck zu reduzieren. • Es ist eindeutig, dass diese Marke hohen ökologischen Standards folgt. • Es ist nicht fragwürdig, dass diese Marke gegenüber der Umwelt verantwortungsvoll handelt.

Brand involvement (Hollebeck et al., 2014)	
To me, [brand] is...	Für mich persönlich ist [Marke]...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unimportant - important • means nothing to me – means a lot to me. • worthless – valuable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unwichtig – wichtig. • bedeutet mir nichts – bedeutet mir viel. • wertlos – wertvoll.

Product category involvement (adapted from Mittal, 1989)	
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	Inwieweit stimmen Sie den folgenden Aussagen zu bzw. nicht zu?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Product category] is important to me. • [Product category] matters to me a lot. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Produktkategorie] ist mir wichtig. • [Produktkategorie] ist für mich von großer Bedeutung.

Perceived brand globalness (Steenkamp et al., 2003)	
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	Inwieweit stimmen Sie den folgenden Aussagen zu bzw. nicht zu?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To me, this is a global brand. • I do think consumers overseas buy this brand. • This brand is sold all over the world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Für mich ist [Marke] eine globale Marke. • Ich denke, dass Konsumenten im Ausland [Marke] kaufen. • [Marke] wird weltweit verkauft.

Perceived brand localness (Swoboda et al., 2012)	
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	Inwieweit stimmen Sie den folgenden Aussagen zu bzw. nicht zu?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I associate this retail brand with things that are [country of research]. • To me, this retail brand represents what [country of research] is about. • To me, this retail brand is a very good symbol of [country of research]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ich assoziiere [Marke] mit Dingen, die [Land der Studie], sind. • Für mich repräsentiert [Marke] das, wofür [Land der Studie] steht. • Für mich ist [Marke] ein sehr gutes Symbol für [Land der Studie].

Brand familiarity (adapted from Halkias et al., 2016)	
How familiar do you feel with [brand]?	Wie vertraut sind sie mit der Marke [Marke]?

Brand ownership (adapted from Kolbl et al., 2019)	
How frequently have you purchased [brand] in the past?	Wie häufig haben Sie bereits [Marke] Produkte gekauft?

Environmental responsibility of the brand prior to the CSR manipulation (added after brand involvement items)	
Für mich ist [Marke]...	
keine umweltfreundliche Marke – eine umweltfreundliche Marke.	

Attention check (adapted from Abbey&Meloy, 2017; added to CSR skepticism scale)	
I would rather eat a piece of fruit than a piece of paper.	Ich würde lieber ein Stück Kuchen als ein Blatt Papier essen.

COVID 1: Opinion on brand's behavior during COVID-19	
Inwieweit stimmen Sie den folgenden Aussagen über [Marke]s Verhalten in der aktuellen COVID-19 Situation zu?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Marke] versucht in dieser Situation die KundInnen auszunutzen. • [Marke] ist in dieser Situation nur am Gewinn interessiert. • [Marke] sorgt sich in Zeiten von COVID-19 um Ihre Kundinnen. • [Marke] hat die Preise für Ihre Produkte während COVID-19 erhöht. • [Marke] hat sich während COVID-19 sozial verantwortlich verhalten. 	

COVID 2: Desired brand behavior during COVID-19

Ihrer Meinung nach, inwieweit hätte [Marke] während COVID-19 mehr von den folgenden Maßnahmen ergreifen sollen?

- Freiwillige Aktivitäten für das Wohl der Gesellschaft während COVID-19 verstärken.
- Moralische Standards auf Kosten des Profits in Zeiten von COVID-19 berücksichtigen.
- Während COVID-19 Geschäfte im Einklang mit Rechtsgrundsätzen betreiben.
- Die wirtschaftliche Leistung während COVID-19 verbessern.

Appendix D: Main study SPSS outputs

1. Preliminary Analyses: Formation of Brand Stereotypes

Paired sample t-tests to test whether each brand differs significantly from brands representing the other stereotypes, e.g., HCHW must be higher in warmth than LCLW.

Warmth: LCHW – LCLW

Independent Samples Test											
		Levene's Test		t-test for Equality of Means			Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)			Lower	Upper	
<u>TT - Armani</u>											
Warmth before CSR	Equal variances assumed	6.560	0.013	4.925	64.000	0.000	0.990	0.201	0.589	1.392	
	Equal variances not assumed			5.074	62.673	0.000	0.990	0.195	0.600	1.380	
<u>TT – Chanel</u>											
Warmth before CSR	Equal variances assumed	4.596	0.036	4.879	59.000	0.000	1.067	0.219	0.629	1.504	
	Equal variances not assumed			4.912	51.958	0.000	1.067	0.217	0.631	1.502	
<u>TT - ZARA</u>											
Warmth before CSR	Equal variances assumed	5.953	0.018	3.649	62.000	0.001	0.802	0.220	0.363	1.241	
	Equal variances not assumed			3.747	56.791	0.000	0.802	0.214	0.373	1.231	
<u>Champion – Armani</u>											
Warmth before CSR	Equal variances assumed	6.550	0.013	3.808	68.000	0.000	0.732	0.192	0.349	1.116	
	Equal variances not assumed			3.844	63.361	0.000	0.732	0.191	0.352	1.113	
<u>Champion – Chanel</u>											
Warmth before CSR	Equal variances assumed	4.604	0.036	3.870	63.000	0.000	0.809	0.209	0.391	1.227	
	Equal variances not assumed			3.797	50.883	0.000	0.809	0.213	0.381	1.236	
<u>Champion – ZARA</u>											
Warmth before CSR	Equal variances assumed	6.044	0.017	2.594	66.000	0.012	0.544	0.210	0.125	0.963	
	Equal variances not assumed			2.594	56.004	0.012	0.544	0.210	0.124	0.964	
<u>s.Oliver – Armani</u>											
Warmth before CSR	Equal variances assumed	5.003	0.029	6.093	64.000	0.000	1.232	0.202	0.828	1.636	
	Equal variances not assumed			6.268	62.965	0.000	1.232	0.197	0.839	1.625	
<u>s.Oliver – Chanel</u>											
Warmth before CSR	Equal variances assumed	3.470	0.067	5.952	59.000	0.000	1.308	0.220	0.869	1.748	
	Equal variances not assumed			5.990	52.479	0.000	1.308	0.218	0.870	1.747	
<u>s.Oliver – ZARA</u>											
Warmth before CSR	Equal variances assumed	4.657	0.035	4.725	62.000	0.000	1.044	0.221	0.602	1.485	
	Equal variances not assumed			4.848	57.284	0.000	1.044	0.215	0.613	1.475	

Competence: LCHW – HCHW

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test		t-test for Equality of Means			Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)			Lower	Upper
<u>JW - s.Oliver</u>										
Competence	Equal variances assumed	0.539	0.466	3.191	60.000	0.002	0.622	0.195	0.232	1.013
before CSR	Equal variances not assumed			3.210	59.184	0.002	0.622	0.194	0.234	1.010
<u>adidas - s.Oliver</u>										
Competence	Equal variances assumed	2.497	0.120	4.458	58.000	0.000	0.700	0.157	0.386	1.014
before CSR	Equal variances not assumed			4.458	53.359	0.000	0.700	0.157	0.385	1.015
<u>JW – TT</u>										
Competence	Equal variances assumed	0.920	0.341	4.738	60.000	0.000	0.914	0.193	0.528	1.300
before CSR	Equal variances not assumed			4.771	58.767	0.000	0.914	0.192	0.531	1.297
<u>JW - Champion</u>										
Competence	Equal variances assumed	0.278	0.600	5.197	64.000	0.000	0.995	0.191	0.613	1.377
before CSR	Equal variances not assumed			5.175	61.509	0.000	0.995	0.192	0.611	1.379
<u>adidas – TT</u>										
Competence	Equal variances assumed	1.635	0.206	6.431	58.000	0.000	0.992	0.154	0.683	1.300
before CSR	Equal variances not assumed			6.431	54.086	0.000	0.992	0.154	0.683	1.301
<u>adidas – Champion</u>										
Competence	Equal variances assumed	3.427	0.069	6.773	62.000	0.000	1.073	0.158	0.756	1.389
before CSR	Equal variances not assumed			6.918	59.315	0.000	1.073	0.155	0.762	1.383

Warmth and competence: LCLW – HCHW

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test		t-test for Equality of Means			Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)			Lower	Upper
<u>JW - Armani</u>										
Warmth	Equal variances assumed	4.733	0.033	6.618	66.000	0.000	1.314	0.199	0.918	1.711
before CSR	Equal variances not assumed			6.735	63.951	0.000	1.314	0.195	0.924	1.704
Competence	Equal variances assumed	0.266	0.608	5.310	66.000	0.000	0.997	0.188	0.622	1.372
before CSR	Equal variances not assumed			5.263	61.655	0.000	0.997	0.190	0.619	1.376
<u>JW - Chanel</u>										
Warmth	Equal variances assumed	3.309	0.074	6.443	61.000	0.000	1.391	0.216	0.959	1.822
before CSR	Equal variances not assumed			6.405	52.512	0.000	1.391	0.217	0.955	1.826
Competence	Equal variances assumed	0.008	0.928	4.339	61.000	0.000	0.906	0.209	0.488	1.324
before CSR	Equal variances not assumed			4.339	60.964	0.000	0.906	0.209	0.488	1.324
<u>JW - ZARA</u>										
Warmth	Equal variances assumed	4.500	0.038	5.199	64.000	0.000	1.126	0.217	0.693	1.559
before CSR	Equal variances not assumed			5.262	57.500	0.000	1.126	0.214	0.698	1.554
Competence	Equal variances assumed	0.092	0.762	5.590	64.000	0.000	1.186	0.212	0.762	1.610
before CSR	Equal variances not assumed			5.602	63.999	0.000	1.186	0.212	0.763	1.609
<u>adidas – Armani</u>										
Warmth	Equal variances assumed	1.348	0.250	3.449	64.000	0.001	0.774	0.224	0.326	1.222
before CSR	Equal variances not assumed			3.461	62.589	0.001	0.774	0.224	0.327	1.220
Competence	Equal variances assumed	3.760	0.057	6.881	64.000	0.000	1.075	0.156	0.763	1.387
before CSR	Equal variances not assumed			7.092	62.583	0.000	1.075	0.152	0.772	1.378
<u>adidas – Chanel</u>										
Warmth	Equal variances assumed	1.048	0.310	3.491	59.000	0.001	0.850	0.243	0.363	1.337
before CSR	Equal variances not assumed			3.498	58.532	0.001	0.850	0.243	0.364	1.336
Competence	Equal variances assumed	4.086	0.048	5.575	59.000	0.000	0.984	0.176	0.631	1.337
before CSR	Equal variances not assumed			5.617	50.285	0.000	0.984	0.175	0.632	1.335
<u>adidas – ZARA</u>										
Warmth	Equal variances assumed	1.620	0.208	2.414	62.000	0.019	0.585	0.242	0.101	1.070
before CSR	Equal variances not assumed			2.437	61.973	0.018	0.585	0.240	0.105	1.065
Competence	Equal variances assumed	5.759	0.019	6.852	62.000	0.000	1.264	0.184	0.895	1.632
before CSR	Equal variances not assumed			7.075	53.759	0.000	1.264	0.179	0.906	1.622

2. Hypotheses Testing

H1a& H1b: Pre-Post CSR Differences in Brand Warmth and Competence

Statistical assumption of normality

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Difference_W	0.116	257	0	0.973	257	0
Difference_C	0.125	257	0	0.970	257	0

H2a-d: Pre-Post CSR Differences Across Different Stereotypical Categories

Statistical assumptions:

1) Bivariate correlations of potential covariates and pre-post CSR differences

Correlations					
		Gender	PCI	Difference_W	Difference_C
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	0.085	0.084	0.076
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.175	0.180	0.227
	N	255	255	255	255
PCI	Pearson Correlation	0.085	1	0.039	0.008
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.175		0.535	0.903
	N	255	257	257	257
Difference_W	Pearson Correlation	0.084	0.039	1	.318**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.180	0.535		0.000
	N	255	257	257	257
Difference_C	Pearson Correlation	0.076	0.008	.318**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.227	0.903	0.000	
	N	255	257	257	257

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlations					
			Income	Difference_W	Difference_C
Spearman's rho	Income	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-0.085	0.094
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.175	0.134
		N	256	256	256
	Difference_W	Correlation Coefficient	0	1.000	.290**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.175		0.000
		N	256	257	257
	Difference_C	Correlation Coefficient	0.094	.290**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.134	0.000	
		N	256	257	257

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

2) Normal distribution of pre-post CSR differences across stereotypical categories

Tests of Normality							
Stereotype Category		Kolmogorov-Smirnova			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Difference_W	HCHW	0.122	62	0.023	0.97	62	0.138
	LCHW	0.120	94	0.002	0.971	94	0.034
	LCLW	0.114	101	0.002	0.966	101	0.011

Tests of Normality							
Stereotype Category		Kolmogorov-Smirnova			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Difference_C	HCHW	0.144	62	0.003	0.969	62	0.124
	LCHW	0.128	94	0.001	0.969	94	0.026
	LCLW	0.134	101	0	0.95	101	0.001

3) Homogeneity of variance

Test of Homogeneity of Variances					
		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Difference_W	Based on Mean	2.464	2	254	0.087
	Based on Median	2.136	2	254	0.120
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	2.136	2	237.98	0.120
	Based on trimmed mean	2.464	2	254	0.087

Test of Homogeneity of Variances					
		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Difference_C	Based on Mean	1.477	2	254	0.23
	Based on Median	1.410	2	254	0.246
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	1.410	2	242.29	0.246
	Based on trimmed mean	1.441	2	254	0.239

H3&H4: The Effect of Brand Stereotypes on Consumer Responses to CSR

Statistical assumptions:

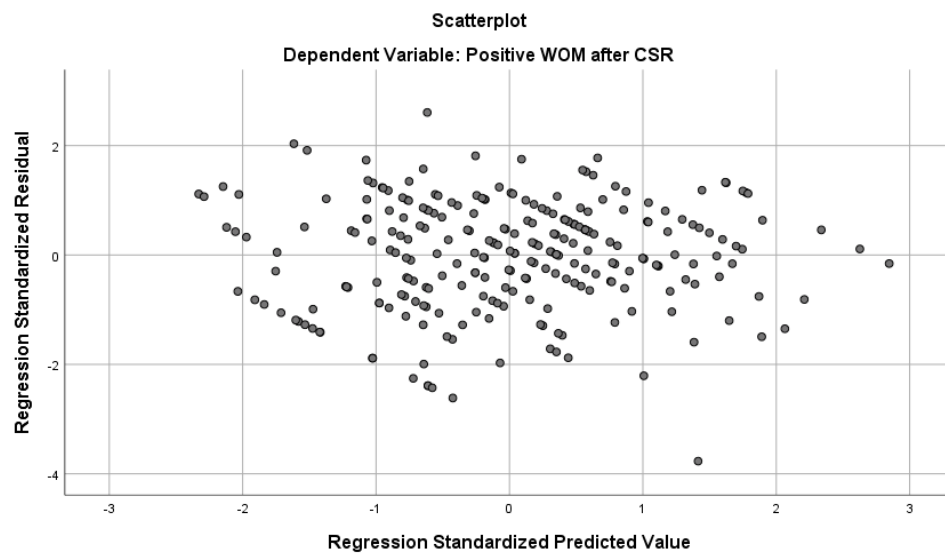
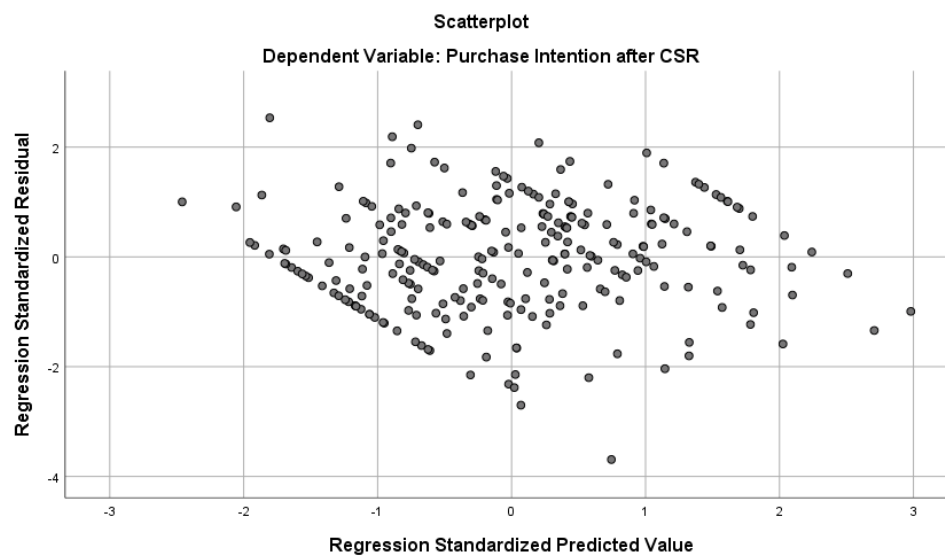
1) Correlation matrix to test additivity and linearity

Correlations		PI_CSR	pWOM_CSR	BA_CSR	W_CSR	C_CSR	BF	BO	PBG	PBL	PCI	BI	Gender	Age	Income
PI_CSR	Pearson Correlation		.839**	.671**	.328**	.351**	.473**	.619**	.273**	.381**	0.080	.626**	0.064	0.052	-0.034
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.199	0.000	0.307	0.411	0.585
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
pWOM_CSR	Pearson Correlation	.839**		.680**	.420**	.384**	.402**	.504**	.191**	.398**	.154*	.554**	0.076	0.036	-0.021
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.014	0.000	0.227	0.563	0.740
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
BA_CSR	Pearson Correlation	.671**	.680**		.529**	.448**	.280**	.310**	0.033	.410**	0.119	.490**	0.079	0.033	-0.031
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.598	0.000	0.058	0.000	0.207	0.597	0.624
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
W_CSR	Pearson Correlation	.328**	.420**	.529**		.432**	0.120	0.089	-.189**	.392**	.267**	.213**	.206**	-0.091	-0.028
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.055	0.155	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.001	0.147	0.651
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
C_CSR	Pearson Correlation	.351**	.384**	.448**	.432**		.247**	.221**	.195**	.346**	0.069	.341**	.248**	-.126*	-.154*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.273	0.000	0.000	0.045	0.014
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
BF	Pearson Correlation	.473**	.402**	.280**	0.120	.247**		.622**	.219**	.203**	.130*	.435**	-0.040	-0.054	-0.083
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.055	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.001	0.038	0.000	0.527	0.390	0.185
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
BO	Pearson Correlation	.619**	.504**	.310**	0.089	.221**	.622**		.260**	.232**	0.045	.538**	-0.056	0.000	-0.114
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.155	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.475	0.000	0.374	0.995	0.069
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
PBG	Pearson Correlation	.273**	.191**	0.033	-.189**	.195**	.219**	.260**		-.164**	-0.022	.254**	-0.054	-0.079	-0.065
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.002	0.598	0.002	0.002	0.000	0.000		0.008	0.721	0.000	0.394	0.211	0.302
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
PBL	Pearson Correlation	.381**	.398**	.410**	.392**	.346**	.203**	.232**	-.164**		.142*	.254**	0.076	-0.018	-0.066
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.008		0.022	0.000	0.227	0.779	0.295
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
PCI	Pearson Correlation	0.080	.154*	0.119	.267**	0.069	.130*	0.045	-0.022	.142*		0.116	0.085	-0.103	.151*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.199	0.014	0.058	0.000	0.273	0.038	0.475	0.721	0.022		0.063	0.175	0.100	0.015
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
BI	Pearson Correlation	.626**	.554**	.490**	.213**	.341**	.435**	.538**	.254**	.254**	0.116		0.111	-.180**	-.128*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.063		0.076	0.004	0.041
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
Gender	Pearson Correlation	0.064	0.076	0.079	.206**	.248**	-0.040	-0.056	-0.054	0.076	0.085	0.111		1	-0.058
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.307	0.227	0.207	0.001	0.000	0.527	0.374	0.394	0.227	0.175	0.076			0.360
	N	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	254
Age	Pearson Correlation	0.052	0.036	0.033	-0.091	-.126*	-0.054	0.000	-0.079	-0.018	-0.103	-.180**	-0.058	1	.364**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.411	0.563	0.597	0.147	0.045	0.390	0.995	0.211	0.779	0.100	0.004	0.360		0.000
	N	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	254
Income	Pearson Correlation	-0.034	-0.021	-0.031	-0.028	-.154*	-0.083	-0.114	-0.065	-0.066	.151*	-.128*	-0.065	.364**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.585	0.740	0.624	0.651	0.014	0.185	0.069	0.302	0.295	0.015	0.041	0.302	0.000	
	N	256	256	256	256	256	256	256	256	256	256	256	254	254	256

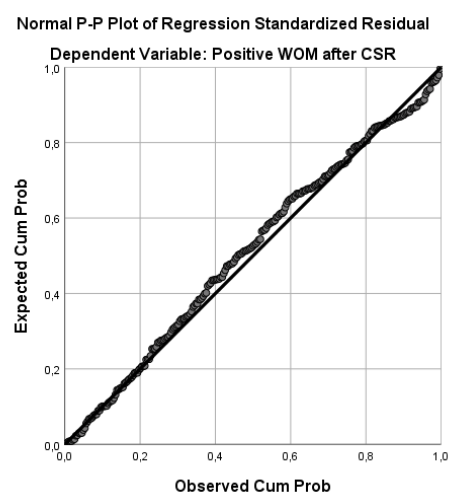
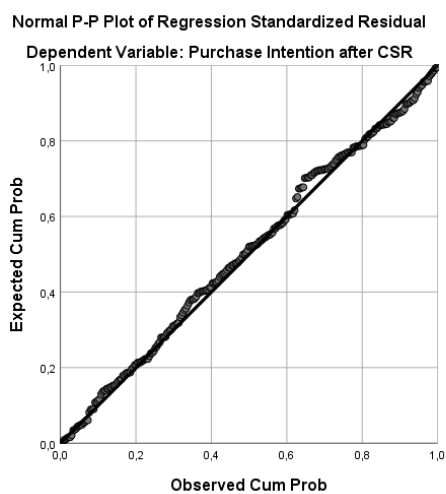
**, Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*, Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

2) Scatterplots to test homoscedasticity



3) P-P Plots to test normality of residuals



PROCESS Output: Mediation Analyses, DV: Purchase Intention after CSR

Run MATRIX procedure:

***** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 3.5 *****

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com
Documentation available in Hayes (2018). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

Model : 4
Y : PI_CSR
X : W_CSR
M : BA_CSR

Covariates:

C_CSR BF BO PBG PBL PCI BI

Sample

Size: 257

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

BA_CSR

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
,685	,469	,822	27,359	8,000	248,000	,000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	,321	,494	,650	,517	-,653	1,295
W_CSR	,437	,070	6,278	,000	,300	,574
C_CSR	,209	,094	2,220	,027	,024	,394
BF	,033	,079	,419	,676	-,122	,188
BO	,047	,084	,562	,574	-,118	,212
PBG	,006	,058	,100	,920	-,109	,121
PBL	,122	,047	2,598	,010	,030	,215
PCI	-,041	,042	-,963	,336	-,124	,043
BI	,285	,054	5,260	,000	,178	,392

Standardized coefficients

	coeff
W_CSR	,360
C_CSR	,127
BF	,025
BO	,037
PBG	,005
PBL	,141
PCI	-,047
BI	,308

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

PI_CSR

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
,831	,690	1,009	61,050	9,000	247,000	,000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	-2,503	,548	-4,565	,000	-3,583	-1,423
W_CSR	,103	,083	1,241	,216	-,060	,267
BA_CSR	,626	,070	8,891	,000	,487	,764
C_CSR	-,183	,105	-1,737	,084	-,390	,025
BF	,072	,087	,827	,409	-,100	,244
BO	,575	,093	6,205	,000	,392	,757
PBG	,268	,065	4,154	,000	,141	,395
PBL	,146	,053	2,755	,006	,042	,250
PCI	-,042	,047	-,892	,373	-,135	,051
BI	,237	,063	3,739	,000	,112	,362

Standardized coefficients

	coeff
W_CSR	,059
BA_CSR	,432
C_CSR	-,077
BF	,038
BO	,309
PBG	,170
PBL	,116
PCI	-,033
BI	,177

***** DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c'_ps	c'_cs
,103	,083	1,241	,216	-,060	,267	,058	,059

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
BA_CSR	,273	,054	,169	,383

Partially standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
BA_CSR	,154	,031	,095	,216

Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
BA_CSR	,156	,031	,096	,217

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95,0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:

5000

----- END MATRIX -----

Run MATRIX procedure:

***** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 3.5 *****

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com
Documentation available in Hayes (2018). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

Model : 4
Y : PI_CSR
X : C_CSR
M : BA_CSR

Covariates:

W_CSR BF BO PBG PBL PCI BI

Sample

Size: 257

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

BA_CSR

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
,685	,469	,822	27,359	8,000	248,000	,000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	,321	,494	,650	,517	-,653	1,295
C_CSR	,209	,094	2,220	,027	,024	,394
W_CSR	,437	,070	6,278	,000	,300	,574
BF	,033	,079	,419	,676	-,122	,188
BO	,047	,084	,562	,574	-,118	,212
PBG	,006	,058	,100	,920	-,109	,121
PBL	,122	,047	2,598	,010	,030	,215
PCI	-,041	,042	-,963	,336	-,124	,043
BI	,285	,054	5,260	,000	,178	,392

Standardized coefficients

	coeff
C_CSR	,127
W_CSR	,360
BF	,025
BO	,037
PBG	,005
PBL	,141
PCI	-,047
BI	,308

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

PI_CSR

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
,831	,690	1,009	61,050	9,000	247,000	,000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	-2,503	,548	-4,565	,000	-3,583	-1,423
C_CSR	-,183	,105	-1,737	,084	-,390	,025
BA_CSR	,626	,070	8,891	,000	,487	,764
W_CSR	,103	,083	1,241	,216	-,060	,267
BF	,072	,087	,827	,409	-,100	,244
BO	,575	,093	6,205	,000	,392	,757
PBG	,268	,065	4,154	,000	,141	,395
PBL	,146	,053	2,755	,006	,042	,250
PCI	-,042	,047	-,892	,373	-,135	,051
BI	,237	,063	3,739	,000	,112	,362

Standardized coefficients

	coeff
C_CSR	-,077
BA_CSR	,432
W_CSR	,059
BF	,038
BO	,309
PBG	,170
PBL	,116
PCI	-,033
BI	,177

***** DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c'_ps	c'_cs
-,183	,105	-1,737	,084	-,390	,025	-,103	-,077

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
BA_CSR	,131	,060	,023	,255

Partially standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
BA_CSR	,074	,034	,013	,145

Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
BA_CSR	,055	,025	,010	,106

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95,0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:

5000

----- END MATRIX -----

PROCESS Output: Mediation Analyses, DV: pWOM after CSR

Run MATRIX procedure:

***** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 3.5 *****

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com
Documentation available in Hayes (2018). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

Model : 4
Y : pWOM_CSR
X : W_CSR
M : BA_CSR

Covariates:

C_CSR BF BO PBG PBL PCI BI

Sample

Size: 257

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

BA_CSR

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
,685	,469	,822	27,359	8,000	248,000	,000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	,321	,494	,650	,517	-,653	1,295
W_CSR	,437	,070	6,278	,000	,300	,574
C_CSR	,209	,094	2,220	,027	,024	,394
BF	,033	,079	,419	,676	-,122	,188
BO	,047	,084	,562	,574	-,118	,212
PBG	,006	,058	,100	,920	-,109	,121
PBL	,122	,047	2,598	,010	,030	,215
PCI	-,041	,042	-,963	,336	-,124	,043
BI	,285	,054	5,260	,000	,178	,392

Standardized coefficients

	coeff
W_CSR	,360
C_CSR	,127
BF	,025
BO	,037
PBG	,005
PBL	,141
PCI	-,047
BI	,308

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

pWOM_CSR

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
,776	,603	,875	41,607	9,000	247,000	,000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	-1,569	,511	-3,074	,002	-2,575	-,564
W_CSR	,183	,077	2,366	,019	,031	,335
BA_CSR	,517	,066	7,890	,000	,388	,646
C_CSR	-,057	,098	-,578	,564	-,250	,136
BF	,040	,081	,488	,626	-,120	,199
BO	,334	,086	3,874	,000	,164	,504
PBG	,168	,060	2,796	,006	,050	,286
PBL	,112	,049	2,272	,024	,015	,209
PCI	,031	,044	,698	,486	-,056	,117
BI	,145	,059	2,459	,015	,029	,261

Standardized coefficients

	coeff
W_CSR	,127
BA_CSR	,434
C_CSR	-,029
BF	,026
BO	,218
PBG	,129
PBL	,108
PCI	,029
BI	,132

***** DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c'_ps	c'_cs
,183	,077	2,366	,019	,031	,335	,125	,127

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
BA_CSR	,226	,047	,138	,324

Partially standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
BA_CSR	,155	,032	,096	,221

Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
BA_CSR	,157	,033	,096	,223

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95,0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:

5000

----- END MATRIX -----

Run MATRIX procedure:

***** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 3.5 *****

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com
Documentation available in Hayes (2018). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

Model : 4
Y : pWOM_CSR
X : C_CSR
M : BA_CSR

Covariates:

W_CSR BF BO PBG PBL PCI BI

Sample

Size: 257

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

BA_CSR

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
,685	,469	,822	27,359	8,000	248,000	,000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	,321	,494	,650	,517	-,653	1,295
C_CSR	,209	,094	2,220	,027	,024	,394
W_CSR	,437	,070	6,278	,000	,300	,574
BF	,033	,079	,419	,676	-,122	,188
BO	,047	,084	,562	,574	-,118	,212
PBG	,006	,058	,100	,920	-,109	,121
PBL	,122	,047	2,598	,010	,030	,215
PCI	-,041	,042	-,963	,336	-,124	,043
BI	,285	,054	5,260	,000	,178	,392

Standardized coefficients

	coeff
C_CSR	,127
W_CSR	,360
BF	,025
BO	,037
PBG	,005
PBL	,141
PCI	-,047
BI	,308

OUTCOME VARIABLE:
pWOM_CSR

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
,776	,603	,875	41,607	9,000	247,000	,000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	-1,569	,511	-3,074	,002	-2,575	-,564
C_CSR	-,057	,098	-,578	,564	-,250	,136
BA_CSR	,517	,066	7,890	,000	,388	,646
W_CSR	,183	,077	2,366	,019	,031	,335
BF	,040	,081	,488	,626	-,120	,199
BO	,334	,086	3,874	,000	,164	,504
PBG	,168	,060	2,796	,006	,050	,286
PBL	,112	,049	2,272	,024	,015	,209
PCI	,031	,044	,698	,486	-,056	,117
BI	,145	,059	2,459	,015	,029	,261

Standardized coefficients

	coeff
C_CSR	-,029
BA_CSR	,434
W_CSR	,127
BF	,026
BO	,218
PBG	,129
PBL	,108
PCI	,029
BI	,132

***** DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c'_ps	c'_cs
-,057	,098	-,578	,564	-,250	,136	-,039	-,029

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
BA_CSR	,108	,051	,015	,217

Partially standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
BA_CSR	,074	,035	,010	,150

Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
BA_CSR	,055	,026	,007	,110

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95,0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:

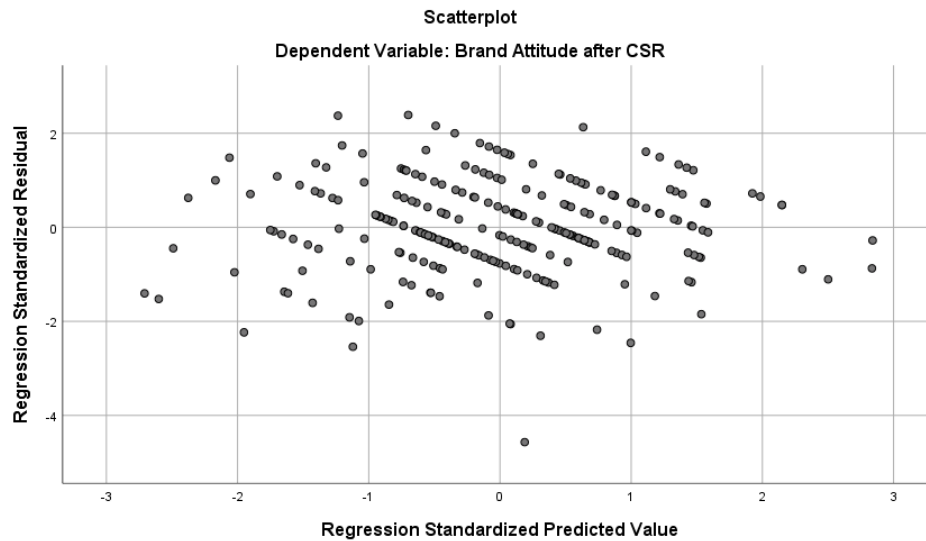
5000

----- END MATRIX -----

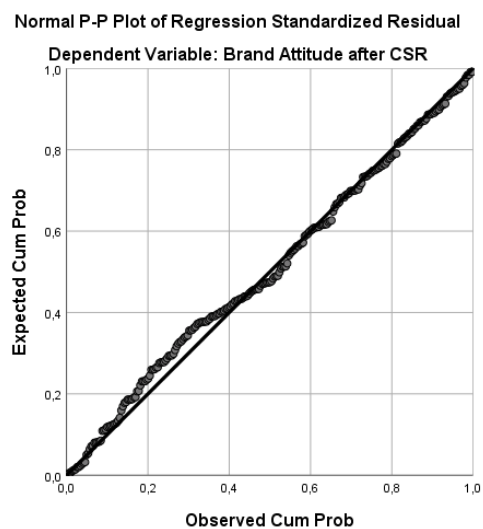
H5: The Potential Moderating Role of CSR Skepticism

Statistical assumptions:

- 1) Scatterplot to test homoscedasticity



- 2) P- P Plots to test normality of residuals



Additional Analyses: Paired Sample T-Tests (Brand Attitude, Purchase Intention, and pWOM Pre-Post CSR)

Statistical assumption of normality

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Diff_BA	0.213	257	0	0.9	257	0
Diff_PI	0.206	257	0	0.901	257	0
Diff_pWOM	0.14	257	0	0.932	257	0

Tests of Normality							
Stereotype Category		Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Diff_BA	HCHW	0.285	62	0	0.806	62	0
	LCHW	0.19	94	0	0.908	94	0
	LCLW	0.191	101	0	0.914	101	0
Diff_PI	HCHW	0.23	62	0	0.902	62	0
	LCHW	0.197	94	0	0.896	94	0
	LCLW	0.197	101	0	0.91	101	0
Diff_pWOM	HCHW	0.184	62	0	0.901	62	0
	LCHW	0.142	94	0	0.942	94	0
	LCLW	0.164	101	0	0.955	101	0.002

Additional Analyses: Mediation Analyses Before CSR

Statistical assumptions:

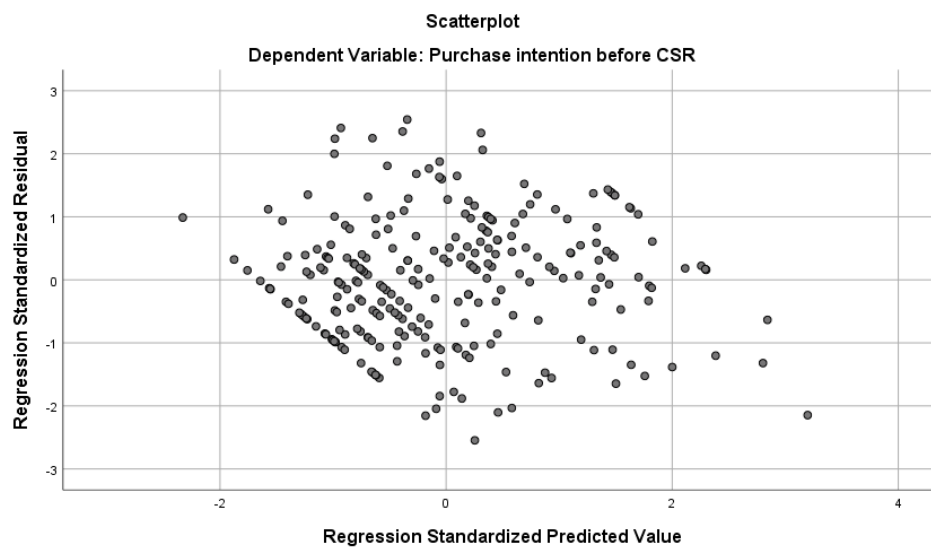
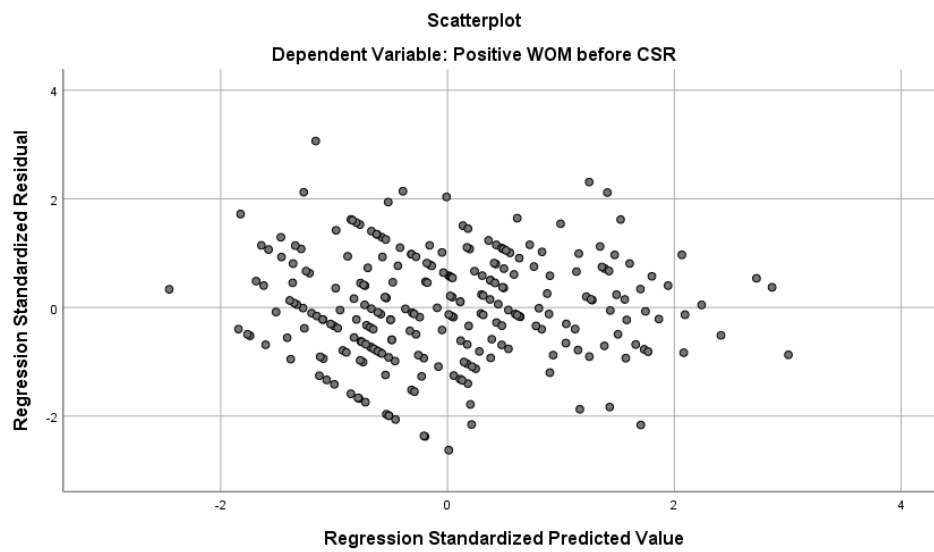
1) Correlation matrix to test additivity and linearity

Correlations															
		PI	pWOM	BA	W	C	BF	BO	PBG	PBL	PCI	BI	Gender	Age	Income
PI	Pearson Correlation	1	.808**	.624**	.396**	.339**	.508**	.679**	.312**	.361**	0.112	.651**	0.061	0.045	-0.108
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.073	0.000	0.335	0.479	0.085
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
pWOM	Pearson Correlation	.808**	1	.623**	.413**	.347**	.414**	.592**	.268**	.375**	.139*	.595**	0.085	0.053	-0.097
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.026	0.000	0.174	0.401	0.121
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
BA	Pearson Correlation	.624**	.623**	1	.584**	.484**	.282**	.353**	0.072	.379**	0.103	.594**	0.123	-0.067	-0.101
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.250	0.000	0.100	0.000	0.050	0.289	0.108
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
W	Pearson Correlation	.396**	.413**	.584**	1	.421**	.219**	.230**	-.151*	.433**	.248**	.333**	.149*	-0.076	0.054
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.015	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.017	0.227	0.392
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
C	Pearson Correlation	.339**	.347**	.484**	.421**	1	.253**	.205**	.227**	.338**	0.053	.421**	.154*	-.260**	-.222**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.395	0.000	0.014	0.000	0.000
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
BF	Pearson Correlation	.508**	.414**	.282**	.219**	.253**	1	.622**	.219**	.203**	.130*	.435**	-0.040	-0.054	-0.083
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.001	0.038	0.000	0.527	0.390	0.185
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
BO	Pearson Correlation	.679**	.592**	.353**	.230**	.205**	.622**	1	.260**	.232**	0.045	.538**	-0.056	0.000	-0.114
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.475	0.000	0.374	0.995	0.069
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
PBG	Pearson Correlation	.312**	.268**	0.072	-.151*	.227**	.219**	.260**	1	-.164**	-0.022	.254**	-0.054	-0.079	-0.065
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.250	0.015	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.008	0.721	0.000	0.394	0.211	0.302
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
PBL	Pearson Correlation	.361**	.375**	.379**	.433**	.338**	.203**	.232**	-.164**	1	.142*	.254**	0.076	-0.018	-0.066
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.008		0.022	0.000	0.227	0.779	0.295
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
PCI	Pearson Correlation	0.112	.139*	0.103	.248**	0.053	.130*	0.045	-0.022	.142*	1	0.116	0.085	-0.103	.151*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.073	0.026	0.100	0.000	0.395	0.038	0.475	0.721	0.022		0.063	0.175	0.100	0.015
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
BI	Pearson Correlation	.651**	.595**	.594**	.333**	.421**	.435**	.538**	.254**	.254**	0.116	1	0.111	-.180**	-.128*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.063		0.076	0.004	0.041
	N	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	257	255	255	256
Gender	Pearson Correlation	0.061	0.085	0.123	.149*	.154*	-0.040	-0.056	-0.054	0.076	0.085	0.111	1	-0.058	-0.065
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.335	0.174	0.050	0.017	0.014	0.527	0.374	0.394	0.227	0.175	0.076		0.360	0.302
	N	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	253	254
Age	Pearson Correlation	0.045	0.053	-0.067	-0.076	-.260**	-0.054	0.000	-0.079	-0.018	-0.103	-.180**	-0.058	1	.364**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.479	0.401	0.289	0.227	0.000	0.390	0.995	0.211	0.779	0.100	0.004	0.360		0.000
	N	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	253	255	254
Income	Pearson Correlation	-	-0.097	-0.101	0.054	-.222**	-0.083	-0.114	-0.065	-0.066	.151*	-.128*	-0.065	.364**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.108	0.085	0.108	0.392	0.000	0.185	0.069	0.302	0.295	0.015	0.041	0.302	0.000	
	N	256	256	256	256	256	256	256	256	256	256	256	254	254	256
** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).															
* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).															

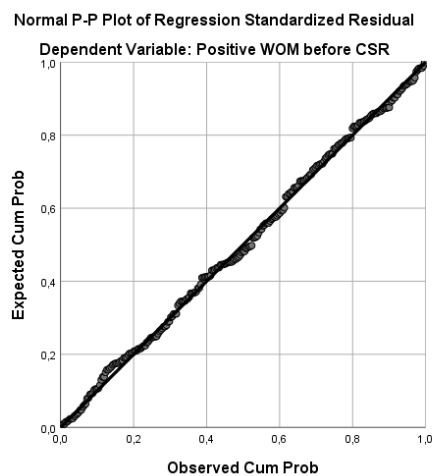
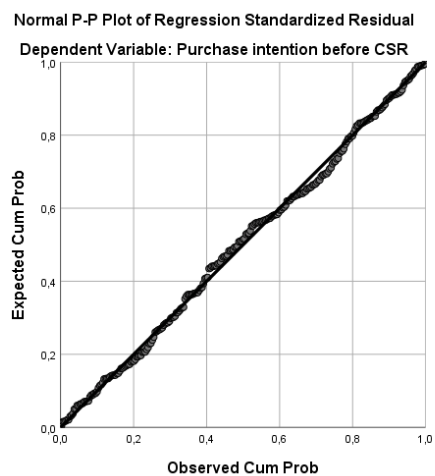
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

2) Scatterplots to test homoscedasticity



3) P-P Plots to test normality of residuals



Appendix E: German Abstract

Der Druck auf Marken ihrer ökologischen Verantwortung gerecht zu werden, wächst kontinuierlich in Zeiten von "Fridays for Future" und alarmierenden Klimaprognosen. Viele Studien haben bereits den Einfluss von ökologischen CSR Initiativen auf das Konsumentenverhalten untersucht. Bisher ist jedoch wenig über die zugrunde liegenden Mechanismen bekannt, die zu unterschiedlichen Reaktionen der Konsumenten auf diese Initiativen führen. Die Marketingliteratur hat gezeigt, dass Markenstereotypen häufig die Emotionen und das Verhalten von Konsumenten beeinflussen. Das Konzept der Markenstereotypen beruht darauf, dass Konsumenten Marken entlang der Dimensionen Wärme und Kompetenz wahrnehmen, die durch die guten oder schlechten Absichten der Marke sowie die Fähigkeit der Marke, diese Intentionen umzusetzen, geprägt werden.

Daher ist es das Ziel dieser Arbeit herauszufinden, ob ökologische CSR Markenstereotypen verbessert und ob dieser Effekt zwischen Marken je nach ihrer ursprünglichen Wärme und Kompetenzwahrnehmung variiert. Außerdem wird untersucht, ob die Markenwahrnehmung nach der CSR Initiative sich auf die Einstellung der Konsumenten gegenüber der Marke und dadurch auf ihr Verhalten auswirkt, und ob dieser Effekt durch die Skepsis Konsumenten gegenüber der Initiative beeinflusst wird.

In einer empirischen Studie wurden Markenstereotypen und Verhaltensabsichten von 257 Verbrauchern gegenüber Modemarken gemessen, bevor und nachdem sie über die ökologische CSR Initiative der Marken informiert wurden. Die Studie bestätigt, dass ökologische CSR allgemein zu günstigeren Markenstereotypen führt, jedoch nicht alle Marken gleichermaßen von einer Wärme- und Kompetenzsteigerung profitieren. Die Ergebnisse deuten darauf hin, dass insbesondere die Wärme und Kompetenz jener Marken steigt, die ursprünglich als wenig warmherzig oder kompetent angesehen wurden, was der warmherzigen und kompetenten Initiative widerspricht und daher in Frage gestellt wird. Außerdem zeigt die Studie, dass höhere Wärme und Kompetenz nach der CSR Initiative zu einer günstigeren Markeneinstellung und dadurch wiederum zu einer höheren Kaufabsicht und Word-of-Mouth führt. Unter Berücksichtigung, dass nicht alle Marken von günstigeren Markenstereotypen nach ihrer CSR Initiative profitieren, liefern diese Ergebnisse eine Erklärung, warum CSR Initiativen nicht für alle Marken zu positiveren Konsumentenreaktionen führen.

Durch die Verknüpfung von Markenstereotypen und (ökologischer) CSR tragen die Erkenntnisse dieser Studie zur internationalen Fachliteratur beider Forschungsgebiete bei. Außerdem liefert die Arbeit wertvolle Erkenntnisse für Markenmanager, ob sie durch ökologische CSR die Wahrnehmung und dadurch auch das Verhalten der Konsumenten gegenüber ihrer Marke verbessern können.