Corporate Social Responsibility and Job Pursuit Intention: A study of Moderating Role of Personal Values

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Abstract

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has become a hot issue recently in both business academic theory and practice. A number of academic studies have investigated its effects on a company's financial performance. Many found that CSR has a positive influence on stakeholders' perception of the company's business practices leading to their favourable reactions. This present study focuses on job seekers' perceived CSR and how they respond to job offers. Moreover, personal values (including Self-transcendence, Self-enhancement, Conservation and Openness to change) which are considered to be driving factors in an individual's ethical decision making are also taken into consideration as moderators of the relationship between applicants' perceived CSR and their job pursuit intention.

Most of the previous researches have been conducted in developed countries. In order to have more knowledge about CSR concept in developing countries, the present study is carried out in Vietnam context. The finding confirms the positive impact of Vietnamese job seekers' CSR perception on their job choice decision. However, little evidence was found to support the moderating effects of personal values.

Keywords: *Corporate social responsibility, job pursuit intention, personal values, Vietnam*

INTRODUCTION

A number of organisations have recognised the multifaceted benefits corporate social responsibility (CSR) brings to the firms. It not only helps to generate profits but also increase the company's reputation.

CSR has become an integrated part of business strategies (Li et al. 2010) because it helps to improve the corporate image along with gaining competitive advantages. In developed countries, CSR has become an embedded concept in business strategies and in community. However, companies in developing countries still see it as a new concept, and not many are adopting CSR practices in their activities (Welford 2004). And previous studies were conducted mainly in this Western context when there is not much research about CSR in developing countries (Li et al. 2010).

Human resource is among the most crucial assets of a company in today's competitive market. Corporates are not only emphasises on motivating and retaining their current employees, but also on how to attract talented applicants (Bhattacharya et al. 2008). To win the "war for talent", many companies have approached CSR as a recruiting strategy because CSR engagement is like a way to present themselves as a good place to work (Losse 2010). To some extent, CSR is used as a signal to potential job seekers about the company's working environment, helping to catch intention of CSR-oriented individuals. In turn, an individual tends to response to an offer from an employer if he/she recognises the fit between them. It suggests that when a job seeker reacts positively a CSR-reputed company, they are driven by a fit. Jones et al (2010) considers perception of value fit, or somehow called Person-Organisation fit (P-O fit).

This study aims to develop the knowledge about the effects of corporate social responsibility in business context, particularly regarding the recruitment process. Moreover, it is going to explore individual differences of values as moderators in interaction with perception of CSR and job choice decision. The Vietnam context is employed to examine Western theories.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Corporate Social Responsibility

CSR definition

One of the most perplexing issues in the study of CSR is how to define it. It is generally referred to an organisation's philanthropic and community contribution.

The four-dimension definition adopted from Carroll (1991) is used popularly. He states that "the social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical and discretionary expectations that society has of organisation at a given point in time" (p.499). This definition is broader because it covers not only responsibilities toward the "well-being" but economic and legal aspects as well. Economic responsibility confirms the obligation of a firm in producing goods and services in order to make a profit. However, in spite of profit maximisation, the firm's business activities must be carried out in legal frame. These two responsibilities are required by the society while the others are expected (ethical behaviours) or desired (discretionary activities) (Carroll 1999). In summary, the society requires economic and legal responsibilities from the corporate; expects the protection of moral rights, and desires welfare and goodwill activities via charity or voluntary programs.

Some approach the concept from stakeholder-driven perspectives, for example Wood (1991). He states CSR as "a business organisation's configuration of principles of social responsibility, processes of social responsiveness, and policies, programs and observable outcomes as they relate to the firm's social relationships" (p. 693). It indicates, to some extent, the motivation of a firm when doing CSR activities is to react to external pressure as well as to gain benefits from its stakeholders' favourable attitude and reaction. This definition is consistent with Freeman's stakeholder theory of CSR, in which stakeholders of a firm are identified to be any individual or organisation which affects or be affected by its business activities and the corporate responsibility is to ensure the benefits of all (Freeman 1984; Clarkson 1995). In turn, the business can gain benefits from its stakeholders' favourable reactions to CSR. A number of researches have focused on consumers' and employees' behaviours; there is not much empirical evidence regarding job seekers' attitudes and reactions.

CSR dimensions

If Carroll model concludes CSR with a four-layer pyramid, there is an argument around “which responsibility is the soul of CSR?”

Friedman (1983) and Marcoux (2003) posit that financial performance is the primary responsibility of a corporate. Drucker (2006) classifies the classic economic view of CSR into three main functions: (1) the measurement of business effectiveness; (2) the provision of necessary risk premium; and (3) the insurance of future capital supply. However, Barnett (2007, p.808) points out the disadvantage of profit-oriented business:

Doing too well can lead stakeholders to perceived that a firm is not doing enough good. Excessive CFP (corporate financial performance) indicates that a firm is extracting more from society than it is returning and can suggest that profits have risen because the firm has exploited some of its stakeholders in order to favour shareholders and upper management....

As a result, even though a good financial performance can help a company to satisfy the benefits of itself and a crucial stakeholder – investors, it is ruining the relationship with others such as customers or employees. Or in Bell & Dyck’s words, the company “miss developing many truly valuable resources” (2009, p.9).

There is a group of researches harmonising the conflict by approaching the idea of “doing well by doing good”. For instance, Davis (1973) argues that social responsibility within firms occurs when activities accomplish social good and increase economic gains. The perspective adapted from Kotler & Lee (2005) represents a socially responsible firm as a good citizen who plays for the society’s benefits. The well-being term mentioned in the statement of CSR implies both communal and environmental responsibilities (Du, Bhattacharya & Sen 2010).

Another way to approach the construct of CSR is from legal dimension such as Blowfield & Frynas (2005). They debate that CSR initiatives enact solely due to the State’s legislation. Meanwhile, Phillips, Freeman and Wicks (2003) criticizes the stakeholder theory that “does not require a change in the law to remain viable” (p.491).

There is no fixed theory for which dimension is the most influential in CSR context. Indeed, once irresponsible manners of a corporate spill over, it has to face with harsh punishment from its stakeholders, regardless of responsible aspects.

CSR benefits

In past decades, a number of studies have focused on investigating the correlation between CSR initiatives and firm performance in order to understand the motivation of engagement into CSR. In general, the results show support for CSR benefits either in financial or non-financial forms (Galbreath 2010). The financial benefits can be seen through the company financial success while the non-monetary benefits co-operate with the company’s competitive advantages (Weber 2008).

To HR scholars, employees and job applicants are considered two primary audiences of CSR practice (Edelman 2008). Recently, a variety of academic journals has investigated the influence of CSR reputation upon the responses of a firm’s current and prospective employees. In the first category – current employees, researchers tested the association of perceived CSR and organisational outcomes such as organisational commitment (Brammer, Millington and Rayton 2007; Peterson 2004); or job satisfaction (Elçi & Alpkan 2009; Tamm et al 2010). And many of them confirm positive association. Some are interested in prospective employees, concerning the impact of CSR on attracting skilled individuals.

CSR in recruitment

Studies suggest that CSR plays a role in supporting business with a good reputation and image enhancement as an attractive employer (Albinger & Freeman 2000; Ployhart 2006; Siltaoja 2006; Yoon et al. 2006). Viswesvaran, Deshpande and Joseph (1998) explain further that job seekers feel trustworthy to companies with their perceived CSR, especially when they have not got any previous interaction with the organisation.

Job seekers tend to access a company's information via the corporate's official website (Jones, Willness & Macneil 2009; Whitehouse 2006) or words of mouth (Cable & Graham 2000; Ryan & Ployhart 2000). And CSR news is among what they search for Edelman (2008). Turban and Cable (2003) found that if a company is ranked in popular business magazines such as Fortune, it can attract more and higher qualified applicants in the labour pool, supported by Backhaus et al. (2002); Greening & Turban (2000); Luce, James & John (2001). In addition, job seekers with high job choice also appealed to firms with high reputation of CSP – a construct similar to CSR (Albinger and Freeman 2000).

The survey of MBA students from European and North America by Montgomery & Ramus (2003) found out a corporate which is famous for attributes like caring for employees, environmental sustainability, community/stakeholder relations, and ethical products and services has potential influence on applicants' job choice decision. Moreover, 90% of the sample is willing to forgo financial benefits to work for a company with high recognition in CSR activities. Furthermore, CSR background becomes an important factor in appealing talented job seekers particularly in circumstances of poor business performance (Kim & Park 2011). It can be said that socially responsible acknowledgment helps put the corporate in the top "employer of choice" list (Sainty 2008). However, the interaction of CSR on job seekers' intention is often discovered through a mediating factor called organisational attractiveness or organisational reputation. There are not many studies investigating the direct relationship between them. Based on what have been discussed, it is hypothesized that:

H1: Job seekers' perception of CSR relates positively to job pursuit intentions.

CSR-driven mechanisms

Greening and Turban (2000) approach the link through Social Identity theory and explain that prospective applicants receive the signal about what it would be like to be an employee in the company via corporate social performance. Rynes and Cable (2003) specify these signals with desirable job attributes, strong opportunities for career growth and development within the companies.

Underlying mechanisms which mediate this relationship also are examined but limitedly. Jones, Willness and Madey (2010) are exceptions when the authors try to test the mediator role of three factors: perceived value fit, employer prestige and expected employee treatment in the relationship between perception of CSR and organisational attractiveness. And the results support for all hypotheses with positive correlations.

Nevertheless, Person-Organisation (P-O) fit is the most popular method tested (Ng & Burke 2005; Jones et al. 2009; Valentine, Godkin & Lucero 2002). The concept is defined by Kristof (1996) as "the compatibility between people and organisation that occurs when: (a) at least one entity provides what the others need, or (b) they share similar fundamental characteristics or (c) "both" (p.6). The fit concept indeed does not have the same influence on different dimensions of CSR. Jones et al. (2009) finds that P-O fit moderates applicant responses to CSR initiatives targeting communal responsibilities while environmental CSR does not have stronger effects on applicants who value the environment than on ones who have a low concern for environment issues. Behrend, Baker and Thompson (2009) also finds

the same result when their research does not show the considerable effect of environmental attitudes of potential applicants on their reactions to environment CSR.

Chapman et al. (2005) states that perception of P-O fit are among the strongest predictors of recruiting outcomes. Cable and Judge (1996) explain the concept of P-O fit in recruitment approach that job seekers find organisations more preferable if they share similar personality. In other words, individuals conceptualise fit by accessing the extent of similarity between their own values and the organisation's values. The perceived value fit, according to Jones et al (2010) helps explain why some applicants are attracted to organisations known for CSR, supported by Greening and Turban (2000) that "prospective applicants who have value systems that regard corporate social performance as important endeavour will be more attracted to socially responsible firms than applicants without such values" (p.255).

It is suggested that job seekers can initiate CSR in different ways which leads to different evaluation of its role in their decision making, especially in job choice decision. A question is highlighted whether personal values can moderate this relationship.

Personal values

It is generally defined personal values as the beliefs that people hold about desirable states that motivate and guide people's choice, attitudes and behaviours (Rokeach 1973; Higgins 2006 - cited in Crilly, Schneider & Zollo 2008). Moreover, they are regarded as one of the most powerful predictors in researches of individual attitudes and behaviours (Thøgersen & Ölander 2003; Rokeach 1973).

In organisational context, studies focus mainly on the effects of personal values on customer's reactions and most of them agree in the conclusion that individual value differences can cause influence in customers' decisions and behaviours. In other words, their purchase decisions are partially to show their own values or esteems. For instance, customers in the study by Basil and Weber (2006) consider values motivation and concerns for appearance (Ego enhancement motivation) in their responses to CSR. Value-related motivation implies that individuals react to CSR in order to "express values related to altruistic and humanitarian concerns for others (Clary et al. 1998, p.1516); while concerns for appearance is motivated by ego enhancement. On the other side, it is argued that individual exhibits value-related intention behaviours in order to avoid negative internal feelings (Meglino and Rawlin, 1998).

In other researches, managerial personal values are taken into consideration. And again these personal values are also conceptualised as the basic antecedents to managerial choice of corporate strategies as well as ethical frames (Connor & Becker 2003; McDonald & Gandz 1991; Oumlil & Balloun 2009). Fritzsche & Oz (2007) highlight the ethical dimension of decision making of managers under the impact of their personal values meanwhile, Hemingway & MacLagan (2004) studies on the influences of personal morality.

However, there is insufficient evidence on the impact of personal values on other stakeholders' intention and decision, particularly job seekers' job pursuit intentions. Chatman (1989) suggested personal values as an appropriate means in applicants' organisation choice decision. Judge and Bretz's (1992) study supports that individuals are likely to choose jobs which share the similar values with their own. Consequently, it is supposed in this study that personal values play a role of moderators in the relationship between perception of CSR and applicant job pursuit intentions.

Dimensions of personal values

The two-dimensional taxonomy of personal values developed by Schwartz (1992) is used popularly in a number of psychological studies (such as Piurko, Schwartz & Davidov 2011; Roccas et al. 2002; Schwartz et al. 2010). After conducting a number of studies in different languages, Schwartz and his colleagues revealed such a universal set of 10 basic values classified by motivational goals. They include: Power, Achievement, Hedonism, Stimulation, Self-direction, Universalism, Benevolence, Tradition, Conformity and Security.

These ten broad values are then categorised into two pairs of compatible groups (Schwartz & Boehnke 2004; Schwartz 2006) which are structured in a circle below:

Theoretical model of relation among 10 basic values.

Adapted from Schwartz (1994, p.24)

Self-transcendence or so-called Altruism comprises of Benevolence, and Universalism. Benevolent individuals think about the interests of others; care for people that close to them. Universalism expresses concerns and care for broader groups – community and nature in general. On the other hand, self-enhancement-oriented individuals are the ones who would like to pursue their own interests; seeking for their ego by obtaining social status, influential power over others or gaining personal achievement as well as social recognition.

People who are openness to change often think and act autonomously, and are interested in something new, exciting and challenging. Meanwhile, conservation value expresses the engagement to traditional values (e.g. beliefs and customs); proper behaviours regarding social norms as well as preference for preference for stability and security for self and others close to self.

Personal values and CSR

The P-O fit has supported the match of CSR initiatives with applicants' own values (Jones et al. 2009; Zhang & Gowan 2012). Zhang & Gowan (2012) consider ethical inclination as a moderator in CSR impact on attracting potential employees. Jones et al. (2009) shows that the more similarities applicants' values share with the socially responsible organisations; the more positively they are willingness to accept the job offer provided.

As mentioned, Self-transcendence values appear to relate to basic ethical principles it means these values are more likely congruent with ethical behaviours and decisions (Fritzsche & Oz 2007). Universalism values such as equality, justice, care for well-being and nature, or Benevolence with honesty and loyalty, to some extent, reflect the moral and ethical orientation. On the other side, self-enhancement - a group of personality-orientated values such as concerns for wealth, power, authority or personal goals- reflects strong egoistic considerations which eventually are more likely leading to unethical and irresponsible behaviours (Steenhaut & Kenhove 2006).

In addition, recent empirical finding by Shafer, Fukukawa and Lee (2007) shows that altruistic and egoistic values cause impact on ethical decision making and CSR-related awareness but in opposite direction. If self-transcendence is a positive contributor, individuals with self-enhancement value less concern about CSR in decision making process (VanSandt 2003). In order to study value impacts on ethical decision making, Fritzsche & Oz (2007) employ Schwartz's ten value model to test and find that there is a positive association between self-transcendence and ethical reactions while a negative relationship is found in case of self-enhancement values; consistent with Wang & Juslin (2011) in their study of Chinese youth perception of corporate responsible activities.

Although CSR does not directly mean ethics, it can be understood for various publics as an ethical behaviour from corporations (Kim & Park 2011). Logically, basing on these findings, it is suggested that individuals whose values incline self-transcendence are more likely to consider CSR reputation with their job pursuit intention. Meanwhile, who enhance self-enhancement values tend to less think of CSR performance in their job-offer pursuit intentions.

Thus, it is hypothesised that:

H2: High self-transcendence –oriented values are more likely to positively moderate the relationship between perceived CSR and job pursuit intentions.

H3: High self-enhancement –oriented values are more likely to negatively moderate the relationship between perceived CSR and job pursuit intentions.

Fukukawa, Shafer and Lee (2007) claims that individuals who are conservation-oriented share characteristics of status-quo; custom and tradition compliance and standard following which restrain them from exploring opportunities and resist change. In terms of CSR context, individuals possessing the tradition-orientation values seem to be bound with legislation, customs and even institutional regulation. Therefore, the benefits of immediate stakeholders such as shareholders are often considered firstly in these contexts. Innovative thinking and new paradigms, particularly in CSR are more welcomed by individuals with openness thinking.

In Roozen, Pelsmacker and Bostyn (2001), conformity and security – two of conservative values are proved to have a negative impact on ethical reactions. Integration and Confucian work dynamism which belong to the deeply traditional values of the Chinese mind and activities have been shown to restrict Chinese employees from moral-related responses as well as approach ethical concept (Woodbine 2004). Stern and Dietz (1994); Stern et al. (1995) both found a negative association between traditional values and environmental concerns. Wang and Juslin (2011) realise that openness to change young people are more sensitive to irresponsible activities of an organisation rather than conservation.

In generalised, ethical responses and behaviours are impacted negatively with conservation values, positively with openness thinking. It leads to hypotheses:

H4: High Conservation values are more likely to negatively moderate the relationship between perceived CSR and job pursuit intentions.

H5: Highly Openness to change values are more likely to positively moderate the relationship between perceived CSR and job pursuit intentions.

CSR is generally referred to the responsibilities of a company in relationship with its stakeholders; therefore it is mainly studied in the practical context. Indeed, a number of studies have been examined in Western background, there is little done in the context of developing countries (Luken 2006; Dobers & Halme 2009). Some academics have proved the inapplicability of CSR literature from one context to the others (e.g. Halme, Roome & Dobers 2009; Prieto-Carrón et al., 2006). It is found that CSR is perceived not the same in different societal contexts (Welford, Chan & Man 2007). Thus, it is found necessary to carry out more CSR studies outside Western boundary.

CSR in Vietnam

In general, CSR in Vietnam share similar features with other developing countries, which are summarised in the table below:

Features in developing countries:

- + CSR is formally practised by internationalised national and multinational firms
- + CSR codes, standards and guidelines tend to be issued specific (e.g. HIV/AIDS, poverty) or sector-led (mining, agriculture)
- + CSR is commonly related to philanthropy or charity.
- + Making an economic contribution (e.g. investments and job creation) and provision of social services (e.g. housing) are the most effective way of making a social contribution
- + The practice of CSR is strongly influenced by traditional community values and religion.

(Blowfield & Frynas 2005; UNIDO 2002);(Adopted from Desta 2010, p267)

CSR in Vietnamese is “trách nhiệm xã hội doanh nghiệp”. “The key word is ‘xã hội’, meaning social which carries both a residual sense of the Marxist-Leninist concepts of “socialist”... and a meaning to do with “society”, or things pertaining to society” (Tran 2011, p. 124). It expresses partially the collectivistic culture in this country which can affect considerably on Vietnamese perception of CSR. According to Tran (2011), the Vietnamese general public initiates social responsibilities “as charitable work, along with the lines of doing good deeds, over and above one’s regular realm of activity” (p.125).

CSR seems to be an unfamiliar term in Vietnam (Tai & Tu 2008), it is known more under the label of codes of conduct or international standards (e.g. ISO 9001, ISO 14001, and SA8000), and more mandatory in business trade with foreigner organisations (Tencati, Russo & Quaglia 2008). It is found that the only reason why enterprises in Vietnam start getting involved in social issues is in order to keep trading viably with foreign countries in international markets (Tencati et al. 2008). Huong (2008) argues that one of the reasons why CSR has not received enough consideration from Vietnamese business entities is the missing realization of sustainability and business success due to company’s short term vision as well as prior economic profit.

However, there are some evidences showing that concerns for socially responsible activities have been more essential in doing business. For instance, a relationship between unwillingness in integrating CSR practices and lower extent of perseverance in entrepreneurial effort was found (Vuong, 2016). In order to encourage companies both

domestic and international to engage in socially responsible behaviour, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Vietnam (VCCI) launched the CSR Award regarding the firms' contribution to society and environment protection. Beside Awards for "good citizens", the punishment for violation is also carried out more strictly. Huong (2008) also emphasises that labor market considerations appear to be one of the most important drivers of business ethics in Vietnam under pressure of shortage of skilled staff in some sectors such as banking, finance, and insurance. And it is time for Vietnamese corporate put more intention to these stakeholders' reactions relating to CSR, including prospective employees'.

Research framework

METHODOLOGY

This study aims to investigate the influence of CSR perception on job seekers' intention in responding to the corporate's job offers, along with the interaction of personal values as moderators. It is suggested that there is a need for a degree of accuracy in data analysis (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009) and the hypotheses need testing with a large sample to generalise the results. And quantitative research is suitable to achieve the goal of this project.

Sample, Design and Procedure

Sample

The target sample of the survey includes Vietnamese people in working age who may have the intention to seek for a job. Because the Vietnamese employment law regulate the minimum age for a Vietnamese citizen entering the labour pool is full 15 years old, the designed questionnaire aims to reach respondents with suitable condition only (the age question limits options from 15 years and above).

The survey questions were distributed only through Facebook due to its fast connection (Burns and Burns 2008) with public status in order to reach as wide range of applicants as possible. In order to assure that the collected data meets the minimum requirement of sample size (100 responses), almost 350 friends list were in boxed with the message about the link of the online survey and invitation to take part in. The participants joined in voluntarily and were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality (Podsakoff et al 2003). In total, 207 usable responses were collected within one week.

Design

The survey was divided into 4 parts. Part 1 is about participants' perception of CSR with 13 questions; followed with job pursuit intention part (5 questions). Then the survey focuses on personal values in part 3 with 16 inquiries and finishes with questions about some personal information such as age, education, job experience and gender. All of these parts include mandatory questions. At the end of the survey, two manipulation check questions are added as optional choice in order to double-check whether the respondents had paid attention to the questions or not. All questions in the survey are accessed from previous studies (e.g. Piurko et al. 2011; Ramasamy & Yeung 2009). These original items in English were then translated into Vietnamese with some modification in case of inappropriateness. Questionnaire translation can have an impact on validity and reliability of the questionnaire (Hui and Triandis 1985).

After the questionnaire was designed, two pilot tests were conducted before the final survey was issued in order to assess the quality of measurement items as well as the suitability of questionnaire type. After the first pilot test, there is a change in question type the results received cause difficulties in analysing. The second test gave a better result; only items with its poor loadings of data values for analysis were removed.

Based on the above critical measures, common method bias is less likely to threaten the data sample (Lin et al. 2012).

Measures

Reliability test

"Equipment, tests and surveys must produce an accurate, stable, and predictable standard" (Burns & Burns 2008, p.409), so reliability tests become necessary. Internal reliability of each variable can be measured with Cronbach's α (Nunnally 1978) by dividing "the number of items squared multiplied by the average covariance between items" by "the sum of all item variances and item co-variances" (Field 2005, p.668). The minimum level of reliability is generally agreed at .70 (Nunnally & Bernstein 1994), but it can be acceptable with $\alpha = .60$ and above for exploratory research (Hair et al. 1998).

All of the variables in the model (Perceived CSR, Job Pursuit Intention and Personal Values) are measured using a 5-point Likert scale of agreement level. According to Pett, Lackey and Sullivan (2003), if the mean falls below 3, it can be interpreted that people disagree with the item, meanwhile they agree with it if the range is higher than 3.

Independent variable

Perception of CSR is the extent to which an individual perceives the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary responsibilities under the eyes of a stakeholder (Maignan, Ferrell & Hult 1999). This conceptualisation refers to individual evaluations and interpretation of business activity, not necessarily actual firm actions (Evans & Davis 2011).

The questionnaire for perception of CSR relied heavily on the one developed by Maignan (2001), but originally based on Maignan & Ferrell (2000). It is then adopted in a variety of studies related to CSR perception (e.g. Ramasamy & Yeung 2009). The survey attempts to access job seekers' perspectives of socially responsible business, basing particularly on Carroll's four component model. The instrument comprises 16 statements that evaluate applicants' perception of what a responsible business should be. There is an amendment to make them more appropriate to the research subjects – job seekers. For instance, the item – "control their production costs strictly" is used to investigate consumers' CSR initiatives

particularly, so in this study it will be deleted. The other 15 items are kept and divided into groups of 4; each is to scale a dimension of CSR. Respondents are asked to rate these statements on a 5-point scale of agreement, from 1 – “Strongly disagree” to 5 – “Strongly agree”. However, each dimension in Carroll model is not analysed separately in this study. Instead, the whole scaled items are used to access perception of CSR as one concept through dimension reduction in SPSS. The reliability of this homogenised term is measured higher than 0.9.

Dependent variable

Job pursuit intentions of respondents were assessed with 5 items which were selected and adapted from previous researches (e.g.. Highhouse, Lievens & Sinar 2003). They were designed to focus on the forward-looking dealing of applicants with a socially responsible corporate. There is an instruction at the beginning of the question that help respondents understand the situation more clearly which is “Assume that a company with a good reputation for CSR does recruitment, what would you do?”.

Participants, then, would rate their degree of agreement within a scale of 5-point from 1- “Strongly disagree” to 5- “Strongly agree” for prepared statements such as: “I would accept the job offer from this company” or “I would make this company one of my first choices as an employer”.

The level of reliability is measured significantly with alpha >.9.

Moderator variables

To measure personal values, the Schwartz survey was applied because it is prove to be useful in predicting individual behaviours from wide cross-cultural studies (Bardi & Schwartz 2003; Schwartz 1996). The version of 19 items was administered. The degree of agreement was divided into a 5-point scale ranging from 1 to 5, whereas, 1 is “Strongly disagree”; 2 – “Disagree”; 3 – “Neutral”; 4 – “Agree” and 5 is “Strongly agree”. Measuring self-transcendence values was based on opinions of “social justice”, “equality”; “care for nature” and “loyalty” while “success”; “ambition” and “social power” are employed to measure self-enhancement. Examples of conservation values are “respect for the elders”; “obedient” and “family security”. Finally, the extent to what the participants agree about the importance of “adventure”, “exciting life” and “freedom” decide openness to change values.

The alphas for all these variables were satisfactory (> .7).

Control variables

In order to categorize respondents into different groups, some of demographic variables such as gender, age and education are deployed. Socio-demographic factors are usually used as control variables in ethical studies (Nill & Schibrowsky 2005; Lam & Shi 2007). In addition, the interaction between age, gender & education and personal values were also employed by academic scholars. For example, Schwartz & Rubel (2005) claim that women tend to value Universalism, Benevolence (dimensions of Self-transcendence), Tradition, and Security (components of Conservation) more than men. In turn, men rate items belonging to Self-enhancement (Achievement, Power and Hedonism) and Openness to change (Self-direction and Stimulation) higher than women. Concerning age, some found there is a monotonic increase for Tradition, Conform and Security while a decrease for Hedonism and Stimulation (Pohjanheimo 1997) getting along with age. The latter also shows that the higher education degree, the more concerns for Self-direction values and the less consideration for Traditional values.

In this survey, gender has been coded with 1 for male and 2 for female. Age has been classified into 5-years groups, starting from 15 years old due to the reason of Vietnamese employment laws. Education was distinguished by degrees with code of 1 for High School, 2 - Bachelor, 3 - Master, and 4 – PhD. Finally, there are four options in work experience which are “none”, “less than 1 year”, “from 1 to 5 years”, “from 6 to 10 years” and “more than 10 years” (then coded from 1 to 5 respectively).

Analytical strategy

Collected data will be interpreted with descriptive analyses by presenting mean, standard deviation, and Pearson’s correlation coefficient. It aims to describe and summarise personal information of respondents. Mean is used to explore the average value of single variable while standard deviations help to see to what extent a variable value can spread around its mean (Saunders et al. 2009). Pearson’s correlation coefficient is employed to test the correlation between two variables.

In order to test the developed hypotheses, both linear regression and hierarchical regression are chosen. Linear regression tests the interaction of one variable on another one (Saunders et al 2009), so it is used to examine the hypothesis 1. Meanwhile, the moderating tests of hypotheses 2, 3, 4, 5 employ multiple hierarchical regressions.

All of these measurements are carried out using Excel and IBM SPSS STATISTICS – a statistic software.

DATA ANALYSIS

When running the regression, Cook-distance was applied to detect outliers in SPSS. After recognising the existence of residual items, variables were standardised to identify and delete them from the sample. The detected cases were deleted if they did not support the explanatory power of the model expressing in significantly increasing R-squared and F-statistic. The procedure was repeated until 4 responses were deleted; the sample then shrank to 203 participants.

Multiple regressions

A multiple regression is a tool to predict the outcome of a dependent variable under the interaction of several predictors. However, before starting running the regression, it is crucial to check the absence of multicollinearity since it can cause “both logical and statistical problems” (Amato 2008, p.78). If there is a high correlation between predictors in the model, the regression coefficient would be unreliable. In other words, the presence of multicollinearity makes it difficult to interpret the coefficient (Amato 2008; Cohen et al. 2003). The variance inflation factor (VIF) is used to screen it in SPSS.

The common rule of thumb is that if VIF is equal to or greater than 10 (or tolerance < 0.1), it shows the presence of multicollinearity leading to concerns of deleting one of the predictors from the model (Cohen et al. 2003). According to Multicollinearity test for regression variables, VIFs are from 2 to 3 which are acceptable results.

The present study examines a multiple regression with Job Pursuit Intention as dependent variable and predictors which were added in three steps:

Step 1: Control variables (including age, gender, education and work experience)

Step 2: Perceived CSR

Step 3: Moderator factors (products of perceived CSR with self-transcendence/ self-enhancement/conservation/ and openness to change)

Coefficients							
Variable		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
		β	Sig.	β	Sig.	β	Sig.
Age		-.063	--	.054	--	-.056	--
Gender		.090	--	.078	--	.099	--
Education		-.188	--	.077	--	-.034	--
Work Experience		.119	*	.046	--	.040	--
Moderators	Perceived CSR			.065	***	.491	**
	Self-transcendence					-.418	*
	Self-enhancement					-.068	--
	Conservation					.066	--
	Openness to Change					.177	--
R Square		.029		.423		.523	
Adjusted R Square		.009		.409		.501	
F-stat		1.477		28.902***		23.526***	
Dependent Variable: Job Pursuit intention							
β standardised coefficient							
Significance code: p<.1; p<.05: **; p<.001: ***							

Multiple regressions for job pursuit intention as dependent variable

The first model with only control variables explained significant low about the variance in job pursuit intention with 0.9%. However, the explanatory power increases considerably to 40.9% when independent variable – perceived CSR was added. As mentioned in Saunders et al. (2009), when the model with more variables shows larger F value, it indicates that the “bigger” model explains more of the variance in the dependent variable than the “smaller” model. It predicts that perceived CSR has a great influencing role in describing the variance of the job pursuit intention, supported with a big positive change in F value from 1.477 to 28.902 ($p=.000$).

Regarding the third model with the participation of personal values as moderators, adjusted R-squared increases to .501, along with a slight decrease in F-stat. It tells that the involvement of moderating factors, along with perceived CSR, helps to explain the higher portion of total variability in job pursuit intention but the data shows a decrease of fitness to the new model.

Hypothesis test

To perform hypothesis tests, hierarchical multiple regressions were carried out in SPSS.

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 predicts that perception of CSR has a positive relation to job pursuit intention. Referring to coefficient table, when perceived CSR is added, β equals .637 (p-value < 0.01). It means the first hypothesis is approved because the Beta value (β) presents the standard deviation number that the outcome will change when the predictor is increased or decreased by one standard deviation; the higher the value is, the more contributes the variable to the explanation of the dependent variable (Pallant 2007). Indeed, the result is higher than zero; it shows the positive link between them. It is confirmed with the Pearson Correlation coefficient of perceived CSR and job pursuit intention which stays at .686 (p<0.01).

There is quite a high correlation between predictors of model, including Perceived CSR, Self-transcendence, Self-enhancement, Conservation as well as Openness to change. It predicts that there may be multicollinear effects among them which lead to the unreliability of explaining power of coefficients (Amato 2008; Cohen et al. 2003). In order to delete the variance inflation, all of these variables were centered. The results show the acceptable VIF values, so the hierarchical regressions continue with moderator tests (hypotheses 2 to 5).

Hypothesis 2

In this hypothesis, self-transcendence value is estimated to play a role as a moderator which interplays positively in the relation of perceived CSR and job pursuit intention.

First of all, concerning the significance of self-transcendence in model 3, p-value is higher than 0.05 but smaller than 0.1 which is sometimes acceptable. However, contrasting to the prediction, self-transcendence does not support Perceived CSR impact on job seekers' intention. Instead, it decreases the positive relationship between them, expressing in the β value equal to -.418, and also explaining why F-stat inclines to 23.526 from 28.902 (p-values = .000). In addition, the adjusted R-squared for model 2 is higher than in the model 2. It means that the second model can better explain the portion of variability of the DV. Hence, the 2nd hypothesis is not approved.

Hypothesis 3

The role of self-enhancement in the association of IV and DV was predicted negatively in the reviewed literature. Unfortunately, this individual value has no significance in the model (p-value >0.1), so there is no evidence to support the interacting effect of self-enhancement. Thus, the hypothesis 3 is rejected.

Hypothesis 4 and 5

A negative moderating impact did predict for Conservation value in the model (H4), meanwhile the hypothesis 5 predicted that Openness to change would support the link between the IV and DV. However, similar to the hypothesis 3, there is no evidence showing the interacting influences of these two values in the model since both p-values are not significant. Thus, the last two hypotheses could not be proved.

DISCUSSION

The present aims to discover the impact of perceived CSR on job pursuit intention, particularly in Vietnam, and also test whether personal values (including Self-transcendence, Self-enhancement, Conservation and Openness to Change can be moderators of that relationship.

Some covariates such as age, gender, work experience or education were expected to help analysing the effects of predictors on job pursuit intention. But it is shown that these control variables do not have any or little impact on the relationship. The only exception is work experience when it can explain to some extent the variance in the decision of job pursuit with $\beta = .164^*$ in the first layer of hierarchical regression test. The model with these covariates could not explain the variance of the DV due to no significance ($p\text{-value} > 0.1$). However, in order to examine whether there is any difference among groups, some sub-tests were carried out regarding covariates.

Take gender into consideration. Nill & Schibrowsky (2005) find the effect if this demographic factor on ethical issues while Lam & Shi (2007) reject the influence. An analysis of group statistics was applied to test the mean difference of Perceived CSR between two groups of gender. The finding supposes equal variance since the significance of both Levene's and T-tests is higher than .05. Nevertheless, when breaking CSR down to 4 dimensions and test, male perceives economic responsibility higher than females; meanwhile there is no significance for other dimensions. When considering gender with the other variables (personal values and job choice decision) all confirm no significance. Some other studies suggest the difference in individual values between male and female (Schwartz & Rubel 2005), but this present study found the equal variance.

The relationship between DV and IV of the model – perceived CSR and job pursuit intention was significantly supported. The explanatory power of the predictor factor on the variance of the criterion variable is up to almost 41% with their correlation index stays at .680^{**}. The higher perception of CSR job seekers have, the higher intention they pursue the job offers by socially responsible companies. It supports the previous studies which share the similar conclusion (e.g. Backhaus et al. 2002; Evans & Davis 2011; Greening and Turban 2000). CSR is supposed to have 4 dimensions which are economic, legal, ethics and philanthropy (Carroll 1991). It is discovered that there is a difference in CSR perception of participants regarding its dimensions. It may be generally considered by the Vietnamese individuals that the social responsibilities of a firm are synonymous to its business ethics and charity activities within the legal frame. Less concern is put on the economic dimension of CSR concept. Jamali & Mirshak (2007) confirmed that if in developed countries, economic is immediately required in CSR policies and practices, the factor has not put enough consideration in the context of developing countries when CSR is deployed. The present study supports this judgement because economic dimension of CSR received the lowest average agreement of respondents in addition to a significantly high standard deviation .

Unfortunately, there is no supporting evidence for personal values as moderators in the relationship of perceived CSR and job pursuit intention, except for Self-transcendence in Vietnam context.

Altruistic individuals are considered to be universalistic and benevolent – take into account the welfare of others rather than themselves (Schwartz 1992). It implies that job seekers who own this value are willing to accept job offers from a socially responsible company due to its ethical and philanthropic policies and practices which bring benefits for the society. However, self-transcendent applicants in the sample responded in contrary way to the prediction leading to the rejection of hypothesis 2. More details, the model with self-transcendence values as a moderating factor can explain 50% of the variance of DV; an increase unit changes in this personal value causes a decrease of (.164) unit in job seekers' intention to job acceptance. It can be explained in Vietnam context due to the fact that though the communal spirit is highly dignified in society, people do not show their expression through the

attachment with a socially responsible employer. They prefer expressing their consideration for others individually.

Vujicic et al. (2010a &b) found expected income and location as predictor factors of future growth opportunity of the Vietnamese graduates and highlighted additionally that these are taken into consideration by the Vietnamese youth when they think of which company to apply for a job. Patel, Salahuddin and O'Brien (2008) survey the effect of collectivist characteristic of Vietnamese society and conclude that this type of culture ranks hard-work and education as high prediction of future success. It indicates that consideration of future growth opportunity will be highly emphasised during job decision making of Vietnamese job seekers.

Leong & Hartung (2003); Pope, Cheng and Leung (1998) expand the sample to cover some developing countries and add that beside personal values and goals, career decision of an individual is controlled by family relations, social expectations as well as culture-related issues (Reynolds and Constantine 2007). In highly communal and collectivistic culture, opinions from parents or other family members sometimes are decisive to one's career choice intention rather than their own viewpoint. As a result, individual values become not influential factors in job choice intention even the value is CSR-preferential.

Implications

The present study was conducted to test in a new context – Vietnam some issues should be taken into consideration when accessing CSR perspectives and its effect. In particular, perception of CSR highly emphasised in ethical and philanthropic aspects, less on economic; it indicates that Vietnamese job seekers seem to synonymise social responsibilities with voluntary and charity activities, confirmed in Tran (2011). It can be resulted from the newness of concept in Vietnam society, or maybe the difference of culture which can impact considerably on individual characteristics and behaviours (Singelis & Brown 1995). It might be a starting point to further studies.

For business consideration, the confirmation of positive correlation between perceived CSR and job seekers' intention implies the application of CSR in recruiting activities. In other words, if a corporate would like to attract potential employees, it should employ the image of a socially responsible company. Moreover, the applicants' individual differences should be taken into account during the recruiting process, because these personal characteristics may be internal factors driving their perspectives of CSR to their job choice decision. Though it is not completely approved in this present study, but more or less it is confirmed with Self-transcendence value.

Limitation

Firstly, the survey examined the potential applicants' responses, not the actual job seekers'. At the beginning of the questionnaire, participants were instructed about the assumption of being an individual who is looking for a job. Consequently, they intent to act like job seekers and their responses to some extent are different from their actual behaviours.

207 was the original number of participants who agreed to attend the survey. However, the questionnaire was distributed online (Facebook in particular), so it limited to approaching the more appropriate study's subjects. The sample of 207 respondents is relatively small compared to the labour pool in Vietnam; therefore, to some extent it cannot represent the intention of the majority who are actually looking for a full-time employment. The sample was randomly selected; it does not focus on any specific group in the same major such as business, management, or finance, so it may not indicate the intention of applicants with

similar education background. It suggests for further research locating this gap.

Regarding the topic of CSR, this is a fairly new concept in Vietnam context. It implies that participants may not have sufficient knowledge about it leading to misunderstanding the questions. Indeed, there were some feedbacks from the participants complaining that the topic was abstract to them; some found it boring and hard to understand. In addition, almost all of literature were developed in the Western context. The research tried to test in an Eastern country showing something irrelatively. Meanwhile, the cultural difference was not highlighted as the moderating factor, so maybe the result of the research was biased to some degree.

Another limitation needs discussing is the use of quantitative research instead of qualitative research. Quantitative method does not provide in-depth answers, so the researcher may not understand the real motive behind their responses, especially when the present survey was going to identify one internal drivers of decision – personal values. Furthermore, without face-to-face or direct interaction, the participants do not have an opportunity to clarify questions if necessary.

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