Attitudes towards a Socially Responsible Brand: Effects of Product Type, Anticipated Guilt, and The Role of Gender Identity

Umut KUBAT[1]

Abstract

This paper examines the relationships among product type, anticipated guilt, and gender identity in pro-social behavior. More specifically, the aim of this research is to examine the effect of product type (utilitarian vs. hedonic) on brand evaluations for a socially responsible brand and to examine the moderating roles of gender identity (femininity and masculinity), and anticipated feelings of guilt in this relationship. The findings from an experimental study show that attitudes towards a socially responsible brand are dependent on product type, anticipated feelings of guilt, and gender traits. It is found that when consumers do not expect high levels of guilt, then the gender identity does not moderate the effect of product type on brand evaluations. When consumers expect high levels of guilt, both feminine and masculine traits moderate the effect of product type.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility, Gender Identity, Anticipated Guilt, Hedonic Products

Sosyal Sorumluluğa Sahip Bir Markaya Yönelik Tutumlar: Ürün Tipinin Etkileri, Beklenen Suçluluk Duygusu ve Cinsiyet Kimliğinin Rolü

Öz

Bu makale toplum yanlısı davranışlarda ürün tipi, beklenen suçluluk duygusu ve cinsiyet kimliği arasındaki ilişkileri incelemektedir. Daha belirgin olarak, bu araştırmanın amacı, ürün tipinin (faydacı-hedonik) sosyal yönden sorumlu bir marka için marka değerlendirmelerine etkisini ve cinsiyet kimliği (kadınsılık ve erkeksilik) ile beklenen suçluluk duygusunun bu ilişkideki düzenleyici rolünü incelemektir. Deneysel bir çalışmanın sonuçları, sosyal sorumlu markaya karşı tutumların hem ürün tipi ile hem de beklenen suçluluk duygusu ve kadınsılık, erkeksilik gibi bireysel özelliklere bağlı olduğunu göstermektedir. Tüketiciler yüksek düzeyde suçluluk hisleri beklemiyorlarsa cinsiyet kimliği, ürün tipinin marka değerlendirmelerine etkisinde düzenleyici rol oynamadığı belirlenmiştir. Tüketiciler yüksek düzeyde suçluluk hisleri bekliyorlarsa, hem kadınsılık hem de erkeksilik karakterleri ürün tipinin etkisini düzenlediği tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kurumsal Sosyal Sorumluluk, Cinsiyet Kimliği, Beklenen Suçluluk Duygusu, Hedonik Ürünler, Faydacı Ürünler

Introduction

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) refers to the obligations of the firm to society (Smith, 2003). CSR is becoming increasingly important in the corporate world. CSR activities range from donations to non-profit organizations, employee volunteerism, cause-related marketing to some other innovative programs. Social responsibility perceptions affect the image of brands and firms, the propensity of consumers to buy brands, and the financial performance of firms (Luo and Bhattacharya 2006). When the company has a good CSR reputation, consumers will have

increased loyalty (Du et al., 2007), and be willing to pay premium prices (Creyer and Ross, 1996). A few researchers also suggested that there is a positive effect of a company's CSR activities and consumers' attitudes towards the company or its brands and products such as brand evaluations (Brown and Dacin, 1997; Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001). Thus, this research will focus on brand evaluations (i.e. brand liking) as a response to CSR activities of a company.

Studies showed that the effect of CSR activities on company / brand evaluations may be moderated by other factors. One of such factors is the congruency of the CSR activity and the company products (i.e. congruence theory). Consumers evaluate the company more favorably when a CSR activity is relevant to the company's existing products (Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001). Another research revealed that this effect depends on the type of the product. In fact, consumers are more likely to choose a hedonic product, offering a donation with a complementary-fit cause. In contrast, individuals tend to prefer a utilitarian product with a consistent-fit cause (Chang and Liu, 2012). Strahilevitz (1999) showed that incentives such as cause-related marketing (CRM) are more effective in promoting frivolous products than promoting practical products. Subrahmanyan's (2004) findings were contrasting, this study found that Singaporeans preferred to buy brands for practical rather than hedonic products. The inconsistency in findings may arise from cultural differences or there may be some hidden moderators such as personal characteristics causing the inconsistency.

By supporting a socially responsible company, consumers may also engage in a prosocial behavior by helping others or supporting a cause through the company's actions. Prosocial behavior can be motivated by numerous reasons. There are three main approaches examining the motivations of prosocial behavior. The first line of research is based on a cost/benefits approach, the second line of research deals with moral and normative considerations. Finally, the third stream of research examines affective motivations (Elgaaied, 2012). One of such motivations is anticipatory guilt which may induce prosocial behavior (Basil et al.,

2008; Chang, 2011; Elgaaied, 2012; Peloza et al., 2013). Anticipated guilt is a personal characteristic, and the tendency to feel guilt in a definite situation varies. Several researchers examined the relationship between product type and guilt in prosocial behavior (e.g. Chang, 2011; Khan and Dhar, 2006; Peloza et al., 2013). Though, some of the studies were not focused on anticipated guilt, but guilt as an appeal (e.g. Chang, 2011). When anticipated guilt is high, people behave more ethical. Prior research has shown that the decision to purchase hedonic goods is often associated with guilt, and one way of mitigating guilt associated with hedonic purchases is performing altruistic behavior (e.g. Khan and Dhar, 2006). That's why often CRM works better with hedonic products (Chang, 2011; Strahilevitz and Myers, 1998). Previous research indicated that anticipated guilt feelings have an effect in ethical consumerism. According to Harper and Makatouni (2002), being an ethical consumer means buying products which are ethically produced and/or not harmful to the environment. In this regard, Peloza and colleagues (2013) examined the role of self-accountability in influencing preferences for ethical products. They found that consumers exhibit a preference for products using ethical appeals over products using self-benefit appeals (i.e. hedonic) when self-accountability is activated. They also found that this effect is driven by the desire to avoid anticipated guilt. Based on the above mentioned literature, this study will investigate the moderating role of anticipatory guilt in relationship between the product type and brand evaluations for a socially responsible brand.

Another stream of research investigated the effects of gender in prosocial behavior which is found to affect consumer responses to CSR actions. However, studies examining the effect of gender yielded mixed results. For instance, in some studies females had more ethical behavior than males (e.g. Ross et al., 1992; Trimble and Rifon, 2006); but, some others found no difference in ethical behavior between females and males (Robin and Hunt, 1997; Vassilikopoulou et al., 2005). One of the reasons of these inconsistent findings is anticipated to be the psychological effects of gender. Therefore, it can be stated that gender identity (i.e.

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femininity and masculinity) may have an impact on the relationship between consumer responses and CSR practices. Thus, this paper focuses on the gender identity, a personal characteristic, instead of the biological gender.

The current study attempts to clarify why previous aforementioned research has yielded inconsistent findings. The study builds upon the previous literature by reconciling the inconsistent findings from product type, anticipated guilt, and gender identity in prosocial behavior. The aim of this study is to examine the joint influence of product type, anticipatory feelings of guilt, and gender identity in responses to the CSR activities. The findings are synthesized into a moderated moderation model of brand evaluations (i.e. brand liking), which provides a way of understanding the previous studies within their theoretical contexts. This research also contributes to the theory by specifically identifying the boundary conditions for the influence of product type on responses to CSR initiatives measured as brand liking. In sum, findings of the study serve to understand when and how product type has an effect on consumers' responses to CSR activities by focusing on two personal characteristics: anticipatory feelings of guilt and gender identity. The following section provides relevant theoretical background on the relationship among gender identity, product type and anticipated guilt relations in prosocial behavior, then the hypotheses of the study are given. Next, the research design and the experimental process are presented. Then, the data and results are reported. The paper concludes with a brief summary, discussion, and the implications for marketers and researchers.

Theoretical Background

Product type

Previous researchers have evaluated products predominantly in two categories as hedonic or utilitarian. Hedonic or pleasure-oriented consumption is motivated mainly by the desire for sensual pleasure, fantasy, and fun (e.g. chocolate, movie tickets). Purchase decision of such products are affectively driven (Strahilevitz, 1999). Utilitarian

consumption is motivated by the desire to fill a basic need (e.g. toilet paper, vacuum cleaners). Purchase decision of these products are cognitively driven (Strahilevitz, 1999).

Consumers benefit from both utilitarian and hedonic consumption. Utilitarian products are effective, helpful, functional, necessary, and practical, whereas hedonic products are fun, exciting, delightful, thrilling, and enjoyable (Dhar and Wertenbroch, 2000).

Research revealed that there is a link between product type and prosocial behavior and researchers have tried to identify moderating factors between the product type and prosocial behavior. Study of Chang and Liu (2012) revealed that consumers are more likely to choose a hedonic product offering a donation with a complementary-fit cause. In contrast, individuals tend to prefer a utilitarian product with a consistent-fit cause.

Peloza, et al. (2013) examined the role of self-accountability in influencing preferences for ethical products. They found that consumers exhibit a preference for products using ethical appeals over products using self-benefit appeals (i.e. hedonic) when self-accountability is activated. They also found that this effect is driven by the desire to avoid anticipated guilt. The following section gives brief information on anticipatory feelings of guilt.

Anticipatory feelings of guilt

Guilt is an aroused form of emotional distress that is distinct from fear and anger, and based on the possibility that one may be in the wrong (Baumeister et al., 1994). In general, guilt has been identified as a moral emotion linked to the welfare of other people (Eisenberg, 2000). As such, guilt is typically viewed as involving concern for moral standards or harm done to others (Tangney and Dearing, 2002).

Guilt appears to be an important emotion in consumer behavior. Consumers are likely to anticipate the guilt feelings they would experience if they would engage in any unethical act (Marks and Mayo, 1991). If people confront with an ethically questionable situation, they will anticipate

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post-decisional guilt feelings and take them into account when making decisions. People differ in their tendency to feel guilt, resulting in different behaviors for people with a high (vs. low) tendency for guilt (Basil et al., 2008). Thus, anticipated guilt is an individual characteristic. Previous research has found that anticipated guilt can be an antecedent to prosocial behavior such as purchase of ethical products or recycling behavior (Chang, 2011; Elgaaied, 2012; Peloza et al., 2013). Basil et al. (2008) showed that individuals with a higher tendency to feel guilty are more likely to volunteer and have higher charitable donation intentions (Basil et al., 2008). As said before, some types of products are related with anticipated feelings of guilt. The next section reviews the literature on product type, anticipated guilt and prosocial behavior, and provides the rationale for the research.

Product type and guilt relations

Several researchers examined the relations between product type and guilt in prosocial behavior (e.g. Chang, 2011; Khan and Dhar, 2006; Peloza et al., 2013). Prior research has shown that purchasing hedonic products may sometimes bring on feelings of guilt before, during, or after consumption, and this guilt may diminish the pleasure of consumption (Strahilevitz, 1999). Guilt is usually not associated with purchasing utilitarian products (Giner-Sorolla, 2001). Thus, hedonic purchase decisions are often more difficult than utilitarian ones. If the level of anticipatory guilt induced by contemplating hedonic consumption is strong, the consumers will be less likely to buy hedonic products. As Ramanathan and Williams (2007) indicated, people showing stable or increasing positive hedonic emotions, such as happiness, and decreasing negative emotions, such as guilt, are more likely to choose hedonic snacks over healthy ones.

One way of mitigating guilt associated with hedonic purchases is performing altruistic behavior (Khan and Dhar, 2006). Khan and Dhar (2006) found that people who imagined engaging in an altruistic behavior prior to choosing between a necessity and a luxury were more likely to select the more luxurious option because they felt approved to

do so. Strahilevitz's (1999) study supports this argument. Strahilevitz (1999) noted that CRM is more effective when it is applied to frivolous products rather than practical products with large donations, but with small donations there are no differences between the two types of brands. Their explanation was that the donation's ability to calm the feeling of guilt produced as a result of a frivolous product purchase. Zemack-Rugar et al. (2016) proposed a compensatory process, in which pairing a product with a charitable donation can be used to launder consumption guilt; the alleviation of guilt liberates consumers to engage in hedonic consumption guilt-free. Subrahmanyan's (2004) findings were contrasting, this study found that Singaporeans preferred to buy cause-linked brands for practical rather than hedonic products. This finding is attributed to the differences in values between Western and Eastern culture. Another significant element in prosocial behavior is gender. The following section gives brief information on gender identity presents its role in prosocial behavior thus in responses to CSR.

Gender identity

Gender identity is one of the most basic and powerful components comprising the person's personality and others' perceptions about who the person is (Bem, 1974). Biological segmentation of gender ignores different psychological orientations within one gender (Fischer and Arnold, 1994). According to the psychological conceptualization of gender, there are two traits coexisting in varying degrees within the same individual, these are femininity and masculinity (Bem, 1974; Spence, 1985). Individuals, independent of their biological gender may display different degrees of feminine and masculine traits. For instance, a woman may have both high feminine and masculine traits or a man can have low feminine and low masculine traits. Feminine gender identity is defined by traits such as expressiveness and being emotional; masculine identity is defined by traits such as independence and activity (Bem, 1974).

The role of gender in attitudes towards ethics and corporate social responsibility (CSR) was examined by several researchers. A few

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studies report that females tend to exhibit more ethical intentions, while other studies found mixed or non-significant results concerning gender effect. Singhapakdi, Rao, and Vitell (1996) found that female marketing professionals were more likely to have ethical intentions than their male counterparts, but in terms of ethical sensitivity, Robin and Hunt (1997) found no significant differences between males and females.

Ross and colleagues (1992) showed that consumers' attitudes towards companies that engage in cause-related marketing (CRM) are perceived more favorably by women than by men. Trimble and Rifon's (2006) study was also supporting these results. They found that women had more favorable attitudes toward the corporate sponsor compared to men. In Hyllegard et al.'s (2011) study, gender did not influence attitudes towards brand, but did predict purchase intentions within the context of CRM. Haski-Leventhal, Roza, and Meijs (2015) found differences between females and males in some aspects of CSR, in some other aspects there were no significant differences. Other findings suggest that gender does not effect responses to CRM activities. For instance, Vassilikopoulou et al. (2005) found that gender was not an important factor discriminating attitudes towards CSR. As seen in previous literature, studies on gender and CSR responses yielded inconsistent results. One of the reasons of these inconsistent findings is anticipated to be the psychological aspects of gender. Therefore, it is worth examining the relations by femininity and masculinity scores rather than examining by biological gender. As Winterich, Mittal, and Ross (2009) indicated "roles, attributes, and attitudinal differences attributed to gender are in fact, manifestations of gender identity" (Winterich et al., 2009, p.200). Thus, this paper examines the effects of femininity and masculinity on attitudes toward a brand that is positioned as socially responsible.

Research suggests that the effect of gender identity (feminine, masculine) in prosocial behavior is moderated by some factors or that gender identity moderates the effect of some other variables. For instance, Winterich, Mittal, and Ross (2009) show that moral identity importance tends to increase donations to out-groups and not to in-groups. This result is

valid for consumers with a feminine gender identity. For consumers with a masculine gender identity, moral identity importance increases donations to the in-group, but not the out-group. Kemp, Kennet-Hensel, and Kees (2013) examined the impact of message type and gender identity on intentions to give. The researchers found that participants with a predominantly masculine identity had higher giving intentions in the pride condition compared to the sympathy condition. In the sympathy condition, individuals scoring high on femininity traits expressed greater behavioral intentions to give compared to those scoring high on masculinity.

Rationale for the Hypotheses

The current study examines attitudes towards a beverage brand engaging in CSR for two types of products: natural (healthful) and hedonic. Products are positioned either as healthful or hedonic because healthfulness or natural content and sensory appeal (taste) are among the most influential food choice motivations (Steptoe, Pollard, and Wardle, 1995). In addition, both type of products are self-benefit products, but the benefit derived is different. Specifically, hedonic gratification is derived from the product's innate affective and sensory attributes; the hedonic experience is rewarding in and of itself, with no further goal or consequence necessary for satisfaction (Botti and McGill, 2011). By contrast, healthy foods are consumed for more utilitarian consequences, such as promoting better nutritional health; utilitarian consumption is more extrinsically motivated because it is not the reward in and of itself but rather an intermediate step toward achieving a higher-end goal (Botti and McGill, 2011).

According to the CSR framework in the food supply chain developed by Maloni and Brown (2006), health is one of the CSR applications in the food industry. Jones, Comfort, and Hillier (2005) indicated that food retailers provided healthful foods and nutrition information as healthy eating CSR initiatives. Lee and colleagues (2014) found that customers perceive restaurants to be socially responsible when they are

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provided with healthful foods and nutrition information; consequently, customers have favorable attitude toward and high willingness to visit restaurants providing healthful foods and nutrition information. Thus, providing healthful products should fit better with the image of a socially responsible company which would in turn result with more favorable attitudes toward the brand. Without considering the effects of anticipated guilt, and gender identity, consumers may have more favorable attitudes towards the brand in the healthful product condition compared to the hedonic product condition. Based on affect-based complementarity (Strahilevitz and Myers, 1998), consumers may have more favorable attitudes towards the brand in the hedonic product condition compared to the healthful product condition.

A stream of previous research supported the argument that females are more sensitive to CSR initiatives (Ross et al., 1992; Singhapakdi et al., 1996; Trimble and Rifon, 2006). Then, high femininity and low masculinity should boost brand liking levels both for the utilitarian and hedonic product ads. A research by Chang (2006), revealed that individuals high in masculinity rely more on product function beliefs when evaluating advertised brands. Then, high masculinity and low femininity should led to a tendency towards the utilitarian product which results in higher brand liking for the product positioned as utilitarian.

This research proposes that these effects between product type and gender identity are dependent on feelings of anticipated guilt. When anticipated feelings of guilt is low, there will be no need to compensate for the negative effects of guilt, then both feminine and masculine consumers may have similar levels of brand liking due to affect-based complementarity and product-company image fit. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H_1: When consumers anticipate lower levels of guilt, gender identity will not moderate the effect of product type on brand liking.

When anticipated guilt is high, consumers will try to mitigate the negative emotion through ethical behavior. Thus, it is expected that:

H_2: When consumers anticipate higher levels of guilt, gender identity will moderate the effect of product type on brand liking, such that:

H_{2a}: For consumers having a more feminine identity, or a less masculine identity, brand liking will not be different between the utilitarian and hedonic product conditions.

H_{2b}: For consumers having a less feminine identity, or a more masculine identity, brand liking will be higher for the utilitarian product condition, compared to the hedonic product condition.

Several researchers indicated that brand familiarity has an effect on brand attitudes (e.g. Dahlén and Lange, 2004; Dawar and Lei, 2009; Verhellen et al. 2016) therefore brand familiarity will be added as a covariate in the analyses. Research has also shown that attitudes toward products or product categories drive brand attitudes (Percy and Rosenbaum-Elliott, 2016, p. 193-194; Posavac et al., 2014) to control its effect, product attitude will also be added as a covariate.

Method

Participants

Participants were 128 undergraduate students. Participants who failed to pass the 2 attention check questions (e.g. please select disagree for this question) were eliminated from the study (N = 45). A final sample of 83 respondents were included in the preceeding analyses to test the relations. Of final participants, 37 were male and 41 participants were female, 5 participants did not indicate their gender. Mean age was 21.57, SD = 3.70.

Design and Procedure

The study employed a (2x2x2) mixed design where product type (utilitarian vs. hedonic) was a manipulated between subjects factor, gender identity (femininity and masculinity) and anticipated guilt (low vs. high) were measured variables. Brand liking was the key dependent variable. The brand was positioned on the basis of either utilitarian

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(health related) or hedonic (sensory related) attributes. Attitudes toward the product, processing fluency of the ads, attitudes toward company donations, and brand-CSR activity fit were also measured.

Hair et al. (2010) recommended 20 samples per each cell group to ensure adequate statistical power. Since the study has one factor (i.e. product type) with two levels, sample size of 83 adheres to the requirements.

Participants first responded to the questions measuring gender identity. Shortened form of BEM Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974) drawn from Choi, Fuqua, and Newman (2009) was used to measure feminine and masculine traits. Participants indicated how well the gender traits describe themselves on a 7-point scale (1= strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). Factor analysis was used in order to ensure that items correctly load on to femininity and masculinity. Principal component analysis was applied followed by Varimax rotation. Based on this analysis, 3 items measuring femininity and 3 items measuring masculinity were removed due to low communalities or cross-loadings. Final analysis revealed 2 factors with eigenvalues over 1. KMO measure of sampling adequacy was .74; Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($\chi2 = 402.61$, df $= 66$, $p = .000$) indicating the factor model was appropriate. The total variance explained by both factors was 62 %. Using BSRI, individuals can be categorized into four different gender roles according to the strength of belief in their masculine (M) and feminine attributes (F): Feminine (high F, low M), masculine (high M, low F), androgynous (high M, high F), and undifferentiated (low M, low F). In this research, separate masculinity and femininity scores are produced by averaging responses across scale items, resulting in two continuous variables for use in regression. The results of the reliability analysis indicated that the scale was reliable ($M_{feminine} = 5.89$, SD $= .62$, $\alpha = .72$; $M_{masculine} = 5.33$, SD $= .78$, $\alpha = .70$).

A common fruit juice brand was used in the study. Participants indicated, on 5-point scales (1 = not at all – 5 = very familiar), their familiarity with the brand which is used as a covariate in the analyses. All participants read brief information regarding the social responsibility activities of the company.

"Last year Brand A breeded 400.000 fruit plants certified by Ministry of Agriculture and distributed these plants to the farmers without any profit. Brand A also donated 7500 plants (young trees) to the TEMA Foundation. By these services Brand A contributes to the Turkish Agriculture, provides farmers with high qualified plants, and helps to prevent soil erosion. Do not forget that trees absorb CO_2, which is harmful to the environment,and make an active contribution to the conservation of biodiversity, plant, and animal habitat."

After reading the information, participants were randomly provided with one of the two advertisements for the brand. In one condition, the product was positioned as healthful; in the other condition, it was positioned as tasty. Orange juice was used as the focal product because it can be perceived as healthy or tasty.

In order to check if both ads were processed fluently, participants were asked whether the ad they were exposed was easy/difficult to understand, easy/difficult to imagine, required a little effort/required much effort (α= .77). This scale was adapted from Fang, Singh, and Ahluwalia (2007). Independent samples t-test analysis revealed that there were no differences in processing fluency of the utilitarian and hedonic ads ($M_{utilitarian}$ = 2.07, $M_{hedonic}$ = 2.42, $t(81)$ = 1.23, p > .1). Then, the participants indicated their brand liking using a 3 item scale (Swaminathan, Page, and Gurhan-Canli, 2007). The answers were provided along a 7-point bi-polar scale (bad/good, unfavorable/favorable, negative/positive; α = .88). Higher numbers represented more positive attitudes toward the brand. Attitudes toward the advertised product were measured in a similar way (bad/good, unfavorable/favorable, negative/positive; α = .93).

Anticipated feelings of guilt were measured using 3 items drawn from Giner-Sorolla (2001) and Ramanathan and Williams (2007). Thinking that you haven't preferred to purchase the advertised product, but some other juice, how much guilt/regret/shame would you feel? (5-point scale, 1 = none at all, 5 = a great deal; α = .90).

Next, CSR activity-brand fit was assessed with items adapted from Simmons and Becker-Olsen (2006): Dissimilar/similar, low fit/high

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fit, does not make any sense/makes sense ($\alpha = .72$; $M_{utilitarian} = 5.77$, $M_{hedonic} = 5.79$, $t(81) = .09$). To control for the CSR activity importance, participants were required to reply to 2 questions: how important do you think that plant donations are important / beneficial to the society? ($1=$ not at all - 5 = extremely; M = 4.37, SD = .78, $\alpha = .79$, Spearman's Rho = .72). There were no differences between the two ad conditions in perceived importance of the company CSR acitivity ($M_{utilitarian} = 4.32$, $M_{hedonic} = 4.44$, $t(81) = .71$, $p > .1$). Then, participants indicated their gender and age.

An open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire served as a suspicion probe to assess if respondents could guess the aim of the study. None of the participants could guess the purpose of the study.

Results

Multivariate regression analyses were performed to test the hypotheses. The first model included femininity, anticipated guilt, the ad condition, and all the possible interactions. Brand familiarity and attitudes towards the product in the ad (i.e.) were added as covariates. To prevent multicollinearity issues, the independent variables were mean centered before entering into analysis as suggested by Aiken and West (1991). Results revealed that the overall model was significant ($R^2 = .32$, $F = 3.51$, $p < .001$). As expected, the product type x anticipated guilt x femininity interaction was significant in explaining brand evaluations ($\beta = .66$, $t(71) = 1.99$, SE = .33, $p < .05$). There was a significant main effect of product type ($\beta = .47$, $t(71) = 2.08$, SE = .23, $p < .05$), and a marginally significant effect of anticipated feelings of guilt ($\beta = .27$, $t(71) = 1.89$, SE = .14, $p < .1$). The effects of brand familiarity ($\beta = .24$, $t(71) = 2.05$, SE = .12, $p < .05$) and attitudes towards the product ($\beta = .23$, $t(71) = 2.57$, SE = .09, $p < .05$) were also significant. The interaction was investigated using Simple Slopes analysis at 1 SD above and 1 SD below the means of moderators. The results are presented in Figures 1 and 2.
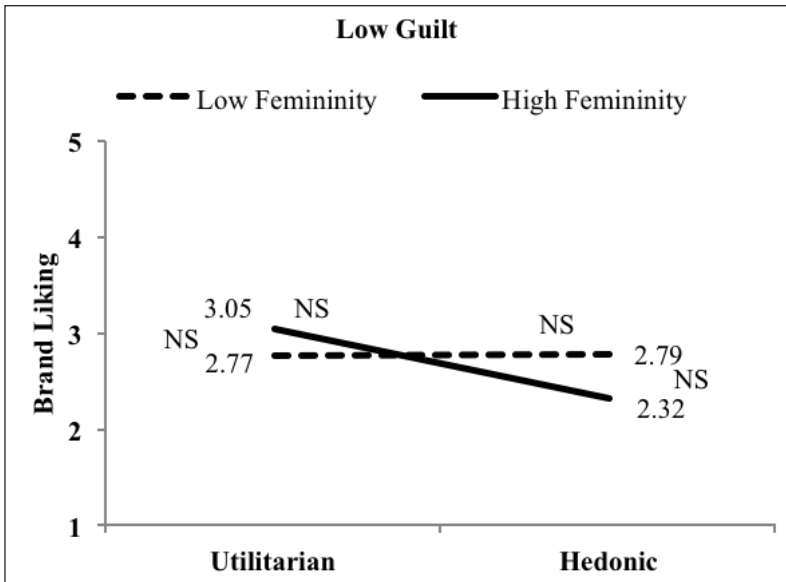
Figure 1. Effects of Product Type and Femininity on Brand Liking
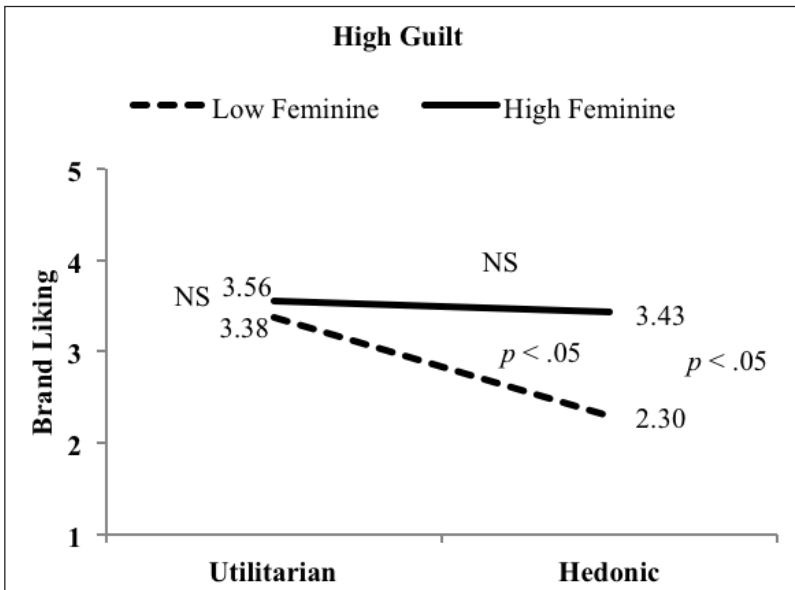when Anticipated Guilt is Low

Figure 2. Effects of Product Type and Femininity on Brand liking when
Anticipated Guilt is High

The second model included masculinity, anticipated guilt, the ad condition, and all the possible interactions. Brand familiarity and attitudes towards the product in the ad (i.e.) were added as covariates. The independent variables were mean centered before entering into analysis. Results revealed that the overall model was significant ($R^2 = .31$, $F = 3.32$, $p < .005$). The interaction of product type, anticipated guilt and masculinity was significant in explaining attitudes towards the brand ($\beta = .88$, $t(71) = 2.55$, $SE = .35$, $p < .05$). There was a marginally significant effect of anticipated feelings of guilt ($\beta = .26$, $t(71) = 1.73$, $SE = .15$, $p < .1$). The effect of brand familiarity ($\beta = .23$, $t(71) = 1.92$, $SE = .12$, $p < .1$) was also marginally significant and the effect of product attitudes was significant ($\beta = .25$, $t(71) = 3.00$, $SE = .08$, $p < .005$). The interaction was explored using simple slopes analysis at 1 SD above and 1 SD below the means of moderators. The results can be seen in Figures 3 and 4.
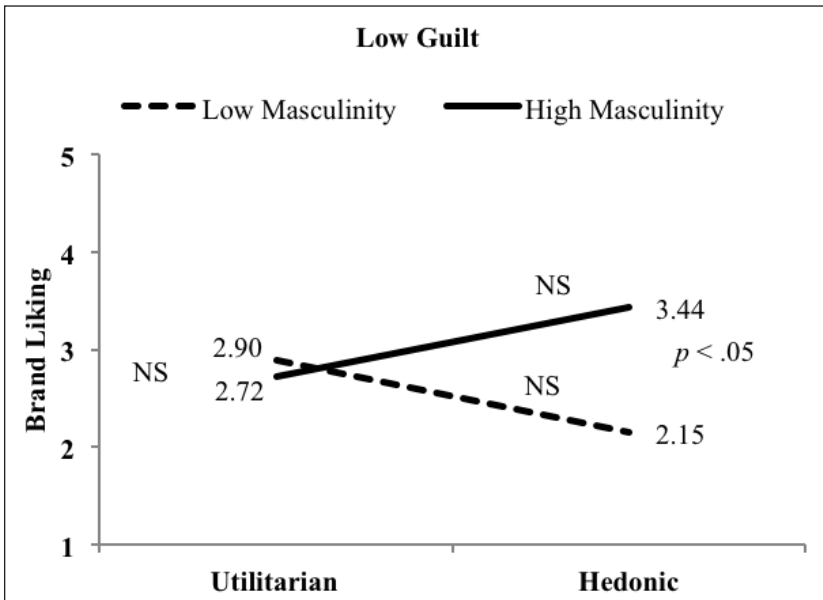

Figure 3. Effects of Product Type and Masculinity on Brand Liking
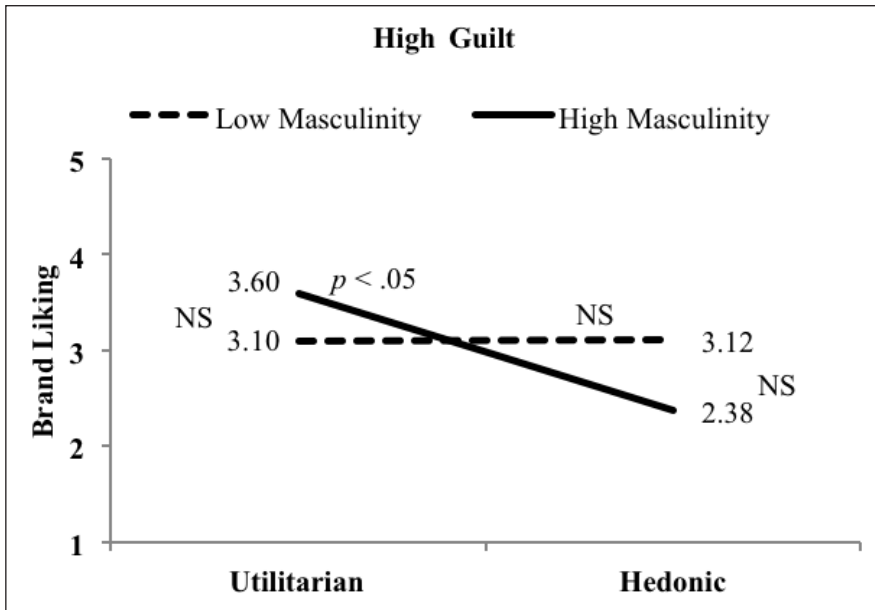when Anticipated Guilt is Low

Figure 4. Effects of Product Type and Masculinity on Brand Liking
when Anticipated Guilt is High

The results supported H1 and H2. As seen on Figure 1 and Figure 3, when consumers anticipate lower levels of guilt, gender identity does not moderate the effect of product type on brand liking. When consumers anticipate higher levels of guilt, gender identity moderates the effect product type on brand liking. As Figure 2 shows, product type affects the brand evaluations, and this effect is moderated by femininity trait such that participants lower in femininity had higher brand evaluations in the utilitarian product condition compared to the hedonic product condition ($M_{Utilitarian}$ = 3.38, $M_{Hedonic}$ = 2.30, $t(71) = 2.31$, $p < .05$). As displayed on Figure 4, when consumers anticipate higher levels of guilt, the effect of product type on brand evaluations is moderated by masculinity trait such that participants high in masculinity had higher brand evaluations in the utilitarian product condition compared to the hedonic product condition ($M_{Utilitarian}$ = 3.60, MHedonic = 2.38, $t(71) = 2.72$, $p < .01$). However, no significant effects emerged for participants high in femininity (see Fig.

2) or participants low in masculinity (see Fig. 4). These results supported
H2a and H2b. The following table summarizes the results of hypothesis
tests.

Table 1: Hypotheses Summary Table

Hypothesis No	Hypothesis	Conclusion
H1	When consumers anticipate lower levels of guilt, gender identity will not moderate the effect of product type on brand liking.	Supported
H2	When consumers anticipate higher levels of guilt, gender identity will moderate the effect of product type on brand liking.	Supported
H2a	For consumers having a more feminine identity, or a less masculine identity, brand liking will not be different between the utilitarian and hedonic product conditions.	Supported
H2b	For consumers having a less feminine identity, or a more masculine identity, brand liking will be higher for the utilitarian product condition, compared to the hedonic product condition.	Supported

According to Johnson and Neyman (1936), the study of an interaction
between a categorical variable and one or more continuous variables
calls for a specific form of analysis which is named by Spiller et al.
(2013) as Floodlight analysis. This analysis illuminates the entire range
of significant and non-significant data points when meaningful break-
points do not exist (Spiller et al., 2013). In this research, Process macro
(Model 3; Hayes, 2012) was used to perform floodlight analysis. Testing
Model 3 using Process macro in SPSS supported moderated moderation.
The product type x femininity x anticipated guilt interaction was
significant (β = .66, t = 1.98, SE = .33, p < .05, CI: [.10, 1.21]). The
results of floodlight analysis revealed that interaction effect of product
type and femininity is significant at guilt levels above 4.07 (β = 1.03, t
= 1.66, SE = .63, p < .05, CI: [0.01, 2.11]). In a similar way, the product
type x masculinity x anticipated guilt interaction was also significant (β

= .88, t = 2.55, SE = .35, p < .05, CI: [-1.57, -.19]). The results testing the interaction effect of product type and masculinity showed that the effect is significant at guilt levels above 4.28 (β = 1.53, t = 1.99, SE = .77, p < .05, CI: [-3.06, -0.001]). The moderated moderation model is displayed on Figure 5.
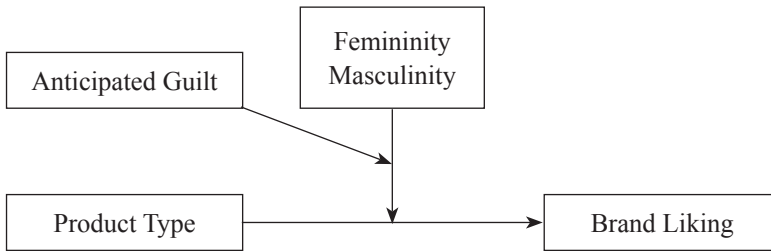

Figure 5. Moderated Moderation Model

To examine the within brand differences, a spotlight analysis is performed across the levels of femininity and masculinity (Aiken and West 1991; Fitzsimons, 2008). The results of spotlight analysis showed that when expected guilt is low, there was no significant difference in brand evaluations for both the utilitarian ($M_{High\ Feminine}$ = 3.05 , $M_{Low\ Feminine}$ = 2.77, t(71) = .68, p > .1) and hedonic product ad conditions ($M_{High\ Feminine}$ = 2.32, $M_{Low\ Feminine}$ = 2.79, t(71) = 1.01, p > .1) across low and high levels of femininity (See Fig. 1). When expected guilt is high, for the hedonic product ad condition, those who scored high on femininity evaluated the brand more favorably than those who scored low in femininity ($M_{High\ Feminine}$ = 3.43, $M_{Low\ Feminine}$ = 2.30, t(71) = 2.49, p < .05), but for the utilitarian brand there was no significant difference in brand evaluations across levels of femininity ($M_{High\ Feminine}$ = 3.56, $M_{Low\ Feminine}$ = 3.38 , t(71) = .39, p > .1) (See Fig. 2).

When expected guilt is low, for the hedonic product ad condition, those who scored high on masculinity evaluated the brand more favorably than those who scored low in masculinity ($M_{High\ Masculine}$ = 3.44, $M_{Low\ Masculine}$ = 2.15, t(71) = 2.10, p < .05), but for the utilitarian brand there was no

significant difference in brand evaluations across levels of masculinity ($M_{\text{High Masculine}}$ = 2.72, $M_{\text{Low Masculine}}$ = 2.90, t(71) = .48, p > .1) (See Fig 3). When expected guilt is high, there was no significant difference in brand evaluations for both the utilitarian ($M_{\text{High Masculine}}$ = 3.60, $M_{\text{Low Masculine}}$ = 3.10, t(71) = .75, p > .1) and hedonic product ad conditions ($M_{\text{High Masculine}}$ = 2.38, $M_{\text{Low Masculine}}$ = 3.12, t(71) = 1.41, p > .1) across low and high levels of masculinity (See Fig. 4).

General Discussion and Conclusion

The current experimental study tried to identify the relations between product type, anticipated guilt, and gender identity in prosocial behavior. More specifically, the aim of this research was to examine the effect of product type (utilitarian vs. hedonic) on brand evaluations for a socially responsible brand and to examine the moderating roles of gender identity (femininity and masculinity), and anticipated feelings of guilt in this relation.

The findings show that brand liking for a socially responsible brand is related with both product type, but also with individual characteristics such as anticipatory guilt feelings and gender traits of femininity and masculinity. The effects of gender traits are dependent on the guilt feelings. When consumers do not expect high levels of guilt, then gender identity does not moderate the effect of product type on brand evaluations. When consumers expect high levels of guilt, both feminine and masculine traits moderate the effect of product type. Consumers who score more in feminine traits or those score low in masculine traits do not differentiate between utilitarian or hedonic product advertisements, when evaluating the brand. For consumers who score low in femininity or those who score high on masculinity, brand liking is higher in the utilitarian product ad condition compared to the hedonic product ad condition.

The results of the study do not exactly support the previous findings that women are more CSR oriented than men (Ross et al., 1992; Singhapakdi et al., 1996; Trimble and Rifon, 2006). Instead, the study shows that under certain conditions, high feminine traits may lead consumers to

develop favorable attitudes towards the SR brand. The data shows that participants high in feminine traits had high scores in brand liking for both the utilitarian and hedonic products when they anticipated high levels of guilt. Specifically for the hedonic product, femininity had a positive effect on brand evaluations when anticipatory guilt level is high. In sum, high femininity combined with high feelings of guilt leads to favorable attitudes towards a SR brand. This result is also supportive of previous studies showing that anticipated guilt can be an antecedent to prosocial behavior (Basil et al. 2008; Chang, 2011; Elgaaied, 2012; Peloza et al., 2013).

The findings show that masculine traits may also have a positive effect on brand evaluations depending on the product type and anticipatory guilt level. Among the participants who anticipated low levels of guilt, masculinity had a positive effect on brand evaluations for the hedonic product. However, when guilt feelings were high, masculinity lead to a tendency for the utilitarian brand. Same pattern is observed for participants low in feminine traits. A masculine person is characterized by having high masculine and low feminine traits. Thus, the results show that a masculine person experiencing high guilt feelings should have more favorable evaluations towards a socially responsible brand if exposed to an ad for a utilitarian product rather than a hedonic product. This finding is in line with Chang (2006), who found that individuals high in masculinity rely more on product function beliefs when evaluating advertised brands. Chang (2006) explains this effect by "ad-self congruency" theory. Self-congruency theory suggests that individuals generally favor brands with "personalities" that match their own (Sirgy, 1982). Based on this theory, the characteristics of utilitarian products are more congruent with masculine traits, such as instrumentality, and that masculinity may be more applicable when people are processing information regarding utilitarian products. The current research identified a boundary condition for this effect that is anticipatory feelings of guilt. Thus, under high guilt conditions, "ad-self congruency" becomes prominent for masculine persons. When

participants who anticipated low levels of low guilt exposed to the hedonic product ad, having more masculine traits led to more favorable brand evaluations than those having less masculine traits. In this case, "affect-based complementarity" might have become prominent. "Affect based-complementarity" suggested by Strahilevitz and Myers (1998) proposes that "If the different sets of emotions generated by two distinct positive outcomes somehow complement each other, it is possible that the value created by bundling these two outcomes together might be greater than the value created by offering them separately. This suggests the possibility of affect-based complementarity." A meta-analysis by Whitley (1984) showed that masculinity is associated with less depression and better overall adjustment. Hence, the positive emotions ascribed to being masculine combined with the emotions generated by hedonic products appear to complement the feelings generated from prosocial behavior.

The current study offers both theoretical and practical value, as it addresses a need for a unified understanding of the role of different factors in consumers' responses to CSR initiatives which is reflected as brand liking. This study provides insight into how consumers with varying gender characteristics evaluate brands for different type of products and the key role of another personal characteristic, anticipatory guilt. The findings of the study may help practitioners in designing targeted promotional campaigns for various consumer segments. They should take into account the differences in consumer and product characteristics. For instance, a campaign for a hedonic product, targeting masculine persons should not use guilt appeals, but a utilitarian product seems to work better with guilt appeals for masculine persons. When targeting consumers having more feminine traits, guilt appeals may work for both utilitarian and hedonic products. In another aspect, guilt appeals combined with feminine appeals may provide better evaluations both for the utilitarian and hedonic products. In this way, CSR activities will provide better results. When an individual perceives manipulative intent on the part of the advertiser, the effects of guilt appeals may backfire (Cotte et al., 2005). Therefore, using moderate guilt appeals is suggested.

Limitations and Future Research

The findings raise important questions to address in future research. Future research should examine the pattern for other CSR initiatives which are not congruent with company products and image. Also, this study used self-benefit appeals in the ad, future research should repeat the experiment for others-benefit appeals. Although health attribute is not exactly an ethical attribute such as organic or environmentally friendly, health attribute might fit better fit CSR brand image. For this reason, different attributes should be included in the ad for the utilitarian product, or future research may use products that are utilitarian/ hedonic in nature. A non-student sample will help generalizing the findings. Besides, it would be interesting to explore how the findings may differ for other product categories.

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