Cultural values matter in shaping perceptions of an attractive employer brand

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Abstract

In competitive labor markets, organizations communicate Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to signal responsible behavior and attract applicants whose values align with their own. Since interpretations of advertising are shaped by cultural backgrounds, understanding how CSR recruitment messages are perceived across cultures is crucial. Drawing on signaling and person–organization fit theory, this study examines how potential employees from different cultures evaluate standardized CSR recruitment advertisements. It analyzes how perceived CSR influences employer brand attractiveness, with person–organization fit as a mediator, and how individual cultural values shape this relationship. Data were collected in three culturally diverse countries (India, n = 305; Germany, n = 396; USA, n = 375) using an environment-oriented CSR advertising stimulus. Findings show that while CSR appeals are evaluated positively across countries, cultural values moderate the relationship between perceived CSR and person–organization fit differently, suggesting international firms should tailor CSR recruitment messages to local values.

Keywords: Cross-cultural advertising, cultural perceptions, CSR advertising, CSR in recruiting, SDG goals, well-being at workplace