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Beyond association: How employees want to participate in their firms' corporate social performance

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Beyond Association: How Employees Want to Participate in Their Firms' Corporate Social Performance.

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Although many studies have found a positive relationship between corporate social performance and employer attractiveness, few have examined how different forms of responsibility might mediate that attraction, particularly when those social practices afford different degrees of employee participation. The current study undertook this line of inquiry by examining prospective employees' attraction to three common approaches to corporate social performance (CSP) that offer increasing levels of participation: donation, volunteerism, and operational integration. Unexpectedly, findings from an empirical investigation challenged the study's main hypothesis; that is, prospective employees were least attracted to firms that integrated their social and financial goals. Consequently, important implications and questions remain for both employers and business educators.

One of the greatest challenges organizations face involves attracting and retaining top employees, who increasingly look for jobs that allow them to make meaningful contributions to society. CNNMoney.com highlighted this trend: "When it comes to recruiting the Millennial Generation, it isn't only about salary … it's about community service. Young people entering the job market today want to work for companies that care about the world" (Luhby).

Many studies have found positive relationships between firms' corporate social performance (CSP) and their attraction to new employees (e.g., Backhaus et al.; Turban and Greening). Little research, however, has considered whether prospective employees find certain approaches to CSP more attractive than others. More specifically, one might question whether prospective employees are more attracted to CSP that offers them direct participation in their organizations' social practices versus CSP that merely provides an association (e.g., "My company donated to disaster relief"). This article presents the findings of an empirical study that aimed to identify prospective employees' attraction to three common approaches to CSP that offer increasing levels of employee participation: donation, volunteerism, and operational integration. Unexpectedly, the findings challenged the study's main hypothesis that prospective employees would choose to maximize participation through an integrated approach to CSP.

The Three Approaches to CSP

Wood defined CSP as "a business organization's configuration of principles of social responsibility, processes of social responsiveness, and policies, programs, and observable outcomes as they relate to the firm's societal relationships" (p. 693), thereby offering a picture of the business–society relationship that is supportive of the integration of social and economic goals. Similarly, reviews of the literature and business practice suggest that most if not all forms of corporate benevolence can be categorized as one of three approaches to CSP: donation, volunteerism, or operational integration (e.g., Sorenson et al.). Figure illustrates the relationships among the three approaches, as well as their respective paths to achieving corporate and societal goals.

Donation

Often termed corporate philanthropy, donation represents the common practice of businesses giving money or product to social causes (Campbell et al. ; Ricks and Williams). For instance, Holcomb et al. found that 80 percent of the top 10 hotel companies made charitable donations, and Mishra described that 44 percent of companies representing the world's top brands gave money for relief related to Hurricane Katrina. In 2001 alone, American firms donated over $9 billion in cash to charities (Cone et al. , p. 95). Not surprising, donation is broadly recognized in the literature as a major form of CSP (Boehm; Meijer et al. ; Peloza and Hassay). Furthermore, the potential for companies to improve financially via donations helps explain strategic philanthropy (Madden et al.; Saiia et al.), or the linking of "philanthropic strategy to a corporate objective" (Ricks and Williams, p. 149) by purposefully choosing social beneficiaries to enhance competitiveness (e.g., Bruch and Walter; Porter and Kramer; Smith).

However, since most firms do not approach donation strategically (Brammer et al.; Ricks and Williams) but rather give irregularly and reactively (Bruch and Walter; L'Etang) out of more purely altruistic motives (Burlingame and Frishkoff ; Campbell et al.), this article treats donation in its broader, nonstrategic form, which also represents the least administratively complex and participatory form of CSP. Even when approached strategically, decisions about donations are often made by relatively few people within an organization (Brammer et al.). Nonstrategic donation requires even less organizational coordination or direct consideration by rank-and-file personnel (Bruch and Walter).

Volunteerism

Volunteerism occurs when an organization enables its employees to take off work, with pay, in order to serve nonprofit organizations (Brudney and Gazley; Peloza and Hassay) that may be ones of the employees' own choice (Peloza and Hassay). A survey of 454 U.S. corporations found that 92 percent of the firms actively encouraged their employees to engage in volunteer work, and 68 percent paid their employees to volunteer on company time (Miller). Similarly, Brudney and Gazley discovered that the percentage of corporations reporting volunteer programs ranged from 55 percent to over 80 percent. The CSP literature often recognizes volunteerism as one of the most common forms of benevolence (Boehm; Lee and Chang; Peloza and), as well as one that benefits both employers and employees (Peloza and Hassay; Spence et al.).

Although strategic volunteerism exists (Elswick), nonstrategic volunteerism is much more the norm (Role of Small Business). For instance, Peloza and Hassay found that the fit between firms' objectives and social causes was not a significant factor in management decisions to support intraorganizational volunteerism. As such, this article treats nonstrategic volunteerism as the second approach to CSP which, compared with nonstrategic donation, is less common but generally more participatory and administratively complex. Volunteerism decisions often must be made by a broader cross-section of the organization, given that employees must elect to participate in volunteer efforts and sometimes select their nonprofit partners. In addition, by allowing employees time off work, the firm must accommodate volunteer-related absences, which requires more organizational effort and coordination. Likewise, employees' engagement in

a complex set of personal motives and actions necessitates at least short-term participation in their firm's CSP (Grant).

Operational Integration

Unlike donation and volunteerism, where corporate benevolence often occurs outside a firm's value chain, operational integration strategically aligns core business processes to achieve both corporate objectives and societal goals. In doing so, a firm benefits not only its primary stakeholders (e.g., owners, customers, employees, suppliers) but also secondary stakeholders (those upon which the organization does not directly depend for survival) (Maignan and Ferrell, p. 284). The notion of firms integrating their economic goals with social goals is not new; it has been described as sustainable business (Kristensen and Westlund; Larson et al.), social entrepreneurship (Dees; Massetti), and triple bottom line (Robins). Over a half century ago, Drucker encouraged organizations to integrate their social and economic goals by suggesting that business should "strive to make whatever is productive for our society, whatever strengthens it and advances its prosperity, a source of prosperity and profit for the enterprise" (p. 82). Likewise, Carroll's iconic four-faceted model of social responsibility suggested that firms could fulfill social and economic responsibilities concurrently. This theme of integrated social economic performance has continued to gain momentum over the years through research such as Anshen, Daneke and Lemak, Wartick and Cochran, Swanson, Carroll, Jackson and Nelson, Munilla and Miles, Porter and Kramer, Windsor, Colbert and Kurucz, and Jamali and Mirshak. Meanwhile, a wide variety of firms have provided real examples of how strategically planned business operations can also produce societal benefits. For instance, Proctor and Gamble developed an easy-to-use water purifier with the potential of saving thousands of children who die each day from lack of clean water (Jackson and Nelson , p. 3). F. C. Schaffer and Associates used its professional services to help develop Ethiopia's sugar industry (Hemphill , p. 346). Likewise, employee teams at 3M found solutions to pollution problems associated with the firm's production processes that also increased revenue and reduced costs (Daneke and Lemak, pp. 22–23).

Compared with donation and volunteerism, operational integration represents the most complex and participatory approach to CSP. To identify a feasible overlap between financial and social goals, to develop strategies to achieve those dual objectives, and to implement those plans demand creative thinking and institutional resolve at all levels of the organization. It is no small task for firms to align a material portion of their core business activities with specific social outcomes, particularly when the two sets of objectives appear to be at odds. For instance, a manufacturer focusing on environmental performance might consider how its production process can be both efficient and nonpolluting, how its product packaging can be both persuasive and recyclable, and how its transportations systems can be both fast and founded on renewable energy. Such assimilation of economic and social goals requires innovative and systematic planning, as well as the daily participation of all employees.

Scale Validation

Given the preceding support of donation, volunteerism, and operational integration as three main approaches to CSP with increasing levels of employee participation, the current study set out to

validate corresponding scales. To test hypotheses that each construct represented a discrete variable, the study employed an original web-based survey, which was completed by 398 individuals associated with three different Christian colleges located in the southeast, midwest, and northeast United States. Additional methodological details of the validation survey phase are presented in Appendices 1 and 2.

We constructed a structural equation model measurement model using Amos version 6.0 of spss (IBM Statistics, Armonk, NY). Because the initial analysis of all 30 CSP items did not produce a good fit of the measurement model, we employed confirmatory factor analysis to identify items whose removal might improve model fit, which led to the retention of five items for each of the CSP constructs. The new, streamlined measurement model produced a very good fit for the remaining 15 items, and no improvement came from further reductions . Appendix details these results as well as favorable reliability tests using Cronbach's alpha, which together suggested the validity of the three CSP constructs. Although many of the respondents shared a similar religious background, the survey items were descriptive in nature, not normative, making it unlikely that respondents' value orientations impacted an objective classification of CSP examples as donation, volunteerism, or integration. As such, the study proceeded to its primary focus: relative attraction of the three CSP approaches.

Factor Loadings for all 30 CSP Items

Component			
Variable	1	2	3
V-MNO-4	0.80	0.06	0.06
V-BCD-2	0.76	0.15	−0.04
V-BCD-3	0.71	0.23	0.04
V-QRS-1	0.68	0.01	0.03
V-PQR-5	0.62	0.00	0.13
V-HIJ-5	0.54	0.06	0.09
D-MNO-2	0.16	0.81	0.29
D-MNO-3	0.05	0.72	0.16
D-QRS-4	0.06	0.67	−0.03
D-BCD-5	0.19	0.62	0.05
D-WXY-2	0.11	0.50	0.07
D-EFG-3	−0.05	0.47	0.06
I-EFG-5	−0.03	0.08	0.71
I-PQR-3	0.04	0.15	0.70
I-BCD-4	0.04	−0.06	0.69
I-FGH-4	0.10	0.20	0.63
I-WXY-5	0.12	0.12	0.59
I-PQR-2	0.06	−0.09	0.08
I-CDE-1	0.08	0.15	0.16
I-MNO-1	0.09	0.17	0.18
I-QRS-2	0.18	0.23	0.23
D-PQR-4	0.04	0.18	0.02

D-XYZ-5	0.11	0.07	0.06
D-HIJ-1	0.01	0.31	0.15
V-HIJ-3	0.15	0.04	0.03
V-FGH-2	0.04	0.05	−0.02
V-FGH-1	0.25	0.30	0.12
I-CDE-3	0.09	0.03	0.31
V-WXY-4	−0.03	0.14	−0.04
D-XYZ-1	−0.03	0.03	0.07

1 *Principal components analysis with varimax rotation.

Measurement Model Fit

Fit criteria	Number of CSP Examples		
30	15	14	
$c^2 < df \times 2$	960.3	142.9	135
(df = 402)	(df = 87)	(df = 74)	
GFI > 0.90	0.853	0.951	0.952
IFI > 0.90	0.8	0.96	0.958
CFI > 0.90	0.797	0.96	0.96
RMSEA ≤ 0.06	0.061	0.044	0.047
Overall model fit	Poor	Very good	Good

Attraction to Participate in CSP

Attracting high-quality employees is important for many reasons including increased efficiency, lower absenteeism and turnover, higher productivity (Wright et al. , p. 272), and sustainable competitive advantage (Albinger and Freeman; Quinn et al.). Firms with more developed CSP enjoy unique recruitment and retention benefits such as enhanced employee self-concepts (Turban and Greening) and stronger candidate pursuit of specific jobs (Greening and Turban), particularly when candidates have more employment options (Albinger and Freeman). Other studies have found positive relationships between firms' attractiveness to potential employees and specific types of CSP such as a quality affirmative action program, good work environments (Wright et al.), and a strong environmental stance (Bauer and Aiman-Smith; Backhaus, Stone, and Heiner 2002). Familiarity with a firm, good or bad, also may be a mediating factor (Luce et al.). Lastly, Sorenson et al. discovered that individuals with distinct personal profiles exhibited different CSP preferences—a finding closely related to the current study's hypothesis that prospective employees are uniquely attracted to different CSP approaches based on potential participation.

While employees may gain some satisfaction merely through association with a socially responsible firm, management theory suggests that even greater satisfaction, and hence attraction, may occur when employees participate in their firms' social initiatives. For example, a common way to meet one's need to self-actualize (Maslow) comes through participation in organizational activities that give back to society. Drucker affirms this notion in suggesting that businesses “must be able to satisfy [employees'] desire for a meaningful contribution to their

community and society" (p. 383). Similarly, motivators of job satisfaction (achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, advancement, and growth) (Herzberg) might come through employees' participation in their firms' CSP. For instance, providing a service that improves the living standard of disadvantaged consumers may give employees a sense of achievement, while participating in the manufacture of a product that eliminates pollutants might bring a company and its employees favorable recognition. Evidence of a positive relationship between these types of higher level needs and employee participation continues to grow (Ghorpade et al.).

Participation is a multifaceted construct, not limited to managerial decision making but also taking into account an array of practices that formally and informally invite employee engagement (Cotton et al.; Myers) in different ways and to varying degrees (Baron; Cotton et al.). More closely approaching the current study's focus, other research has explored volunteerism as a form of both CSP and employee participation (Chong; Grant). Stemming from this theoretical and empirical context, the current study suggests that job candidates should be most attracted to firms that provide their employees frequent and direct participation in their CSP. Again, as firms often decide to donate money without the input, or even the knowledge, of the vast majority of employees, donation seems to afford the least opportunity for participation in CSP. Volunteerism, in turn, offers greater involvement by virtue of its broader inclusivity and direct personal engagement; however, the amount of time that a given employee can volunteer is usually limited to a few days a year. In comparison, operational integration aligns a firm's core business processes both with its economic goals and with social outcomes such that employees naturally and continually participate in their firm's CSP. The following three hypotheses flow from this reasoning:

Hypothesis 1: A volunteerism approach to CSP will be more attractive to prospective employees than a donation approach.

Hypothesis 2: An operational integration approach to CSP will be more attractive to prospective employees than a donation approach.

Hypothesis 3: An operational integration approach to CSP will be more attractive to prospective employees than a volunteerism approach.

Attraction: Methodology

To test prospective employees' attraction to the three approaches to CSP, we took the 15 validated CSP examples and arranged them into five sets, each containing three randomly ordered approaches: one donation, one volunteerism, and one integration. Instructions asked respondents to imagine that they were looking for a new job and that each "potential employer" had an opening in their field that offered a competitive salary and benefits, in a department that complemented their career interests. Respondents then rated each organization in terms of its attractiveness to them (1 = very unattractive; 9 = very attractive), but they could use a given attractiveness rating just one time per example set, which accomplished a forced ranking of the three items. The web-based survey instrument also contained a set of attitude toward helping

others (AHO) scales borrowed with permission from Webb et al., a question about service learning, and several respondent profile items.

Respondents came from eight different U.S. colleges and universities located in Florida, Indiana, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, and Washington. Five were private, faith-based institutions, while the other three were medium-to-large secular universities. Virtually all respondents were undergraduate students—an appropriate sample for exploring the perceptions of prospective employees; only a few dozen graduate students received the survey by virtue of having been undergraduates at the same university. A cover letter with survey link was e-mailed to 9,366 potential respondents, of which 1,829 completed the survey, yielding a response rate of 19.5 percent.

Respondents were rather evenly represented by class: 19.8 percent first-year students, 21 percent sophomores, 25.5 percent juniors, and 32.6 percent seniors. More respondents were female (66.2 percent) than male (33.7 percent). The average respondent was 21.1 years old and had a grade point average (GPA) of 3.36. One hundred different majors were represented in the sample, the three largest being Accounting, Business Administration, and Nursing. No single major constituted more than 6.3 percent of the sample. Collectively, 548 business students, representing 12 different majors, comprised 30 percent of the sample. The remaining 1,279 participants (70 percent) were nonbusiness majors. Considerably more respondents identified their school as "faith-based" (84.3 percent) than "secular" (15.6 percent). A high percentage of respondents indicated that they worked part-time (66.8 percent), while few had full-time jobs (6.8 percent), and a little less than a third were not employed (30.7 percent). Average full-time work experience was 1.64 years. Finally, when asked in what occupation or field they hoped to work long term, respondents identified over 200 different career paths, the most popular of which were teacher (13 percent), nurse (5.7 percent), and psychologist (4.3 percent).

Attraction: Statistical Analysis and Results

Respondents reacted favorably to all of the 15 different "potential employer" examples. Eleven of the scenarios garnered means above 7.00, the highest being 7.50. None of the remaining four examples produced means below 6.55. The 15 organization examples and their means are listed in Appendix. Given the nature of the study's hypotheses and the need to determine the relative attractiveness of donation, volunteerism, and operational integration, we employed paired t-tests, which are summarized in Table. First, evidence was found to support that respondents favored a volunteerism approach to CSP over a donation approach (Hypothesis 1). Although the mean difference between volunteerism and donation was not very large (0.059), the difference was statistically significant ($\alpha = 0.05$) and in the predicted direction. Surprisingly, however, operational integration did not emerge as more attractive than donation (Hypothesis 2); in fact, the opposite relationship was found. The mean of donation was 0.426 higher than that of integration, which constituted a highly significant difference ($\alpha = 0.01$). A similar result occurred for operational integration and volunteerism. Although integration was predicted to be more attractive than volunteerism (Hypothesis 3), volunteerism's mean exceeded integration by 0.485, yielding another significant, albeit unexpected, difference ($\alpha = 0.01$). In short, an analysis of the entire sample ($n = 1,829$) found that the "prospective employees" preferred volunteerism most, followed by donation, followed by integration.

Paired t -Tests for Differences between Integration, Volunteerism, and Donation

Hypothesis	Approaches to CSP	Mean Difference	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of the Mean	t	df	Significance (two-tailed)	α
Hypothesis 1	Volunteerism (Vmean)–Donation (Dmean)	0.06	1.08	0.03	2.34	1,828	0.020	0.05
Hypothesis 2	Integration (Imean)–Donation (Dmean)	−0.43	1.24	0.03	−14.71	1,828	0.000	0.01
Hypothesis 3	Integration (Imean)–Volunteerism (Vmean)	−0.49	1.37	0.03	−15.17	1,828	0.000	0.01

2 *Significant but not in the predicted direction.

While the preceding results were true for the complete sample, certain subsets exhibited unique responses, as indicated by the one-way ANOVA results shown in Table. For example, gender appeared to explain some of the variation in attraction to donation and volunteerism. Women rated donation and volunteerism significantly higher than did men (α = 0.01); however, there was no significant difference between women's and men's ratings of operational integration. Analyzed by themselves, the men's results (n = 616) mirrored the overall sample; that is, the men rated volunteerism significantly higher than donation and integration, and donation significantly higher than integration. Analyzed by themselves, women (n = 1,211) also rated volunteerism and donation significantly higher than integration. No significant difference, however, was found between the women's ratings of volunteerism and donation.

One-Way anova Results for Integration, Volunteerism, and Donation

Variable	Integration	Volunteerism	Donation						
F	Adjusted R^2	Significance	F	Adjusted R^2	Significance	F	Adjusted R^2	Significance	
AHO	0.785	0.079	0.000	16.502	0.163	0.000	27.420	0.249	0.000
School type	2.063	0.001	0.151	4.349	0.002	0.037	8.560	0.004	0.003
Gender	0.039	−0.001	0.844	20.532	0.011	0.000	68.503	0.036	0.000

Age	1.545	0.010	0.024	0.960	−0.001	0.534	0.979	0.000	0.503
Year	2.213	0.003	0.065	2.749	0.004	0.027	0.390	−0.001	0.816
GPA	0.891	−0.011	0.841	0.948	−0.005	0.673	1.011	0.001	0.448
Work status	0.521	−0.001	0.594	2.154	0.001	0.116	1.938	—	0.144
Work experience	1.031	0.000	0.420	1.429	0.006	0.078	1.113	0.002	0.318
Business major	0.121	0.000	0.728	1.203	0.000	0.273	2.608	0.001	0.106

The preceding results for gender paralleled those for business majors. Like the male respondents, business majors ranked volunteerism significantly higher than donation ($\alpha = 0.01$), and donation significantly higher than integration ($\alpha = 0.01$). The results for nonbusiness majors, in contrast, followed those of the female respondents: There was no significant difference between volunteerism and donation, but both approaches ranked significantly higher than integration ($\alpha = 0.01$). These results are not surprising given that 47.1 percent of business majors (258) were men and 52.9 percent were women (290). In comparison, 28 percent of nonbusiness majors (358) were male, and 72 percent were female (921). In addition, when business major and gender were modeled as independent variables in the prediction of integration, multivariate analysis revealed a significant level of interaction ($\alpha = 0.05$) between business major and gender. No interaction appeared with donation or volunteerism as the dependent variable. Finally, there were no significant differences between business majors' and nonbusiness majors' attraction to donation, volunteerism, or integration.

School type (faith-based or secular) also helped to explain variation in volunteerism and donation but not integration. Students who attended a faith-based school found the donation ($\alpha = 0.01$) and volunteerism ($\alpha = 0.05$) examples to be significantly more attractive than did those at secular schools; there was no significant difference related to integration. Year, or class, only helped to predict volunteerism. In addition, age emerged as a significant predictor of integration. Although significant, these relationships between respondent profile items, including gender, and the three CSP approaches were rather weak. Adjusted R^2 values ranged only from 0.010 to 0.036. No significant relationship was found between the three CSP items and GPA, current work status, or number of years of full-time work experience. Finally, one construct that produced highly significant ($\alpha = 0.01$) and somewhat strong relationships with donation, volunteerism, and integration was AHO. A combined AHO mean explained 0.249, 0.163, and 0.079 of the variation in the three respective CSP approaches. Also, those with an average AHO score greater or equal to five rated all three approaches significantly higher ($\alpha = 0.01$) than those with a mean AHO score less than five.

Discussion

This study was unsuccessful in producing support for its main hypothesis that job candidates would most prefer organizations engaged in operational integration. Although such a failure often diminishes the importance of research results, in this case, the nonfinding may hold even greater implications for key stakeholders such as business managers and educators. Business and the media increasingly highlight firms that strive to integrate their social and economic goals, for instance, companies that seek to produce low-energy-use products, to employ underrepresented people groups, to develop disadvantaged suppliers, to turn waste products into revenue streams, and to offer products that improve consumers' health and well-being. In doing so, these organizations can be both profitable and responsible: a combination that every business strategist should endorse and that warrants public recognition (Porter and Kramer).

The key question, then, is: Why aren't prospective employees more responsive to this unique strategic achievement? The three components of attitude (cognitive, affective, and behavioral) (Rosenberg and Hovland) might help to explain the unanticipated response. Prospective employees demonstrated relatively weak behavioral intentions toward operational integration. Based on the principle of component consistency, these intentions existed either because of incomplete cognitions/beliefs or because of negative affect/feelings. Consequently, the two most likely explanations of prospective employees' intentions are that they either do not completely understand operational integration or they do not really appreciate it.

A Lack of Understanding

Even for seasoned business people, operational integration can be challenging to comprehend. In comparison to donating money to charity or volunteering one's time with a nonprofit organization, it is considerably more complicated to understand how a company might realize key economic objectives that simultaneously accomplish specific societal goals. As mentioned above, the term sustainable business is a common descriptor of the concept; however, it is also one that people tend to associate more narrowly with environment-related concerns, which unnecessarily limits the scope of operational integration. Similarly, there exists the notion of businesses maintaining a triple bottom line. The general public, however, often seems to question how such a balance can be struck, as many people appear to view business as a zero-sum game in which some must lose in order for others to win.

Perhaps a more complete understanding of operational integration comes with education and experience, which of course may correlate with age. In the current research, age was a significant, albeit weak predictor of attraction to integration. Given the study's sample frame, undergraduate students, it is not surprising that the average age of respondents was 21.1, with a standard deviation of 4.35. Likewise, participants on average had just 1.64 years of full-time work experience. Perhaps an older and more experienced sample would have demonstrated a greater appreciation for integration. The idea of an organization aligning its economic goals with its social goals may be a concept that is more fully understood and appreciated by more seasoned employees: ones with a decade or more of work experience. This experience also may need to come from a level in the organization that deals with issues of strategy. Such analysis of the impact of age and experience would be a worthwhile focus for future research.

A Lack of Appreciation

People may have a clear understanding of operational integration but still respond negatively if they do not see the approach as important or desirable. Such negative affect could, for instance, stem from a perception that integration is not truly participatory but rather represents top-down management decision making. Individuals' preference for opportunities that are simpler and more familiar also may play a role. Most people have a ready-made context for donation and volunteerism—they have given their money to a cause and their time to help others. People are less likely to have such a context for operational integration. At the same time, individuals also might prefer donation and volunteerism because they stand out from the daily routine. For employees in a firm that is operationally integrated, each day involves participation in the firm's social responsibility; however, each day also looks pretty much like every other day. In contrast, a day in which a firm donates $100,000 to charity or allows its employees to serve a nonprofit organization is markedly different than the typical workday. Similar reasoning also might explain why men preferred volunteerism over donation: because volunteerism provides particularly unique and active employee engagement. Finally, there is the prevalent and even biblical precept that "it is better to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). While donation and volunteerism are more singularly about giving, operational integration also involves receiving, which may feel uncomfortable for individuals conditioned to pursue activities that are more purely philanthropic.

The current study's AHO results also support the preceding argument. Again, AHO emerged as a highly significant and strong predictor of all three CSP approaches, particularly donation. Those who score high in AHO tend to believe strongly that "[p]eople should be willing to help others who are less fortunate," "[h]elping troubled people with their problems is very important," "[p]eople should be more charitable toward others in society," and "[p]eople in need should receive support from others" (Webb et al.). All of these statements seem reflective of the unilateral giving associated with donation and volunteerism versus the dual focus of operational integration.

Recommendations for Action

Given the promise that operational integration holds both for building business and for enriching society, the key question that remains is: What can be done to improve prospective employees' attitudes toward this important CSP approach? Several different institutions might help to bring about this change, perhaps the most likely one being academia. Undergraduate and graduate business programs develop students' business acumen and shape their understanding of business's greater purpose, which is why it seems fitting for higher education to play a key role in explicating operational integration. To do so, business educators have a number of effective pedagogies at their disposal, for instance, case studies of firms that integrate their business and social goals, discussion of relevant articles (e.g., Porter and Kramer), and company visits.

It also may be effective to use another common pedagogy, service learning, as a metaphor for explaining operational integration. Service learning involves the assimilation of academic goals and community goals (Boyer; Heffner and Beversluis; Howard). As students apply what they are learning in a course to meet the needs of a specific organizational partner, they replicate the pattern of operational integration. Both service learning and operational integration match central value proposition objectives to complementary societal goals. Faculty members who teach

service learning courses and students who have had service learning experiences should be especially proficient at understanding this comparison. Furthermore, when students participate in service learning, they might gain an appreciation for goal integration that may translate into a desire to work for an operationally integrated firm.

Although these assertions related to service learning stem mainly from anecdotal evidence, some minor support also comes from the current study's results. One specific survey item asked respondents to indicate the extent to which they agreed with the statement “Service learning is a great way to learn while helping others.” This item garnered a mean of 6.04 on a 7-point scale, where 7 indicated strong agreement. There was also a strong positive correlation (0.618) between this item and the AHO scale. However, the correlation between the service learning item and respondents' preference to work for organizations that integrate their social and economic goals was relatively low (0.243). These findings provide additional support for the potential to improve individuals' attitudes toward operational integration through education, particularly service learning.

The other organizations that hold potential for reshaping attitudes toward operational integration are the firms that practice it. Of course, businesses have ready-made ways of communicating with their employees and other internal stakeholders. Firms also increasingly have the ability to reach external stakeholders through means such as webinars, e-mail, blogs, posts, and tweets, as well as through traditional advertising media. Whatever the method, the message of operational integration must be effectively communicated, which means accurately relaying the approach's dual objectives (cognitions) while also generating positive feelings about the firm's activities (affections). There are many good examples of operational integration; for instance, in order to develop stronger milk production capabilities in Moga India, Nestlé partnered with the International Water Management Institute to implement a water conservancy program that has helped native farmers more efficiently use this valuable resource (Water-saving initiatives—India).

The challenge, though, is that when firms share their examples, they tend to explicitly describe achievement of their social objectives but only imply realization of their related business objectives, at least when speaking with outside stakeholders. It is hard to fault businesses for communicating in this way, however. Describing social benevolence generates considerable goodwill, whereas talking about revenues or profit performance suggests self-interest. Certainly integrated firms could effectively convey their two-pronged approach, but as their aim is image-building, not this type of education, it is unlikely that many will do so, short of some new-found motivation. Perhaps if top business school graduates leave their institutions more informed and passionate about operational integration, firms will adapt their messaging in order to become more attractive to these desirable prospective employees.

Conclusions

When considering job opportunities, prospective employees likely place more weight on job criteria other than CSP, such as salary and benefits. Still, organizations' approaches to CSP also may influence candidates' decisions, especially when those individuals are choosing among more than one job opportunity (Albinger and Freeman). It is in this context that the findings of the

current study are particularly relevant as there is increasing evidence that college graduates prefer to work for organizations that demonstrate social responsibility. Furthermore, the high ratings given to volunteerism suggest that many prospective employees want to be personally involved in their corporations' benevolence; that is, they are looking for more than just identification or association with a good company. Such findings should prove useful to firms wanting to attract and retain top employees.

Although still favorable, the relatively low ratings of operational integration are disconcerting, particularly given that more and more businesses strive to assimilate their economic and social goals and that such integration holds great promise for changing our world. In light of this nonfinding, we have discussed how attitude theory may offer possible explanations for the lower-than-expected intentions toward integration. In addition, this analysis spawned recommendations for how business educators, in particular, might increase their students' understanding of and affect toward operational integration. Perhaps if students learn about operational integration in the classroom through articles and case studies, and practice the assimilation of their own academic and social goals via service learning projects, they will graduate with stronger desires to work for and otherwise support integrated organizations.

Appendix Appendix

Appendix 1

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: A donation approach to CSP will be viewed as significantly different than a volunteerism approach to CSP.

Hypothesis 2: A donation approach to CSP will be viewed as significantly different than an operational integration approach to CSP.

Hypothesis 3: A volunteerism approach to CSP will be viewed as significantly different than an operational integration approach to CSP.

Survey:

■ Respondents read 30 different brief examples of firms' socially responsible behavior, which were based on the activities of the top 10 socially responsible organizations identified in Fortune's annual list of “America's Most Admired Companies” (Fisher).

■ The Researchers combed the 10 firms' web sites, examined their CSR reports, and engaged in personal communication with the firms' representatives in order to identify approximately 100 unique activities cataloged, from which three researchers' cross-verification yielded the 30 best examples.

■ An arbitrary three-letter acronym replaced each firm's name (e.g., MNO), and the researchers organized the examples into five sets, each containing six CSP examples: two for each of the

three constructs, randomly ordered. The first example set appears below. Demographic questions at the end of the survey (e.g., gender, age range, etc.) helped to verify a representative sample as well as to see whether responses varied based on personal characteristics.

■ Given the need to recognize respondents' "correct" identification of each CSP example, we recoded the data to 0 and 1 for incorrect and correct answers, respectively.

Sample:

■ Researchers e-mailed a cover letter and survey link to a total of 1,810 potential respondents: 1,430 undergraduate and graduate students of various majors, as well as 277 faculty from a wide variety of disciplines, and 103 business practitioners, all associated with three different Christian colleges located in the southeast, midwest, and northeast United States.

■ Of the e-mails sent, 19 addresses proved undeliverable, lowering the number of potential respondents to 1,791, of which 398 took the survey, yielding an effective response rate of 22 percent, which can be considered respectable for an online survey. After removing cases with missing data, 378 cases were retained for analysis.

■ The sample consisted of 203 women and 175 men; 147 undergraduate students, 113 masters or doctoral students, and 118 nonstudents; 112 part-time workers, 105 full-time workers, and 161 individuals who were not currently employed or who did not respond to this item.

Appendix 2

CSP Validation Instrument: Example Set #1

Please indicate whether each of the following examples most closely represents Donation, Volunteerism, or Integration, as described again below. However, if multiple categories seem equally appropriate, or if no category seems appropriate, please check "None."

Donation: a firm gives money or product to a charitable organization or cause

Volunteerism: a firm allows its employees to take time off with pay in order to serve a nonprofit organization

Integration: a firm pursues certain economic goals that also meet specific needs of society, beyond the needs of the firm's own employees and customers

Appendix 3

CSP Scale Validation Phase: Detail of Measurement Model Results

■ To determine measurement model fit, the study used five criteria: a chi-squared of less than twice the model's degrees of freedom; a goodness of fit index (GFI) of more than 0.90; a Delta2/incremental fit index (IFI) greater than 0.90; a comparative fit index (CFI) above 0.90;

and a root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) value less than or equal to 0.06 (Garson; Hatcher).

■ The initial analysis of all 30 CSP items did not produce a good fit of the measurement model: although the RMSEA was relatively low (0.06), none of the other criteria levels were acceptable (chi-squared, 960.30 with 402 degrees of freedom; GFI, 0.85; IFI, 0.80; CFI, 0.80).

■ Principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation revealed many related items that loaded heavily on the same CSP component, with relatively little interference from unrelated items. As shown in Table , the results of retaining the top five items for each construct were factor loadings that ranged between 0.50 and 0.81 for donation (component 2), 0.62 and 0.80 for volunteerism (component 1), and 0.59 and 0.71 for integration (component 3).

■ All of the fit indicators of the streamlined measurement model achieved levels far better than targeted: chi-squared, 142.92 with 87 degrees of freedom; GFI, 0.95; IFI, 0.96; CFI, 0.96; and RMSE, 0.04. The elimination of additional items did not improve fit; rather, IFI and CFI decreased slightly and RMSEA rose. As a result, it appeared that the 15 items retained represented the best model fit, which Table summarizes.

■ Tests of reliability using Cronbach's alpha revealed standardized alphas of 0.78, 0.79, and 0.75 for the five-item scales of donation, volunteerism, and integration, respectively. These results compared favorably to Garson, which maintained that an alpha of 0.60 is a common, lenient cut-off for exploratory research, while an adequate scale requires 0.70, and a good scale demands 0.80.

	Donation	Volunteerism	Integration	None
After an employee has given 25 hours of his/her own time in helping a nonprofit organization, QRS pays the employee an hourly rate for the rest of the time he/she serves the nonprofit, up to 100 hours.				
Each year, XYZ provides college scholarships to several deserving students.				
The business strategy of MNO, a food retailer, actively supports organic agriculture, including the use of renewable resources, soil and water conservation, and overall enhanced environmental quality.				
HIJ provides financial support for a nonprofit organization that builds houses for families in need.				
CDE strives to have an increasing percentage of its packaging made from wood fiber material, which conserves natural resources and reduces environmental impact.				

Through its Adopt-A-School program, FGH enables its employees to enrich local elementary school education by using company time to read to students and bring lunch to teachers.				

3 Optional: your comments on any of the examples above.

Appendix 4

Descriptive Statistics Integration, Volunteerism, and Donation

Q Set	Question Part/CSP Construct	Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Donation				
1	Each year MNO gives a percentage of its profits to a variety of community and nonprofit organizations.	D-MNO-1	7.15	1.49
2	On designated days throughout the year, MNO gives a percentage of its daily net sales to local nonprofit organizations.	D-MNO-2	7.13	1.51
3	Each year, QRS makes large charitable gifts that together represent a significant portion of the company's pretax earnings.	D-QRS-3	6.91	1.48
4	BCD gives a percentage of the proceeds from the sale of one of its successful products to cancer research and treatment.	D-BCD-4	7.38	1.51
5	WXY often contributes financial aid to areas devastated by natural disasters.	D-WXY-5	7.50	1.40
	Donation construct	Dmean	7.21	1.15
Volunteerism				
1	BCD compensates its employees for taking part in community service initiatives ranging from house building, to highway and river clean-ups, to youth mentoring.	V-BCD-1	7.24	1.57
2	MNO compensates its employees for their time spent doing community service work, such as cleaning up litter, helping build houses for underprivileged families, and planting gardens at local schools.	V-MNO-2	7.36	1.58
3	BCD allows employees 8 paid hours a year to work with the charitable organization of their choice.	V-BCD-3	7.40	1.58
4	After the first 25 hours an employee serves a nonprofit organization, QRS pays the	V-QRS-4	7.23	1.53

	employee an hourly rate for up to 100 hours of work for the nonprofit.			
5	PQR provides “Employee Involvement grants” to select employees to support their work at eligible charitable organizations.	V-PQR-5	7.13	1.48
	Volunteerism construct	Vmean	7.27	1.22
Integration				
1	During its production processes, PQR captures and destroys low-concentration, low-risk gases using natural, biological processes; the result is no wasted energy, no greenhouse gases, and substantial financial savings.	I-PQR-1	6.97	1.55
2	BCD's product line includes an LED table-top light that uses 40 percent less energy than a 13-watt compact fluorescent bulb; the light's energy efficiency and sleek design have earned it recognition as one of the best inventions of the year.	I-BCD-2	6.55	1.49
3	WXY operates the largest alternative fuel-fleet in the transportation industry, including vehicles that run on compressed natural gas, liquefied natural gas, propane, fuel cells, and electricity.	I-WXY-3	6.87	1.56
4	FGH operates a specialized recycling program that separates concrete and asphalt, sets aside clay and soils for landscaping uses, and processes recyclable material into crushed aggregates. Besides benefiting FGH and its customers, the program reduces landfills, decreases truck traffic, and aids in property reclamation.	I-FGH-4	6.93	1.49
5	EFG maintains a soundstage reuse program that allows other television producers to rent thousands of previously used set walls, facades, and props. This rental program produces substantial revenue for EFG while also lowering its disposal fees, conserving resources, and reducing waste.	I-EFG-5	6.62	1.48
	Integration construct	Imean	6.79	1.17

4 *Scale: 1 = very unattractive; 9 = very attractive.

Footnotes

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