

MEASURING THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF TRUST ON THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN PERCEIVED CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WORK
ENGAGEMENT

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

During the COVID-19 pandemic, American billionaires became 60 percent wealthier, as the government and nonprofits were struggling to assist the devastating impact this left on our society. Whereas nonprofits and the government are not able to fix all of societal issues, we need greater contributions from for-profit leaders. This is where Human Resource Development academics come in—this is our responsibility to highlight the positive impact of corporate social responsibility (CSR), especially regarding employees in the workplace. As many CSR activities are designed to attract customers with minimal consideration of real issues, we can challenge business leaders and encourage them to have more balanced CSR programs by considering all stakeholders (including employees).

Previous studies have highlighted that some CSR efforts lead to more productive, positive work environment for employees. Specifically, I found that employees can be more engaged at work due to CSR, but underlying mechanisms are unclear, as majority of the researchers have focused on the direct relationship of CSR activities with employee behaviors. The purpose of this quantitative study was to expand CSR literature by investigating if employees' perceptions on the organizations' CSR activities can positively impact work engagement through mediation of employee trust.

For this study, I collected 391 responses from US retail industry employees. I identified a positive relationship between CSR, trust, and employee engagement while employee trust partially mediates the relationship between CSR and employee engagement. The results of this study might be interest to CSR researchers, industrial

psychologists, business leaders, business consultants, and some graduate/postgraduate social science students as it expands upon the impacts of CSR on organizational wellness.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to Hashem and Mitra, my parents, for their unconditional love and support throughout my life. I also dedicate this to Mina, my wife, and Avid, my son, for their support and devotion.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Over half a century ago, Howard Bowen (1953) significantly developed the concept of corporate responsibility toward workers and society. His book, *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman*, has been discussed in countless articles, books, conferences and press programs, and since then corporate social responsibility (CSR) has created a paradigm shift in corporate America. Nowadays, CSR and employee work engagement are receiving great interest in several fields of study, such as human resource management (HRM), political science and marketing. There are numerous reports and articles about CSR and employee engagement from top management companies such as McKinsey, Gallup, and Deloitte and well-known business magazines like *Forbes* and *The Economist*.

To provide a perspective on my study's importance, I conducted a Google search to identify how popular my main variables are. My search "corporate social responsibility" produced 41 million hits, "employee engagement" 16 million hits, and "human resource development" generated 13 million hits. Evidence depicted that CSR is becoming increasingly popular every year. In 1995, CSR-related investments in the US were near \$639 billion, while it increased to \$6.03 trillion in 2010 (Besieux, Baillien, Verbeke, & Euwema, 2018). Recently, CSR concept created a shift from classic ideology that corporations exist to maximize profits for shareholders to corporations as global problem solvers. While a majority of articles have focused on impacts of CSR on consumers, only a limited number of studies have examined how corporate social activities affect employees (Farooq, Payaud, Merunka, & Valette-Florence, 2014; Hollingworth & Valentine, 2014; Turker, 2009).

Vogel (2005) affirmed that CSR is in fashion, and this strong wave started to respond to powerful social movements against capitalism that started from early 70s. Studies have revealed that around eighty-five percent of Americans prefer to support organizations that have positive social impacts (Cone Communications, 2017) and almost seventy percent of Americans prefer to work for organizations with socially-responsible activities (Forbes, 2018). These social expectations made CSR practices a valuable tool to increase customers' trust and company reputation (Aguinis & Glavas 2012; Bögel, 2019; Fatma, Rahman, & Khan, 2015; McWilliams, & Siegel, 2011; Pivato, Misani, & Tencati, 2008) as well as employee trust (Hansen, Dunford, Boss, Boss, & Angermeier, 2011; Lin, 2010). Lin (2010) also affirmed that employees satisfied with their corporations' CSR programs tend to be more engaged and productive, compared to those that work for less socially responsible corporations.

Whether we believe wealth creation for shareholders should be the prime organizational objective or not (Friedman, 1962), improving performance and productivity is one of the most significant factors for organizations to survive. Scholars have identified that employee work engagement has a positive, significant impact on employee performance (Anitha, 2014; Wollard & Shuck, 2011), organizational performance (Harter, Schmidt & Hayes, 2002) and employee retention (Bhattacharya, Sen, & Korschun, 2008). Vance (2006) also claimed that employees who are more engaged put more effort to deliver excellent quality work. Improving performance and productivity in organizations normally lead to wealth creation, reduction of employee turnover, and provide companies a significant competitive advantage (Vance, 2006).

The concept of employee engagement attracted many scholars and practitioners in organizational and business studies over the last two decades, and also received a lot of attention from human resource development (HRD) scholars (Shuck, & Wollard, 2010;

Valentin, 2014; Wollard, 2011). Vance (2006) also asserted that employee engagement is an important factor to determine the company's business health. In 2013, a Gallup study revealed that only 13% of employees were engaged on their work, the lowest result ever recorded globally for work engagement; this has become a major concern for companies. It is estimated that the American economy loses around \$450 to \$550 billion each year as a result of lower productivity from disengaged employees (Gallup, 2013). The Gallup study conducted during COVID-19, in June 2020 revealed that only 31% of the working population are engaged in the US, while the remaining 69% of workers are not engaged. Based on Gallup report, these employees are psychologically unattached to their work and company; they normally do not put energy or passion into their work and only contribute the minimum effort required.

Problem Statement

The CSR field of study remains a complex, debatable subject. There are extensive debates among researchers that report positive, neutral, or negative impacts of CSR on organizations in different domains (Albertini, 2013; Melé, 2008). Some scholars even criticized the overestimation of CSR's positive outcomes (Schreck, van Aaken, & Donaldson, 2013). It can be claimed that CSR practices are causing higher levels of employee motivation in helping companies to work toward their goals (Skudiene, & Auruskeviciene, 2012). There is an increasing pressure on for-profit organizations to become more socially responsible; however, these organizations need to identify how to manage their power to maximize their profits and adopt CSR policies simultaneously.

Nowadays, business leaders are aware that making profit relies more on their corporation's participation in socially-responsible programs (Collier & Esteban, 2007) with many studies suggesting financial benefits of CSR, but there is a lack of research to describe why

and how CSR can bring positive outcomes for the workplace (Glavas, 2016; Santhosh, & Baral, 2015; Yadav, Dash, Chakraborty, & Kumar, 2018). For example, Valentine and Godkin (2017) stated that majority of previous studies only examined if there is any relationship between CSR and employee engagement. My literature review displayed that CSR practices result in more engaged employees, but the literature did not provide a clear understanding of underlying mechanisms, because most researchers have focused their attention on the direct relationship of CSR activities with employee behavior (Turker, 2009; Valentine, & Godkin, 2017).

Work engagement should be studied with considerate attention because work disengagement will seriously harm organizations with low employee commitment (Fay, & Luhrmann, 2004), lack of employee trust (Chughtai & Buckley, 2008), and high employee turnover (González-Roma, Schaufeli, Bakker & Lloret, 2006). The key role of work engagement for both employees' well-being and organizations' performance has already been identified (Bakker, Demerouti, & Sanz-Vergel, 2014). Previous studies suggested that a strong bond of trust between the organization and employees can create several positive outcomes for organizations, such as increase in productivity and reduction in employee burnout (Brown, Gray, McHardy, & Taylor, 2015; Mo & Shi, 2017).

The literature review depicts that when CSR is effective, its perception among employees improves work engagement. The question is: Why is the CSR perception creating a more engaged employee? My literature review findings showed there is a gap in linking the two concepts: perceived CSR and work engagement. Thus, there is a need to help industry leaders understand the importance of their employee perceptions of their CSR efforts. In particular, there is a need to investigate whether employee trust can mediate the CSR, work engagement relationship in the US retail industry.

It is important to mention that this research was impacted by COVID-19 pandemic. I faced a major challenge of gaining direct access to retail organizations to collect my data. As a result, I had to collect the required data utilizing Amazon Mechanical Turk (crowdsourcing website) and LinkedIn.

Purpose and Research Questions

Most CSR scholars have focused on CSR impacts on customers (e.g., Iglesias, Markovic, Bagherzadeh, & Singh, 2018; Korschun, Bhattacharya, & Swain, 2014;) and financial performance (e.g., Saeidi, Sofian, Saeidi, & Saeidi, 2015). Nejadi and Ghasemi (2013) have looked at other types of benefits provided by CSR, a positive impact of CSR on employee attitudes and behaviors, but little research has determined how firms' CSR programs influence employees' work engagement in the organization. By studying the importance of mediators in my proposed model, new insights might be gained on how business leaders can engage their employees to improve their employees' performance. The purpose of this dissertation is to expand CSR literature by addressing whether CSR can contribute to employee work engagement through mediation of employee trust and to what degree. I highlight two research questions associated with the impact of CSR activities on work engagement. The research questions frame the relationship between perceived CSR (independent variable) and engagement (dependent variable), how employee trust in the organization mediates this relationship. Employees in the US retail industry are targets of this research. Research questions are as follow:

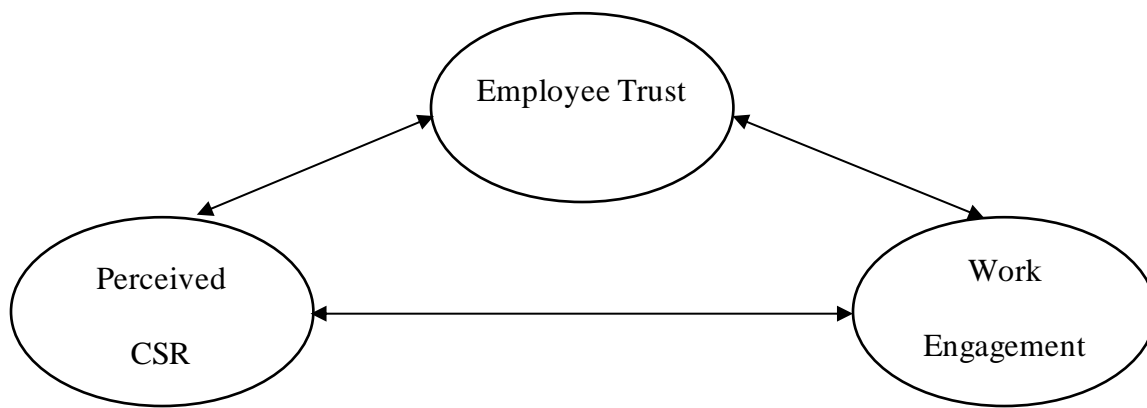
1. What relationship (if any) exists between CSR and employee work engagement?
2. Does employee trust mediate the relationship between CSR and employee work engagement?

In this study, I wanted to identify mechanisms that motivate business leaders to continue

promotion of CSR in their organizations; it is also a response to a recommendation from Russ-Eft, Watkins, Marsick, Jacobs and McLean (2014) that declared further exploration and development of CSR are needed in HRD. My study can help field leaders understand the importance of their employee perceptions on their CSR efforts. In figure 1 I tried to illustrate my proposed model:

Figure 1

Conceptual model of this study



Theoretical framework

A general theoretical literature review has focused on three fundamental themes: impacts of perceived CSR on employee trust, the connection between CSR and work engagement, and link between employee perceptions of CSR to employee trust. This systematic review of the literature identified different theoretical lenses such as stakeholder theory (Cooper, 2017; Leveson & Joiner, 2014; Low, Ong, & Tan, 2017; Turker, 2009; Valentine, & Godkin, 2017), planned behavior (Valentine & Godkin, 2017), social identity (Brammer, Millington, & Rayton, 2007; Hollingworth, & Valentine, 2014), self-concept (Lin, & Liu 2017), organizational identification (Jones, 2010), social exchange (Low, Ong, & Tan, 2017; Slack, Corlett, & Morris, 2015), ethical decision-making (Leveson, & Joiner, 2014), sense-making (Klimkiewicz, & Oltra,

2017), signaling theory (Yadav, Dash, Chakraborty, & Kumar, 2018), and theory of job matching (Bode, Singh, & Rogan, 2015), which have been used to explain employee feelings, attitudes and reactions to CSR.

By reviewing the current literature, I created my model based on social exchange theory (SET) and the theory of planned behavior. Recent models of social exchange theory in management and organizational behavior disciplines have focused on workplace relationships, to predict organizational antecedents that lead to interpersonal connections called social exchange relationships (Cropanzano, Byrne, Bobocel, & Rupp, 2001). By engaging in CSR activities, employees see their organizations as more trustworthy and are therefore more likely to foster positive social exchange relationships.

My model's foundation rests on social exchange theory (SET), which states that individuals are rational human beings who look for rewards/profits while avoiding punishments/penalties. In SET, two forms of economic and social exchanges take place within corporations (Blau, 1964). While social exchange is grounded on unstated agreements, the economic exchange depends on a written contract between employees and corporations; Blau (1964) concluded that trust is the main outcome of social exchange. Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) affirmed SET is rooted on trusting relationships when two or more parties follow certain rules of exchange. This theory stems from the norm of reciprocity, which is a universally-accepted rule (Farooq, Payaud, Merunka, & Valette-Florence, 2014). When employees perceive that their interactions with their organization is beneficial, they tend to develop positive feelings of trust and then feel obligated to repay or reciprocate benefits received toward their organization (Blau, 1964).

Theory of planned behavior (TPB) explains the relationship between individual's beliefs and behaviors (Armitage, & Conner, 2001). Trust is defined as "A belief in a person's competence to perform a specific task under specific circumstances" (Sitkin & Roth, 1993, p. 373). On the other hand, work engagement is about positive behaviors of employees that leads to improved business outcomes. Ajzen (1991) stated TPB suggests subjective norms, which likely could include individual perceptions of CSR (or individuals' feelings of trust towards their organization), can lead to positive behavior (e.g., work engagement) at the workplace (Ajzen, 1991). While employee trust can be observed from their behaviors at workplace, this theory can clearly define the relationship between employee trust and work engagement, as it explains that one's beliefs and behaviors are linked.

Significance of Study

This research contributes to the field of human resource development by addressing a gap in literature about the mechanism of relationship between corporate social responsibility and work engagement. CSR is one of the under-explored topics in the field of HRD and scholars have mentioned there is a need of research in this area (Ardichvili, 2013; Russ-Eft, Watkins, Marsick, Jacobs, & McLean, 2014). Work engagement also has been recognized as a leading indicator of organizational success (Macey & Schneider, 2008; Trahan, 2007). Exploring the relationship between perceived CSR and work engagement is a critical step to fill this gap and form a basis for additional research in the field of HRD and HRM.

The findings from this study offer important practical insights to practitioners and researchers interested in employee engagement such as industrial psychologists, management practitioners, business consultants, and graduate/postgraduate business students and educators. This study generates empirical evidence to enhance organizations' understanding of their

employee perceptions on their CSR programs and how that might impact employees' trust as well as their work engagement. In addition, the generalizability of correlations between perceived CSR and work engagement may be of interest to a broad number of organizations, and not solely limited to retail industry.

Definition of Terms

This section defines a set of terms used in this study, which provides a common understanding of variables. Definitions of key terms for this study include:

Corporate social responsibility: "situations where the firm goes beyond compliance and engages in actions that appear to further some social good, beyond the interests of the firm and that which is required by law" (McWilliams, & Siegel, 2001, p. 117).

Employees' Trust: Sinek (2009) described trust as a feeling and not a rational experience. Robinson (1996) defines trust as "one's expectations, assumptions, or beliefs about the likelihood that another's future actions will be beneficial, favorable, or at least not detrimental to one's interests" (p. 576).

Human resource development: HRD is "any process or activity that, either initially or over the long-term, has the potential to develop adults' work-based knowledge, expertise, productivity, and satisfaction, whether for personal or group/team gain, or for the benefit of an organization, community, nation or, ultimately, the whole of humanity" (Mclean, & Mclean, 2001, p. 322).

Work engagement: Kahn introduced the most-cited definition, stating that work engagement means employees are deeply involved in their work roles, and being able to find meaning, express physical, emotional, and cognitive energy at workplace (Kahn, 1990). Based on this definition, Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) claimed "work engagement is a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (p. 295).

Methodology and Methods

As a quantitative study, this research was conducted on LinkedIn and Amazon Mechanical Turk and collected 391 valid cases from American retail industry employees. Three validated instruments were administered in the online survey. I used Qualtrics for distribution of questionnaire and data collection. Upon data collection, data screening was conducted based on literature of missing data, and outliers. Also, reliability was estimated by using Cronbach's alpha. Thereafter, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to test factor structure of the scales. The mediation was tested with two software. First, with IBM SPSS (version 28) using path analysis-based mediation with the Hayes PROCESS macro (model 4, version 3.5; Hayes, 2018). The main strength of using PROCESS macro is that it does not make assumptions about normal distribution, this technique is also more functional in studies with limited sample sizes (Preacher and Hayes, 2008). Second, I used STATA v16 and Structural equation modeling (SEM) to confirm findings from PROCESS macro.

Assumptions and Limitations

This study has several assumptions and limitations:

Assumptions

This study assumes that Amazon Mechanical Turk (M-Turk) participants and Texas A&M University graduates who work in the top 100 retail organizations equally meet the criteria for this study and can be used as a sample of the US retail industry population. It is also expected that respondents had a basic understating of statements listed in the questionnaire and provided honest answers to survey questions. Last but not least, the study assumes the data analyses correctly reflected participants' perceptions.

Limitations

Every study has limitations that should be addressed clearly, no matter how well conducted and construed. “Limitations are matters and occurrences that arise in a study which are out of the researcher’s control” (Simon & Goes, 2013, p. 1). One research design limitation is that the data collected from retail industry employees during the pandemic time in the US, therefore the data might not be generalized for all other situations and industries. Second, this study relies mainly on self-reported data from employees, which is a common approach. However, employees might answer based on their perceptions on the level of their work engagement, which could be different from reality as "the healthy person is prone to self-deceptive positivity" (Paulhus, & Reid, 1991, p. 307). Survey questions might not be able to estimate the exact value of each construct, and some variables such as employee engagement are deeper than it could be measured by a scale in few minutes. In addition, the length of the survey also could be another limitation, which might cause answering without enough consideration.

Delimitations

Delimitations describe the boundaries of the study and prevent the investigator from generalizing the findings to all populations (Bryant, 2004). While limitations derive from the implicit attributes of method and design, delimitations arise from the particular choices made by the scientist (Goes & Simon, 2018), such as the “choice of research purpose and questions, variables of interest, theoretical perspectives that were adopted, the paradigm (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed), the theoretical framework, and the choice of participants” (Goes & Simon, 2018, p.291).

I collected the data from two different sources, while the majority of the participants were Texas A&M University students or alumni, some of them participated via Amazon M-Turk ;

however, They have dissimilar incentives for their participations. Participants were employed in different retail organizations across the nation and thus from divergent organizational values and cultures with diverse range of CSR practices. I did not consider the impact of organizational culture in the relationship between the constructs under study. This study involved a group of respondents in North America, the researcher did not consider their geographic location as long as they were employed in the retail industry. In addition, my focus was on the individual level perceptions, while CSR and employee engagement perceptions are beyond the individual level of analysis.

The impact of CSR practices on the society could be measured for each organization to gain a clear understanding about its impacts on the society. Measuring the effectiveness of CSR practices or measuring employee work engagement at the organizational level were not a focus for this study. In this study, I aim to find whether CSR can contribute to employee work engagement through mediation of employee trust and to what degree.

Summary

In chapter one, I provided an overview for this study and built the foundation for my dissertation. The introduction highlights a brief history of CSR development and importance of employee perception on CSR activities. Moreover, it explained a need for this research and addressed two theories which are foundations of the study based on literature. I used the most-cited definitions that match with the conceptual model and theoretical framework. Specifically, this chapter consists of the problem, purpose of the study, theoretical framework, definition of terms, research questions, significance of the study, and the researcher's assumptions and study limitations. The purpose of this research study is to quantify mediating effect of employee trust on CSR-work engagement link by testing the hypotheses.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several human resource development academics advocated for HRD practitioners to play a role in promoting corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Ardichvili, 2013; Blakeley & Higgs, 2014; Garavan & McGuire, 2010). Some also stated a need to have more focus on CSR models and theories in HRD's future research (Alizadeh, Dirani, & Qiu, 2020; Russ-Eft, Watkins, Marsick, Jacobs, & McLean, 2014). Since HRD serves goals of developing individuals and enhancing organizations (McGuire, 2014) to benefit communities and whole of humanity (McLean & McLean, 2001), CSR can become central to HRD theory, research, and practice. I identified a gap in HRD and CSR literature, on how CSR activities impact employee work engagement.

While many studies suggest financial benefits of CSR, there is a distinct lack of research to describe why and how CSR can bring positive outcomes for workplaces (Glavas, 2016; Santhosh, & Baral, 2015; Yadav, Dash, Chakraborty, & Kumar, 2018). A key problem exists as the majority of existing studies only focused on finding any relationship between CSR and employee engagement (Valentine, & Godkin, 2017). The purpose of this dissertation is to expand (CSR) literature by addressing the relationship between CSR and employee work engagement and whether employee trust mediates this relationship. The research questions guiding this research study are:

1. What relationship (if any) exists between CSR and employee work engagement?
2. Does organizational trust mediate the relationship between CSR and employee work engagement?

In this chapter, I reviewed scholarly articles that address CSR and how it relates to work engagement, as well as reviewed the literature on employee trust and its mediating effects on employee work engagement. Reviewing the literature helped me to discover the important variables that should be covered and explored in this study. This chapter is structured into four sections. First, I clarify the concept of CSR. Second, I review the work engagement concept, along with a discussion of work engagement concept through studying job engagement and employee engagement in scholarly articles. Third, I review employee trust and its role as antecedent of employee work engagement. In the final section, I explore how existing studies discussed the impact of CSR on work engagement. I also provide the conceptual model that considers the mediation of trust into the relationship between CSR and employee work engagement.

Literature Search and Screening Process

For my literature review, I applied a deductive research method to find a rational outcome about the relationship between CSR, employee trust, and work engagement. Creswell and Clark (2007) revealed that the deductive method is a process that starts from general ideas, leading to more specific conclusions. The plan is to deductively use the literature to discover related answers for research questions, and investigate relationships between the three variables: CSR, work engagement, and employee trust.

I followed two methods for the screening process, Torraco (2005) suggested having a basic review of articles' abstracts, browsing the analysis of methods/findings sections, and reading all selected publications. Moreover, Garrard (2016) recommended the matrix method to direct the literature review with clear similarities and differences among scholarly articles. He suggested a spreadsheet or table to add summarized information for analysis. This method

enables an outcome that combines and summarizes all findings, for critical analysis. I followed a two-step screening process. For the first step, I pursued the Torraco suggestion with a basic review of important sections, and for the second step I summarized each related article.

To conduct this literature review, I chose the primary source of databases from Texas A&M University Libraries' website to discover any published literature relevant to my topic and research questions. For choosing keywords, my goal was to have corporate social responsibility and work engagement both in the topic, as keywords, or in abstracts of my collected articles. I also created a word folder to store and summarize related articles.

Based on my topic—CSR's impact on HRD engagement—I chose primary databases from business, education and management subjects. ABI/INFORM complete, ERIC (EBSCO), Scopus, Web of Science, Academic Source Ultimate and Business Source Ultimate are the main databases used for this study. I implemented the literature search by using various combinations of the following keywords: corporate social responsibility or corporate responsibility or CSR and corporate citizenship; employee work engagement, work engagement, employee engagement, and employee behavior. For the second step, I added: trust, employee trust, and organizational trust. I found forty-two articles in total after adding trust-related keywords, separately, to CSR and work engagement-related keywords in the seven aforementioned databases. Table 1 provides a summary of database search results with the number of collected articles.

Table 1.

Number of collected articles in two steps

Database	Number of Collected Articles	Number of Collected Articles in second step
ABI/inform	129	12
ERIC(EBSCO)	2	1
Scopus	172	10
Web of Science	250	32
Academic Search Ultimate	8	0
Business Source Ultimate	46	2
Total Articles:	607	57

For the following step regarding selecting articles, I conducted a review of each paper's abstract to see if it relates to my topic. During the scanning process, I identified five peer-reviewed articles that studied employee engagement with CSR. Due to limited number of articles, I did not restrict my selection criteria by any population age, date, and journal. Therefore, the main selection criteria were peer-reviewed articles that have CSR, employee engagement, and trust-related keywords in their title or abstract and published in English. Through a group of collected articles, I was able to identify how scholars studied the relationship between CSR and work engagement.

Corporate Social Responsibility

Across the globe, CSR is a famous and widespread concept. From political leaders and corporations to marketing and human resource practitioners, people have discussed this topic in detail. In this era, anyone who watches television, reads newspapers or management magazines will notice multiple news reports about for-profit companies' social activities, which mainly focus on the protection and welfare of the environment and civil society. "From professional magazines to newspapers, books, dictionaries, encyclopedias, websites, conferences or blogs, the concept of CSR is widely discussed and applied" (Farcane & Bureana, 2015, p. 31).

CSR is the act of adding ethical and moral responsibilities to an organization's goals and decision-making strategies (Branco & Rodrigues, 2006). This concept mainly developed post-World War II, with most developments taking place in the last two decades (Farcane & Bureana, 2015). Carroll (1999) declared that large corporations have great decision-making power to influence lives of everyone in society, and these decisions should be made by company leaders based on societal values. He argued that the foundation of current CSR policies and practices were shaped by Howard Bowen (Carroll, 1999). His renowned book from 1953, *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman*, had a significant impact on CSR's development, His book was successful to make CSR not only practical, but also a key tool and driving force in the American private sector.

Nowadays, CSR activities fall under a wide range of programs that form an organization's core system. These activities are usually focused on internal issues such as employees' work-life balance, employee needs, workplace safety, sustainability and human resource management, or focused on external issues such as the environment, poverty, and community development (Branco & Rodrigues, 2006). Many organizations try to adopt CSR

programs aligned with their visions. For example, Southwest Airline's CSR program, Southwest Citizenship, has charitable giving as one of its main activities. For this program, the airlines provided approximately 39,000 free flights to donation requests received for disaster relief, nonprofit organizations, and medical emergencies (Southwest Citizenship, 2019).

Definition of Corporate Social Responsibility

Practitioners have used different terms to address CSR such as social responsibility of business, corporate responsibility, corporate citizenship, business responsibility, corporate sustainability, sustainable business, and corporate conscience. Reviewing the literature revealed that there is no single, generally accepted definition for CSR (Carroll, 1999). However, in *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman*, Bowen (1953) proposed one of the earliest definitions for social responsibility of business. He addressed social responsibility as “the obligations of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those line of actions which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society” (p. 44).

Carroll (2008) mentioned that one of the earliest definitions of CSR, post-Bowen, was by Keith Davis (1960) who claimed, “Businessmen's decisions and actions are taken for reasons at least partially beyond the firm's direct economic or technical interest” (p. 70). According to Carroll who proposed one of the most influential definitions for CSR, “the social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given point of time” (Carroll 1979, p. 500).

Afterward, Du, Bhattacharya, and Sen (2015) claimed CSR initiatives are sets of voluntary organizational policies and practices that attempt to promote long-term economic, social, and environmental wellbeing. Scholars do not have an agreement on dimensions of CSR, but the majority of CSR pioneers include, stakeholders, social, and environmental dimensions as

the foundation of CSR (Foran, 2001; Frederick, 1988; Reder, 1994). McWilliams and Siegel (2001) affirmed that CSR has two dimensions of social and voluntariness, as social responsibility goes beyond economic and legal dimensions. Other scholars proposed CSR focus needs to be on community, environment, employees and customers (Farooq, Payaud, Merunka, & Valette-Florence, 2014; Matten, & Moon 2008).

McWilliams and Siegel (2001) definition of CSR refers to “situations where the firm goes beyond compliance and engages in actions that appear to further some social good, beyond the interests of the firm and that which is required by law” (p. 629). Rupp, Ganapathi, Aguilera, and Williams, (2006) referred to CSR as “activities, decisions, or policies, that organizations engage in to effect positive social change and environmental sustainability” (p. 537). Turker (2009) proposed a framework that categorizes CSR practices into four main groups:

- **Social and nonsocial stakeholders:** This group of CSR activities represent the responsibility of a business toward society, environment, and next generations.
- **Employees:** CSR toward workers, supports employees with sets of activities that relates to employee wellbeing, justice at workplace, family friendly policies, job safety and security, and coworkers’ relations.
- **Customers:** Relate to CSR activities toward consumers and products, such as customer care and satisfaction, solving customer complaints, and product quality and safety beyond the law.
- **Government:** This dimension declares corporations are responsible to comply with governmental rules and pay taxes.

After reviewing the literature, I rely on definitions that exclude the government and economic dimensions of CSR and follow scholars that affirm legal requirements are not part of CSR activities (Farooq, Payaud, Merunka, & Valette-Florence, 2014).

History of Corporate Social Responsibility

Social responsibility for business owners has a long history. As early as 1916, in his article “The Changing Bases of Business Responsibility,” Clark (1916) stated, “The world is familiar enough with the conception of social responsibilities. These do not need to be rediscovered in the year of our Lord 1916” (p. 229). While countless articles and books have been published about social responsibility of business leaders and companies from the 1920s to 50s, University of Georgia Professor Archie Carroll (1979, 1999) claimed Howard Bowen as “the father of Corporate Social Responsibility” due to his book published in 1953.

Bowen (1953) noted “Only within the past few years, large numbers of business leaders publicly acknowledged and actively preached the doctrine that they are servants of society and that management merely in the interests (narrowly defined) of stockholders is not the sole end of their duties. Indeed, discussion of the social responsibilities of business *has become not only acceptable in leading business circles, but even fashionable*” (p. 44). In this quote, Bowen cited *Fortune* magazine’s broad survey in 1946 that asked business leaders if business owners should recognize social responsibility and participate in such activities. Only 1.6 percent of business leaders then felt that business owners do not need to be engaged in social responsibility, according to the result.

Although corporate social responsibility is not associated with a specific author, it is clear that the movement by Donald David, third dean of Harvard Business School, and other Harvard academics from 1946 pushed CSR to a new era. It is undeniable that Howard Bowen was an

influential scholar who systematically developed and rationalized CSR. However, the scholarship developed by *Harvard Business Review* academics cannot be ignored. In the following section, I provided a review of CSR's history by dividing it into two phases: pre-1950s, and after 50s.

Social responsibility initiatives and practices pre-1950s

CSR roots have a deep, wide-ranging history, especially if we include corporate philanthropy and business owners' social responsibility activities as the origin. Wren (2005) noted that philanthropy by business owners began centuries ago as many community projects, churches and schools were built by generous business leaders. The review revealed that early CSR activities had a religious component, where business owners were encouraged, utilizing faith, to provide employee support and charity. In early nineteenth century, businesses donated to faith-based organizations, leading to powerful, financially stable nonprofits (Agard, 2010).

In his 1849 published book, *On the Responsibilities of Employers*, David Power encouraged employers to get involved in charities, consider employee wellbeing, and in return they can receive employee commitment and support. He claimed that a close-knit society requires responsibility.

The Industrial Revolution is the starting point of CSR activities, according to numerous professionals and scholars in the field (Argandoña, & von Weltzien Hoivik, 2009; Carroll, 2008; Kaplan, 2014; Visser, 2011). Carroll (2008) noted that CSR began with wealthy business owners who engaged in philanthropy during the mid-to-late 1800s. He explained that early practices were not clear as to determine CSR versus individual philanthropy.

He addressed several cases from nineteenth century as early practices of CSR. For example, Macy's department store donated money to a New York orphan asylum in 1875; they

also added a gift to charities section in the company's books back in 1887. Carroll also noted that the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) was supported by companies and philanthropists to run various community-related and social programs (Carroll, 2008).

Business philanthropy extended beyond the Western world. For example, Baku Jewish Charitable Society was involved in community welfare programs in Azerbaijan in the nineteenth century; this nonprofit was funded by Jewish for-profit oil and gas companies (Visser, 2011). Also, the textile industry in Mumbai, India, was owned by several Parsi (Persian origin) families, who created a culture of providing service to the wider community, and not just pursuing their own financial interests (Desai, 1968).

Professor Jerrold Voss (1974) cited the economist John Maurice Clark as a pioneer from back in 1916, who promoted social responsibility. Clark emphasized social housekeeping, which took into account "the primacy of worker benefits and the social usefulness of products and technology" (p. 13). Oliver Shelton (1924) declared that corporations should not only focus on their economic and legal goals, but also their social responsibilities. In *The Social Responsibility of Management*, he explained that social responsibility has two sections for companies: external responsibilities, which include the relationship of management to the community, and an internal one that focuses on relation of management to its employees. Furthermore, Reinhold Niebuhr (1949) declared that corporations in a free society are empowered not simply by self-interest but by "a sense of the common good in all classes of society" (p. 68).

A remarkable push forward for CSR practices started post-World War II, when Dean of Harvard Business School Donald David encouraged corporations and future business leaders to get involved in business social responsibility (Spector, 2008). David (1949) emphasized that business involvement in community and social responsibility should be promoted by academics

in business education. Dean David could be addressed as the main influencer and first designer of the CSR construct. Pettigrew, Thomas, and Whittington (2001) mentioned that many of these *Harvard Business Review* articles were encouraging integrating personal values with managerial action. The basic principle that social responsibility can be a guiding principle for corporations was gaining traction.

From 1945 to 1960, CSR significantly gained emphasis in *Harvard Business Review*. To provide an example, esteemed executive and CED Chairman Paul Hoffman wrote that enlightened businessmen become “crusaders for the general public interest,” and unless they do not stand up for this tough work, free society may be lost (Kaplan, 2015, p. 136).

Although many scholars consider Howard Bowen as the father of CSR (Carroll, 1979, 1999, 2008), the concept and foundation were well-established before him (Clark, 1916, David, 1949; Dempsey 1949). Back in 1949, the economist Bernard Dempsey encouraged businesses to be more engaged in public activities. He reasoned for companies to be ethically committed in social responsibility, as they are a part of society. Dempsey believed that businesses need to employ their resources to their community for the betterment of society. Even in that era, public opinion was a powerful tool that made CSR an investment in corporate reputation, a helpful practice to attract more customers and thereby increase profits. Huang and Watson (2015) mentioned that even if CSR addresses ethical/philanthropical concerns, it may still maximize wealth of shareholders.

Social responsibility initiatives and practices after the ‘50s

Before discussing CSR growth and development after the 50s, it is helpful to address how the scholar Patrick Murphy classified CSR development in the last century. He categorized CSR history in four stages. The first stage was philanthropic time, when companies preferred donating

to nonprofits, and were not actively engaged in CSR activities. Murphy called the second era awareness time (1953-1967), when companies recognized the need for becoming more responsible in society. The period from 1968 to 1973 was called the issue era, when companies began to focus on social issues such as pollution and discrimination. This era might be affected by the Clean Air Act of 1963 and 1970, as well as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which increased companies' attention to civil rights. Finally, from 1974, the responsiveness era began, when companies took major actions to address CSR issues and increase social awareness (Carroll, 2008). These actions included management and organizational activities to explore corporate ethics.

As Howard Bowen (1953) provided a long list of references in the appendix of *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman*, it proves that the concept of corporations being socially responsible has long been a topic of scholarly discussion among practitioners and academics. Bowen's book was one of six volumes of a study by the Federal Council of the Churches, with the purpose of exploring economic life and its connection to religious and moral values (Bowen, 1953).

Peter Drucker (1954) addressed the importance of business social responsibility and placed public responsibility as one of the critical areas where companies' goals must be considered. He highlighted that all companies need to engage in social activities to promote society stability and strength, because they have a responsibility to the whole of society. In 1973, Drucker emphasized the importance of CSR, "The fact is that in modern society there is no other leadership group but managers. If the managers of our major institutions, and especially of business, do not take responsibility for the common good, no one else can or will" (p. 325). He also claimed that profitability and responsibility are complementary concepts, as social

responsibility of business can turn a social problem into economic opportunity for companies (Drucker, 1973).

While Carroll (2008) claimed social pressure and government regulation led corporations to increase their CSR activities, Soule's study (2009) also affirmed during 1960 to 1990, high demand from individuals for more corporate accountability in society caused growing interest in CSR from 1970s. This significant increase in spending money for welfare caused high dissatisfaction among some investors and shareholders, due to profit decrease resulting from expenditures on social programs. This situation led to a critique on CSR by Milton Friedman, who wrote an op-ed in *The New York Times*, "The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase Its Profits." He claimed for-profits should follow their main goal, which is maximizing profits, and let social institutions and nonprofits work on social problems (Friedman, 1970). This point of view mirrors the shareholder theory, which states that for-profit organizations are only responsible to maximize profits for their shareholder.

During the 70s, the logic for supporting CSR activities grew stronger when Preston and Post (1975) reasoned that companies should deal with social issues that they caused or might be related to their normal operating activities. For example, an automobile maker should address vehicle air pollution or safety issues for the consumer and consider their activities' impact on the local community. The scholars believed these companies do not need to become engaged in non-related charitable activities. Sethi (1975) claimed CSR has three distinguishable elements: a social obligation that makes companies responsibly obey the law, social responsibility that considers related social norms, values and expectations, and third, social responsiveness that aids with development of programs, policies and abilities that can minimize negative effects of social demands.

For years, CSR has been viewed by the majority of practitioners through the lens of stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984). During the 1980s and 1990s, organizations became more engaged in environmental CSR, human rights and equality, public health, and employee safety at work (Frederick, 2006). From the 80s, most professionals and practitioners knew that CSR does not necessarily reduce shareholders profits (Mulligan, 1986), and CSR started to dramatically develop in depth and scope of their philanthropic programs (Muirhead, 1999). This was the beginning of the Corporate Social Performance model, which states that corporations are accountable for making decisions to encourage and develop public welfare (Melé, 2008). However, stakeholder theory, which claims companies are only responsible for their stakeholders, is more popular than corporate citizenship, which states that the public is also considered to be a stakeholder of corporations (Melé, 2008).

From the new millennium to present-day, corporations and managers are increasingly welcoming CSR practices, as they identified this as a significant element to achieve business success in today's competitive era (Varenova, Samy, and Combs, 2013). Contrary to early publications claiming CSR activities as unnecessary for companies due to reducing shareholder profits (Friedman, 1970), it is well-established that the for-profit sector needs to actively become responsible in social issues. The majority of recent studies proved that CSR activities have several positive outcomes for participating companies. For example, research showed that CSR has a positive impact on organizations' earnings and values (Cooper, Raman, and Yin, 2018; Jain, Jain, and Rezaie, 2016; Malik, 2015). A summary of the development of CSR is provided in table 2.

Table 2.

Development of CSR

Timeline	Title	Description
Pre-1920	Corporate philanthropy and business owners' social responsibility activities	Philanthropy by business owners began centuries ago as many community projects, churches and schools were built by generous business leaders (Wren, 2005). Prominent business owners engaged in personal philanthropy that was separate from corporate activities (Carroll, 2008).
1920-1950	Need for corporation's social responsibility	Practitioners and scholars started to claim that corporations should not only focus on their economic and legal goals, but also their social responsibilities (Shelton, 1924; Reinhold Niebuhr, 1949). Corporations started to take responsibility for welfare of shareholders, employees, customers, and community (Carroll, 2008). Harvard Dean called for CSR (David, 1946, 1949).
1950-1990	Social pressure and demand for CSR	Social Pressure increased on corporations to expand the scope of their philanthropic activities (Muirhead, 1999). Government regulation also led corporations to increase their CSR activities (Carroll, 2008).
1990-2020	CSR expansion and establishment as a field of practice and research	Corporations and managers were increasingly welcoming CSR practices, as they identified this as a significant element to achieve business success in today's competitive era (Varenova, Samy, and Combs, 2013). Organizations increasingly embraced CSR as a critical part of business success.

The following sections further illustrate positive outcomes of CSR for organizations.

HRD and Corporate Social Responsibility

The majority of HRD studies about CSR have been conducted in the last ten years, and HRD scholars mostly published conceptual papers and tried to identify or explain links between CSR and HRD (Ardichvili, 2013; Becker, Carbo, & Langella, 2010; Sheehan, Garavan, & Carbery, 2014). Fenwick and Bierema (2008) have published one of the influential papers related to CSR. They discussed the relationship of HRD with CSR and reasoned that HRD can help organizations implement CSR initiatives. They also suggested that HRD should redefine itself and become more socially-conscious. Fenwick and Bierema (2008) declared HRD can have better engagement in CSR, if practitioners become more familiar with core principles and initiatives of CSR within the organization and evaluate how they can help CSR to achieve its goals.

Armitage (2018) stated that CSR presents two critical issues for HRD researchers. First, CSR as a subject is not taught within HRD topics; this is a foreign subject that requires academic exploration (Fenwick and Bierema, 2008). Furthermore, “no discourse of CSR was penetrating the HRD practitioners’ sense of their role” (Fenwick, 2014, p. 172). Second, it is unclear how HRD learners should react to CSR issues. Some HRD educators think CSR is just a response to market demand to achieve customer loyalty, and HRD should encourage equality and fairness at the workplace or promote green environment (Armitage, 2018). On the other hand, some practitioners declared the role of HRD is greater and they should become “gatekeepers of ethical behavior” in organizations (Fenwick, 2014, p. 172). Armitage (2018) declared that mostly HRD duties in organizations have focused on culture, leadership, and some routine roles to manage HRD practices, but HRD participation is not recognized when addressing CSR aspects of the case study.

Garavan and McGuire (2010) suggested that HRD practitioners should get involved in socially-responsible activities to help organizations and society promote belongingness. MacKenzie, Garavan, and Carberry (2011) affirmed HRD specialists should first create ethical corporate cultures to implement a successful CSR program. Ardichvili (2013) published an article on CSR's role in HRD and proposed a relational model by linking HRD with sustainability, CSR, and ethics. He stated that "HRD practitioners need to evaluate how practices and policies affect workers, not just management or employees of the organization, but the wider community" (p. 461). Subsequently, Russ-Eft, Watkins, Marsick, Jacobs, and McLean (2014) suggested that further exploration and development in CSR, particularly for practitioners, is needed.

Corporate Social Responsibility Antecedents

In this section, I identified main prerequisites of a successful CSR program. Laudal (2011) affirmed that antecedents of CSR may differ with respect to company size and degree of internationalization, which is affected by employee standards and levels of cost based on the company's operations area. Dhanesh (2015) also claimed different cultures might have variable drivers for CSR. For example, the concept of *Kyosei* in Japanese culture and concept of Confucianism in Chinese culture are key drivers of CSR for the two countries, respectively (Dhanesh, 2015). *Kyosei* is one of the Buddhist philosophical principles, which was promoted by Japanese thinkers for the creation of a sustainable society. Hennigfeld, Pohl, and Tolhurst (2006) described *Kyosei* as "living and working together for the common good" (p.237). Based on *Kyosei*, it is natural for a company to fulfil its social responsibilities. Many Japanese corporations like Canon apply CSR activities by following *Kyosei* principles (Hennigfeld, Pohl, & Tolhurst (2006).

Confucianism is also a system of thought and behavior or simply a way of life which is very famous in China. One of its main foundations is humaneness, that describes a perfect human is one “wishing to be established himself, seeks also to establish others; wishing to be enlarged himself, he seeks also to enlarge others” (Hwang, 2001, p. 190). Previous studies have shown Confucianism embodies rich CSR thoughts (Gao, 2011; Kim, & Kim, 2010). Kim and Kim (2010) surveyed 240 participants from different Asian organizations and found Confucianism positively affects CSR attitudes.

Aguinis’ and Glavas’ (2012) review illustrates that most companies engage in CSR practices because of institutional pressures from stakeholders. Another important antecedent of CSR is the need for good corporate reputation (Battacharya, & Sen, 2004; Laudal, 2011). Business leaders have indicated that CSR might positively impact public perception of the company; this includes perception of consumers, employees, and future employees (Laudal, 2011). As a majority of researchers have investigated CSR antecedents from customers’ perceptions, the reason could be that customers’ perceptions are one of the key drivers of CSR activities for many corporations. Some business leaders adopt CSR programs to receive public attention, maintain legitimacy, avoid bad publicity, and gain a competitive advantage (Fry, Keim, & Meiners, 1982).

Yang and Rivers (2009) analyzed CSR antecedents in multinational corporations from institutional and stakeholder perspectives and explored corporations that adapt CSR practices to gain legitimacy. Lee, Park, and Lee (2013) found that cultural fit and CSR capability are two critical antecedents of CSR perception. They declared if employees feel there is a unity between CSR activities and their company culture, they feel that the company’s CSR program is

successful. Another finding revealed that companies should make sure they strengthen CSR programs to increase employees' positive perception toward their CSR activities.

Chang (2015) aimed to develop a model and identify the mediating role of CSR between green organizational culture and green product innovation performance in Taiwanese manufacturing companies. Chang concluded that green activities can raise performance of environmental management. Chang's findings illustrate that green organizational culture is an antecedent of CSR. Chapple and Moon (2005) studied 50 companies in seven Asian countries and found that when corporations become international and the number of stakeholders increases, they will become more engaged in CSR. They also found that when organizations start international competitions, in most cases, they set higher standards for their CSR.

Laudal (2011) surveyed managers in the Norwegian clothing sector and identified five main antecedents. He declared companies tend to follow practices of leading companies in their field. He called this strategic or competitive behavior, which is "following leading companies." Some corporations engage in CSR activity as mutually beneficial partnerships that enhance local reputation, via showing social and environmental responsibility (Laudal, 2011). Laudal also displayed that CSR could work as a strategic tool for corporations to diminish market risks, create market opportunities, and get involved in public policy decision-making processes. In other words, they may use CSR as a tool to influence or even change public regulations.

Dhanesh (2015) analyzed key drivers of CSR in India; his findings were based on 19 in-depth interviews with business leaders actively involved in CSR implementation. He claimed there are two sets of moral and strategic drivers that lead to CSR. The moral drivers are mainly rooted from ethical values and moral leadership; these antecedents were main motivators during the nineteenth century—the early days of CSR. In contrast, strategic drivers stem from external

motivators, and different reasons such as market dynamic, or institutional pressures might lead to engage in CSR. The study revealed that Indian organizations engage in CSR activities for reputational, financial, and relational benefits (Dhanesh, 2015).

Waldman et al. (2006) studied drivers of CSR in 15 different countries and declared that demographic, cultural, managerial, and economic factors are critical antecedents of CSR. They found collectivism culture and low power distance in organizations can create high values for CSR, while individualistic culture and high-power distance reduce the values of CSR. Nonis, and Relyea (2016) compared CSR antecedents in Sweden and Taiwan and revealed cultural values, besides education, play a critical role in shaping CSR drivers in each country.

Reviewing the literature helped me to understand that CSR drivers vary in terms of cultures and companies. Scholars revealed that companies enroll in socially-responsible activities because they want to gain a good corporate reputation, more legitimacy, competitive advantage, pressure from stakeholders (customers, employees), and avoid bad publicity. The literature review revealed that national culture, education regarding CSR outcomes, institutional collectivism /individualistic culture and power distance can play critical roles to create value of CSR antecedents. An in-depth study on this topic can illustrate how CSR might benefit the company in relation to specific firms.

Corporate Social Responsibility Outcomes

CSR consequences are ones that result from CSR practices. Although scholars have published numerous articles about different outcomes for CSR, there is still a need to understand underlying mechanisms that link CSR with its outcomes (Aguinis, & Glavas, 2012). In this section, I addressed what general consequences of CSR practices applications could have for organizations. Research on CSR outcomes tends to mainly focus on customers; few scholars

have reported on CSR impact on employees. Aguinis and Glavas (2012) analyzed 588 journal articles and 102 books and wrote a literature review article about CSR actions, policies, and consequences. Their finding released that the most important consequences are improvement in organizations' reputation and increase in customer loyalty.

Lee, Park, and Lee (2013) collected data from seven Korean companies engaged in CSR practices. They applied social identity theory, which suggests that employees feel proud to identify themselves with a company that has a positive reputation. Their findings revealed that a positive relationship occurs and employee perception on CSR activities leads to higher employee attachment. CSR activities may also have a positive impact on organizations' earnings and values (Cooper, Raman, & Yin, 2018; Jain, Jain, and Rezaie, 2016; Malik, 2015), employee commitment and customer loyalty (McWilliams, & Siegel, 2011), customer trust and company reputation (Fatma, Rahman, & Khan, 2015), and firm productivity (Sun, & Stuebs, 2013). Pivato, Misani, and Tencati, (2008) also explained that trust is the first outcome of corporations' CSR practices. Their findings aligned with other studies regarding impact of CSR on trust (Archimi, Reynaud, Yasin, & Bhatti, 2018; Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen, 2011).

Bögel (2019) examined the influence of CSR activity on consumers' trust, and his findings illustrated that level of trust increases after presentation of information about firms' CSR practices. This occurs even in cases where the firm had a previously negative reputation. Kim, Rhou, Uysal, and Kwon, (2017) collected data from employees at upscale hotels in South Korea. Their finding revealed that CSR practices positively impact employee commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, and job performance. Hansen, Dunford, Boss, Boss, and Angermeier, (2011) identified initial evidence for a positive relationship between CSR-related perceptions and employee attitude via employee trust. They studied healthcare employees in the

US and identified that employee CSR perceptions positively impacts employee trust as well as attitude and behavior.

Hansen, Dunford, Boss, Boss, and Angermeier (2011) used Albinger and Freeman's (2000) corporate social performance measure to examine employees' CSR perceptions. Albinger and Freeman (2000) explained that corporate social performance allows for "organizations [to] be compared to one another on how well each is meeting its social responsibilities" (p. 28).

Employee Trust

A main duty of organizational leaders and CEOs is building trust externally and internally (Edelman Global Trust Barometer, 2018). For this study, I base the concept of employee trust on Robinson's definition that trust is "one's expectations, assumptions, or beliefs about the likelihood that another's future actions will be beneficial, favorable, or at least not detrimental to one's interests," (Robinson, 1996, p. 576). Edelman (2018) collected data from 33,000 participants from 20 different markets, and findings revealed there were higher concerns about trust in organizations compared to previous years. A majority of individuals were worried about false information or fake news that might be used through media as a tool to mislead them.

Chughtai and Buckley (2009) affirmed that employee trust to organization is the key tool that improves operational efficiency, increases exchange of knowledge and information between members and leads to constructive workplace behaviors and attitudes. They surveyed 130 high school teachers and explored that organizational trust has a positive impact on job performance, organizational citizenship behavior and learning goal orientation. Chughtai and Buckley (2009) also cited the (1999) study and mentioned improvement in employee trust can reduce organizations' costs by increasing employees' collaboration and cooperation.

Moreover, Archimi, Reynaud, Yasin, and Bhatti (2018) surveyed 366 employees in education to identify how perceived CSR might reduce employee cynicism through a mediating role of employee trust. The study findings illustrated that employee trust towards an organization mediates the relationship between the four dimensions of CSR (economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary responsibilities) and employee cynicism.

Concept and Definition of Trust

Social exchange theory (SET) suggests that the contract between employees and organizations act as a mechanism for knowledge exchange, social partnerships, and co-worker behaviors, and where increased understanding of workplace behavior is facilitated (Slack, Corlett, & Morris, 2015). As described by Kahn (1990), employee behavior is a matter of choice, but can be influenced by organizations.

Drawing from SET, empirical evidence depicts that organizational members interact based on trust (Yardley, 2014). Specifically, when members of the organization exhibit high interpersonal trust, they are more apt to engage in productive interactions and behaviors (De Jong & Elfring, 2010). Extant research provided sufficient evidence suggesting the importance of trust at work, whereby trust in management and overall trust climate in an organization contribute to work engagement (Jiang & Probst, 2015). Conceptualizing trust and establishing its foundations have been the focus of studies in organizational theory for several decades (Kramer & Lewicki, 2010). The scholars found that organizational researchers have identified trust as an important piece in the organization's function and performance. However, they also noted that recent surveys show a deficit of trust within many organizations.

To add context and depth to this study, an exploration of the concept of trust is necessary to see how CSR programs create trust in individuals to provide high levels of employee

engagement. While Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, and Camerer, (1998) affirmed there is no “universally accepted scholarly definition of trust” (1998, p. 394), I am going to address some of the famous definitions for trust and illustrate how different scholars described trust from various perspectives. “Trust exists to the extent that a person believes another person (or persons) to be benevolent and honest” (Larzelere & Huston, 1980, p. 596). Yılmaz and Altınkurt (2011) declared trust is a feeling of belief without hesitation or doubt where important exchange in human interaction translate into resulting mutual respect and feelings. Hasel and Grover define trust as a “willingness to be vulnerable to another party with the understanding that the other party will look out for one’s interests” (2017, p. 850). This notion of accepting vulnerability is common in many other definitions (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998; Dirks, & Ferrin 2001, 2002; Agote, Aramburu, & Lines, 2016).

Vragel (2013) declared trust is “the outcome of interactions among people’s values, attitudes, moods, and emotions” (p. 27). Moreover, trust can be labeled as a psychological state, where the intention is to accept vulnerability, due to positive expectations for the other person’s intention/behavior (Rousseau, Burt, Sitkin, & Camerer, 1998). Going further, Kramer (1999) wrote that trust allows the economy to run smoothly and provides connections for economic movement.

Norman, Avolio, and Luthans (2010) identified trust as the most influential component in cooperation among members of an organization. Trust is an influential component and is the one variable identified that most influences employees’ attitudes and behaviors (Hsieh & Wang, 2015, p. 2330). Sinek (2009) described trust as a feeling and not a rational experience, noting that trust “begins to emerge when we have a sense that another person or organization is driven

by things other than their own self-gain” (p. 84). Cummings and Bromiley (1996) argued that trust reduces transaction costs within an organization and between organizations.

It is useful to break the topic down into conceptual trust types. Kramer (1999) outlined the existing literature of trust, noting that despite various definitions of trust in literature, this is basically a psychological state. This state includes perceived vulnerability/risk derived from the individual’s uncertainty, when it comes to depending on the other person (Kramer, 1999, p. 571). He also referenced scholars who maintain trust as a rational choice. The rational choice perspective, where trust is seen as a choice among calculated, rational, efficient choices was predominant among organizational social scientists of his time (Kramer, 1999). He also referenced a relational model of trust. In this framework, trust is not only a calculated risk but a “social orientation toward other people and toward society as a whole” (Kramer, 1999, p. 573). He recognized that there was a divergence in literature at that time between the two models and argued the merits of a combined model where social contact is interwoven with the rational choice model, as both are necessary.

Hasel and Grover (2017) discussed the three trust-type models: calculus-based trust, knowledge-based trust, and identification-based trust. Calculus-based trust involves a “calculation of cost and benefits of entering into a relationship” (Hasel & Grover, 2017, p. 850). This type of trust allows people to begin to trust someone. It is trust in the early stages of a relationship. Results are limited, and minimal work effort is made through compliance (Hasel & Grover, 2017). This definition follows Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, and Camerer, (1998) definition of “a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based on the positive intentions or behavior of another” (p. 395). The second type of trust is knowledge-based trust. Knowledge-based trust depends on the leader’s predictability (Hasel and Grover, 2017). As

leaders develop relationships with followers, followers come to understand their leader's behavior (Hasel and Grover, 2017). The third type of trust that Hasel and Grover (2017) identify is identification-based trust, which involves a "mutual understanding and acceptance of each other's values" (Hasel and Grover, 2017, p. 851).

Robbins (2016) examined and proposed a three-part model and definition of trust, understanding that there is no sole definition of the concept. Robbins proposed that trust can be analyzed along three categories, that is "how to trust, whom to trust, and what to trust" (2016, p. 973). The first dimension, how to trust, looks at the psychological foundations of trust. The second category, who to trust, can be thought of in a particular manner: the specific people to trust, or general groups or categories of people to trust. The third category of what to trust begins at the most basic exchange element of trust to the most complicated trust, based on common values and identifications. Furthermore, Wong and Cummings (2009) identified trust as a key element of a healthy work environment.

Robinson (1996) published one of the notable studies about employee trust. She explored the relationship between employees' trust in their firm and their experiences to which the firm had either fulfilled or broke its psychological contract with them. She defined psychological contracts in terms of employee reciprocal exchange relation with their organization. She also defined psychological contract breach as a subjective experience based on employees' perceptions that the organization had failed to fulfill its perceived obligations.

Robinson (1990) studied the level of trust in three steps of 125 newly hired employees. First, she measured their initial trust in the organization. Second, she measured their trust levels at 18 months, and in the final step she examined their trust level at 30 months. Her findings revealed that employees with high trust levels at the beginning of the hiring process, were less

likely to perceive the psychological contract breach. In comparison, those who had low trust were more likely to perceive the psychological contract breach. Robinson (1990) also found there is a negative correlation between psychological contract breach and employee contributions to the organization.

History of Employee Trust

Upon looking at the history of trust, I identified that employee trust has not been studied. Majority of studies in trust took place in anthropology, philosophy and psychology; human resource studies have not historically looked into employee trust.

HRD and Employee Trust

A very limited number of articles in HRD literature focus on employee trust. To identify what HRD scholars have done in this topic, I reviewed four main HRD journals: *Human Resource Development International*, *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, *Human Resource Development Review*, and *Advances in Developing Human Resources*.

The keywords that I used were “employee trust,” “organizational trust,” and “trust.” Surprisingly, only nine articles were found. These studies attempted to understand the role of trust in collective learning (Gubbins, & MacCurtain, 2008), manager development (Birchall, & Giambona, 2007), organizational performance (Guinot, & Chiva, 2019), organizational commitment (Song, Kim, & Kolb, 2009), and virtual teams (Germain, & McGuire, 2014).

Employee Trust Outcomes

Trust is a necessary factor to create employee engagement (Vragel, 2013). According to Hassan, Toyman, Semerciöz, and Aksel (2012), building trust between managers and workers

leads to an increase in productivity and organizational commitment. This conceptual research highlighted and summarized findings from literature reviews to determine the importance of achieving and maintaining trust in organizations (Hassan, Toyman, Semerciöz, & Aksel, 2012). The authors mentioned organizational trust can lead to greater participation, feedback, empowerment, productivity, and organizational commitment (Hassan, Toyman, Semerciöz, & Aksel, 2012). These scholars provided instrumental data to support organizational trust, manager transparency, and employee stress. Findings from this study were useful in the area of organizational trust, as they supported the purpose of this research.

According to Staples and Webster (2008), trust between individuals makes them willing to engage in social exchanges and information sharing. Recent studies explored the effects of interpersonal trust in virtual teams and knowledge sharing in teams as a social exchange (Staples & Webster, 2008). As a result, a correlation was identified between virtual teams and interpersonal trust (Staples, & Webster, 2008). This empirical study implemented a web-based questionnaire to collect data from 985 participants of virtual teams in a larger study (Staples & Webster, 2008). According to Staples and Webster (2008), teams that shared information were interdependent and experienced greater levels of trust among team members.

Caldwell & Hayes (2010) asserted that a leader's behavior that points out ethical leadership, commitment, trustworthiness, and ethical stewardship help foster trust among managers and employees. Factors such as leadership relationship, resource utilization, and image management leading are factors leading to success or failure of the leader's trustworthiness by their employees (Caldwell & Hayes, 2010). The author's also asserted that employees are more successful in high trust organizations. Also, as organizations are judged based on behavior of its leaders, the authors pointed out leadership must earn the trust of its employees by displaying

trustworthy character and competence (Caldwell & Hayes, 2010). Findings from this study contribute to the knowledge on organizational trust and the impact it has on employee's behavior (Caldwell et al., 2010). According to Caldwell, & Hayes (2010), the behavior of leadership influences the behavior of others to create a feeling of trustworthiness.

Chen and Indartono (2011) surveyed 216 employees from various organizations and educational backgrounds, and identified that when employees trust an organization, it has a positive impact on their organizational commitment (Chen & Indartono, 2011). Research findings on the relationship between perceptions of equity, perception of organizational politics, and organizational commitment remains inconclusive. The research confirms employee trust requires a relationship between the employees' perception of equity and perception of organizational politics as it relates to trust and commitment (Chen & Indartono, 2011).

Employee Trust and CSR

Previous studies affirmed CSR has an essential capacity to influence social exchange affairs between the corporation and its employees (Farooq, Payaud, Merunka, & Valette-Florence, 2014). Earlier I discussed that CSR activities can affect employees' attitudes and behaviors by the social exchange process. This process is based on the norm of reciprocity: If an organization voluntarily supplies a benefit to employees, the employees feel obligated to respond in kind (Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, & Jon 1998). The rule of reciprocity works for the case of CSR in organizations, because it indicates voluntary actions to improve wellbeing of employees as well as other stakeholders.

On the other hand, CSR activities related to customers, community, and environment also increase employee trust, as employees are also part of the macro-group to which the community,

consumers, and environment belong. It is predicted that employees will reciprocate the CSR activities that organizations participate in to support the welfare of the community, society, or consumers. Farooq, Payaud, Merunka, and Valette-Florence (2014) affirmed that employees are aware of their personal wellbeing and the well-being of other stakeholder groups (e.g., community, customers, environment); Therefore, CSR practices for other stakeholder groups might cause social exchange relationships between employees and their organization.

Both other-focused and employee-focused CSR activities show that the corporation is caring, benevolent, and generous (Farooq, Payaud, Merunka, & Valette-Florence, 2014). These positive signals that show the organization cares for employees now and in the future establish employee trust (Robinson 1996). This indicates that employee trust could be the direct outcome of CSR activities (Farooq, Payaud, Merunka, & Valette-Florence, 2014). My proposal is consistent with influential social exchange theorists who proposed that trust between parties is a key consequence of positive exchange relationships (Aryee, Budhwar, & Chen, 2002; Blau, 1964; Konovsky & Pugh 1994; Molm, Takahashi, & Peterson, 2000; Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, & Jon 1998).

Work Engagement

Human resource (HR) scholars and practitioners have continuously wanted to improve employee performance in organizations. A majority of early studies focused on job satisfaction (Brayfield, & Crockett, 1955; Katzell, Barrett, & Parker, 1961; Orpen, 1979; Sutermeister, 1971) and organizational commitment (Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin, & Jackson, 1989; Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974; Shore, & Martin, 1989) to improve employee performance. Saks and Gruman (2014) noted that in 1990, William Kahn published a seminal study on work

engagement that was rarely cited until 2010, but in the last few years his work received a considerable amount of attention, with almost 6,000 citations in the last five years.

Scholars also described how work engagement can be differentiated from job satisfaction, job involvement, and organizational commitment. Bakker and Leiter (2010) declared a satisfied worker is not automatically an engaged worker, as job satisfaction depends on effect of work on employees while employee engagement depends on employees' attitude at work. According to Saks (2006), work engagement clearly differs from job involvement because "job involvement is the result of a cognitive judgment about the need satisfying abilities of the job and is tied to one's self-image" (p. 602). Work engagement is all about how employees engage themselves to improve performance of their tasks and duties. In addition, engagement demands ongoing use of passion and behavior besides learning and understanding (Saks, 2006).

Macey and Schneider (2008) affirmed employee commitment is a critical part of employee engagement, but commitment is not sufficient to achieve engagement. Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979) defined organizational commitment as "relative strength of an individual's identification with, and involvement in, a particular organization" (p. 226). Saks (2006) stated that work engagement refers to level of employee involvement in their work position, but organizational commitment refers to employees' general attitudes and feelings toward their organization.

Definition of Work Engagement

Several scholars claimed that work engagement is highly difficult to define (Macey & Schneider, 2008; Saks, & Gruman, 2014; Schaufeli, 2013). For the definition of engagement, *The Merriam-Webster Dictionary* refers to "emotional involvement or commitment." Employees are engaged at work when they have an active, involved mind, and show hard work and

dedication to fulfill the goals of their organization. The term work engagement was used differently in the 1980s and 1990s, as it checked level of employees' satisfaction with their job, while the current usage is based on measuring and understanding employees' output. Kahn defined engagement as "harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles: in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, emotionally, and mentally during role performances" (p. 694).

Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, (2002) proposed one of the most-cited definitions of work engagement as "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (p. 74). They developed a new instrument based on that definition with vigor, absorption, and dedication. Vigor is described as "high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one's work" (p. 74). Dedication is defined as "a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge" (p. 74). Here, absorption is characterized by being deeply focused on job tasks to produce high-quality work, without noticing how time is passing fast' employees with high absorption do not want to detach from their work.

Schaufeli et al. (2002) collected their data from 314 university students and 619 employees from 12 companies in Spain; the majority of company participants were in clerical and technical jobs. The researchers identified that cynicism, exhaustion, and professional efficacy are positively related with vigor, dedication, and absorption and they influence employee engagement. Their findings revealed that lack of vigor and dedication reduced employee engagement. One of the main contributions of this research was its comparative analysis between university students from the education field and employees from organizations.

Maslach and Leiter (1997) claimed that employee engagement and burnout are two endpoints of a single line. In other words, when employees are more engaged, there is a lower chance for burnout. Maslach and Leiter (1997) characterized engagement by aspects such as energy, involvement and efficacy, which are opposites of three burnout aspects which are exhaustion, cynicism and lack of accomplishment. Going further, Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter (2001) addressed employee engagement as “the positive antithesis of burnout” (p. 418). This modification and change in definition with more focus on employee energy, involvement and efficacy was in harmony with the well-cited, famous definition of work engagement proposed by Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma and Bakker (2002). Recently, Kuok and Taormina (2017) reasoned that work engagement and employee burnout are totally independent constructs, and not related to each other.

Work engagement has dramatically obtained more attention over the past few years; a Google Scholar search displays only 330 academic results had the term “work engagement” in their topics in 2010, but the number of published scholarly works increased to 780 in 2018. While work engagement has earned a lot of scrutiny over the last few years, it lacks a consistent definition (Saks & Gruman, 2014; Schaufeli, 2013). Macey and Schneider (2008) also stated while there is no generally accepted definition for work engagement, practitioners and scholars have measured the concept in various ways.

Employee engagement is one of the most critical factors for organizational success, leading to multiple benefits such as increased profit (Stewart, 2010), productivity (Saks, 2006), employee performance (Bakker, 2011), satisfaction, retention and increased internal reputation (Albrecht, Bakker, Gruman, Macey, & Saks, 2015; Jiang & Men, 2017; Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002). Key drivers of employee engagement include corporate

social responsibility (Wollard & Shuck, 2011), perceived organizational support (Mahon, Taylor, & Boyatzis, 2014; Saks, 2006; Wollard & Shuck, 2011), procedural justice (Saks, 2006), organizational climate (Albrecht et al., 2015), work-life balance (Hewitt, 2015; Wollard & Shuck, 2011) authentic leadership (Jiang & Men, 2017) and internal communication (Jiang & Men, 2017; Kang & Sung, 2017; Karanges, Johnston, Beatson, & Lings, 2015; Mishra, Boynton, & Mishra, 2017; Ruck, Welch, & Menara, 2017; Vercic & Vokic, 2017).

HRD and Work Engagement

In the last few years, a few HRD researchers have done remarkable studies to identify leading factors that can affect work engagement, such as Shuck and Wollard, (2010), Shuck, Rocco, & Albornoz, (2011) and Rurkkhum and Bartlett (2012). This section addresses factors that HRD practitioners have mentioned as potential influences on work engagement.

Shuck and Wollard (2010) have published the most-cited article related to engagement, based on Google Scholar. They reviewed 159 scholarly articles on engagement and found 144 related studies for in-depth analysis. They described engagement as "an individual employee's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral state directed toward desired organizational outcomes" (p. 103).

Shuck and Wollard (2010) findings revealed that employee sabotage, poor employee–job fit, employee burnout, and high turnover were main barriers reducing work engagement in organizations. This research also indicated that having a transformational leader can directly increase trust level and in consequence increase employee engagement (Shuck and Wollard,

2010). Shuck and Wollard (2010) claimed “too many people go to work every day actively disengaged from their work” (p. 107). This issue can be solved if organizational leaders design a positive, energizing workplace where employees feel motivated for performing their duties.

Shuck, Rocco, & Albornoz (2011) explored employee engagement from the employees’ perspective. They conducted a qualitative study with semi-structured interviews and observations at a large service corporation, and thereafter applied content analysis to interpret engagement efforts and experiences. The collected data can illustrate that creation of organizational policies and activities increasing levels of employee trust and safety have the largest impact to enhance engagement. The findings highlighted that any procedures improving employee trust and increasing attachment to their organization, as well as providing learning opportunities for employees play a critical role to have engaged employees at work.

Rurkkhum and Bartlett (2012) also studied the relationship between work engagement and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). They wanted to identify if employee perceptions on HRD practices (e.g., training, career management support) have any moderating effect on the relationship between employee engagement and OCB. The researchers collected their data from a sample of 522 employees from four Thai industrial organizations. Rurkkhum and Bartlett identified there is a positive relationship between workers’ OCB and level of work engagement. They also declared that employee positive perceptions on HRD practices play a critical role for more engagement in the organization. Employee engagement was higher when workers noticed that there are some opportunities for individual and group development within the organization via training programs, leader support, and promotion.

After reviewing the literature, it became clear that practitioners cannot study work engagement in isolation, as it not only affects other factors but is also affected by different

variables. Due to limitations of available researchers, it is difficult to summarize antecedents and consequences of work engagement. However, to illustrate the concept of work engagement and its mechanism, I addressed some of the main antecedents and consequences of this subject.

Work Engagement Antecedents

Scholars have studied work engagement and its antecedents from different perspectives. I summarized some of the most influential studies in this section. Schaufeli & Bakker (2004) revealed that job resources are significant predictors of work engagement. They categorized activities such as organizations' social support, performance feedback, and supervisory coaching activities as job resources activities (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Kahn (1990) considered job resources as a key essential that make employees more engaged. Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti & Schaufeli, (2007) defined job resources as “the physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that: (a) are functional in achieving work-related goals; (b) reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs; and (c) stimulate personal growth and development” (p. 122).

Schaufeli, Bakker, and Van Rhenen (2009) collected their data from 201 telecom managers and identified that when organizations accommodate sufficient resources for employees, the work engagement level dramatically increases. Another study focused on the relationship between job resources and teachers' engagement (Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti, and Xanthopoulou, 2007). They hired 805 participants from secondary and vocational schools in Finland and recognized that job resources such as leadership support, appreciation of good performance, and innovativeness are positively correlated with teachers' work engagement. While several studies have focused on job resources impacts on engagement, Schneider, Macey, Barbera, & Young, (2010) stated that job resources “fail to capture the psychological experiences employees have

that most significantly impact their engagement” (p. 159). These experiences contain employee trust toward organization. The relationship between work engagement and organizational trust needs to be empirically tested (Malinen, Wright, & Cammock, 2013).

Saks (2006) published the first academic research and most important article with over 4,300 citations regarding work engagement antecedents and consequences. He defined work engagement as “a distinct and unique construct that consists of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components that are associated with individual role performance” (p. 602). His data were collected from 102 employees in multiple Canadian organizations. The survey participants had an average work experience of 12 years with the average age of 34. He found that factors such as organizational support, procedural justice, and employee interests predict employee engagement. Saks (2006) claimed one of the strongest theoretical justifications for describing work engagement could be found in social exchange theory. He explained based on social exchange theory “relationships evolve over time into trusting, loyal, and mutual commitments as long as the parties abide by certain “rules” of exchange. Rules of exchange usually involve reciprocity or repayment rules such that the actions of one-party lead to a response or actions by the other party” (p. 603). Based on his findings, employees who trust more are more likely to be more engaged at workplace because of the high-quality relationships they have with their organization; in consequence they also will be more likely to have better attitudes and intentions toward the employer.

Saks (2006) further mentioned the nature of work, amount of salary, office environment and job duties might also impact on employee engagement. The study also elaborated employees were less engaged when the organization was not able to satisfy their needs. The findings expressed that considering employee needs is a critical factor to achieve engagement. Lin (2010)

found out that engagement is not only improved by satisfying workers' personal needs, but also by understanding employees' social needs by the organization. Lin claimed that previous studies discovered "employees who are satisfied with their organizational social responsibility are likely to be more positive, more engaged, and more productive than those working for less responsible organizations" (Lin, 2010, p. 528). The author declared that when employees were positive about their organizations' corporate social responsibility, their work engagement increased to 86%. On the other hand, when employees were negative about their social responsibility program, only 37% of them were highly engaged with work (Lin, 2010).

Wollard and Shuck (2010) also published a literature review paper on engagement and listed 42 engagement antecedents by their applications at individual and organizational levels. Their research has the most citations among HRD articles regarding employee work engagement antecedents. They pinpointed several hygiene factors as main influencers that can lead employees to be more engaged at work. They addressed hygiene factors as "fair pay, reasonable working conditions, a reasonable degree of security, and low levels of trust with the leader" (p. 436). Malinen, Wright, and Cammock (2013) conducted a study to investigate antecedents of employee work engagement; their data were collected in a service public organization. The findings revealed those who had higher trust in their management were more engaged to their work with lower level of intentions to leave.

Work Engagement Outcome

Saks (2006) indicated that some of the main consequences of better work engagement are higher job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, and lower intentions to leave. He also claimed that work engagement is one of the antecedents of job involvement as employees who are more engaged in their work are ones to become more

involved at their jobs. As a result, engaged employees are one of the most important assets for organizations to achieve desired outcomes. Another study by Agarwal (2014) examined the effect of work engagement on employees' innovative work behavior and effects of trust on work engagement. The researcher collected his data from 323 managers from manufacturing and pharmaceutical companies in India. This study revealed that employee engagement significantly and positively influences innovative work behavior between employees. It also presents support that trust is a critical factor for improving employee engagement.

Halbesleben and Wheeler (2008) studied the impacts of work engagement on employee turnover and job performance in the US. The data were collected from 573 employees working in multiple organizations, and over sixty percent of the participants were females. Their findings revealed higher work engagement led to lower intention to leave among participating employees. Halbesleben and Wheeler (2008) declared those who were less engaged to work, were more interested to leave their organizations, while highly engaged employees did not favor leaving their organizations.

CSR and Work Engagement

Several researchers have studied the direct impacts of employee perception of CSR on work engagement and found different results. For example, Tsourvakas and Yfantido (2018) surveyed 154 employees from Procter & Gamble and Unilever companies in Greece and found that there is a weak relationship between perceived CSR and employee work engagement. In contrast, Glavas (2016) collected data from 15,184 workers from a US professional service company and found a strong relationship between CSR and employee engagement. The researchers indicated that there is a positive relationship between CSR and employee work engagement (Chaudhary, 2017; Ferreira, & Oliveira, 2014; Hosseini et al, 2021; Kaewchird et al,

2021; Kim, & Kim, 2020). In other words, we know that employees can be more engaged due to CSR, but the underlying mechanisms are not clear (Farrukh et al, 2020; Gullekson et al., 2021).

Tsourvakas and Yfantido (2018) declared that financial incentives are not the only motivator for employee engagement because many employees have higher expectations. For example, they expect to make a positive impact to their communities or society through their work to be motivated (Skudiene, & Auruskeviciene, 2012). In addition, companies that are socially responsible attract more talented employees and inspire them to work harder (Bhattacharya, Sen, & Korschun, 2008; Zappala, 2004). In addition, several recent studies on generation Z and millennials have shown that CSR can be used as a value-creation strategy to enhance talent engagement (Chatzopoulou, & de Kiewiet, 2021; Lee et al., 2021; Supanti, & Butcher, 2019).

Conceptual Model

The conceptual model of this research study is based on literature reviewed in this chapter. Social exchange theory includes elements that can help me to explain the relationship between CSR, employee engagement, and employee trust. By reviewing current literature, I was able to create a conceptual model based on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Here are my three variables: First, *corporate social responsibility*, are sets of voluntary organizational policies and practices that attempt to promote long-term economic, social, and environmental wellbeing (Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen, 2015). Second, *employees' trust*, “exists to the extent that a person believes another person (or persons) to be benevolent and honest” (Larzelere & Huston, 1980, p. 596). Third, *work engagement*, means employees are deeply involved in their work roles, and being able to find meaning, and express physical, emotional, and cognitive energy at workplace (Kahn, 1990). The conceptual

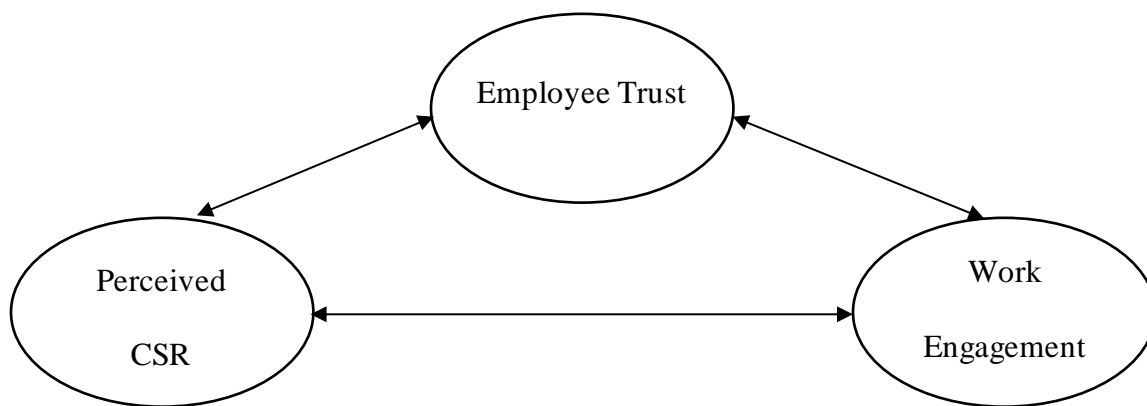
model in this study considered the mediating variable of trust into the relationship between CSR and employee work engagement. By engaging in CSR activities, employees are going to see their organization as more trustworthy and therefore more likely to foster positive social exchange relationships.

CSR, Employee Engagement, and Trust

The conceptual model for my study is based on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Recent models of social exchange theory (SET) in management and organizational behavior disciplines have focused on workplace relationships, to predict organizational antecedents that lead to interpersonal connections, called social exchange relationships (Cropanzano, Byrne, Bobocel, & Rupp, 2001). The conceptual model (figure 2) in this study considered the mediating variable of trust into the relationship between CSR and employee work engagement. By engaging in CSR activities, employees see their organization as more trustworthy and therefore are more likely to foster positive social exchange relationships.

Figure 2.

Hypothesized model of this study



Summary

This chapter depicted a review of the major literature of CSR, employee engagement, and employee trust and their relationship with HRD. Knowing the background of concepts and literature provide a useful base of knowledge as this study progresses. Moreover, a summary of the history of CSR and its development were provided. Ultimately, engaging in CSR activities will improve employee trust and have a positive impact on employee attitude and behavior (Hansen, Dunford, Boss, Boss, & Angermeier, 2011). Reviewing the literature also revealed that corporate reputation is one of the main drivers for business leaders to start CSR (Aguinis, & Glavas, 2012). Employee engagement literature was also reviewed here. Employee engagement in the workplace was first introduced by Kahn in 1990 and is part of the larger, positive psychology movement (Jeung, 2011). The concept of employee engagement is significant, as engaged employees have consistently shown to be more productive, profitable, safer, healthier, and less likely to leave their employer (Fleming & Asplund, 2007). Moreover, trust is a necessary factor to create employee engagement (Vragel, 2013). Using Hasel and Grover's (2017) notion of trust as based on the leader's values, a shared identification, I developed a research method to investigate the relationship of these frameworks in the chosen setting. The literature shows that these concepts of CSR, employee engagement, and trust are interrelated, interdependent, and have been studied in many settings. A better understanding of these concepts enables development of methods for research design.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I will restate the study's purpose and detail the methodology including research philosophy, methodological overview, research design, the study's population and sample, instruments used for data collection, procedures for data collection, and detailed methods/techniques for data screening and analysis. The study adopted quantitative correlational design by using valid, reliable scales that were accessible for public on the internet. The data for this study was gathered by using online survey tool administered to retail industry employees in the United States. The data collected was numeric and was analyzed by using statistical software.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this dissertation is to expand CSR literature by addressing whether CSR can contribute to employee work engagement. In addition, mediating effects of employee trust was examined in this relationship. The research questions guiding this study are:

1. What relationship exists between CSR and employee work engagement?
2. Does organizational trust mediate the relationship between CSR and employee work engagement?

Research Philosophy

Research philosophy is accounted as a critical component of research methodology. In human resource development research, three philosophical perspectives about research philosophy are applicable, which include positivism, interpretivism and critical science (Swanson & Holton, 2005), where researchers try to see "how things really are/work." Guba (1990) mentioned the duty of positivist scientists is to discover the true nature of reality and how it works; this is normally used in natural science. Next, interpretive philosophy states that the

social world of business and management is formulated on theories and laws similar to natural science. This philosophy indicates that there are multiple truths and meanings behind a simple fact; these are customized for distinct situations for each research problem (Johnson & Christensen, 2019). Critical science is the combination of critical theory and postmodernism, wants to provide historical understandings through the reexamination of important events (Swanson & Holton, 2005).

Burrell and Morgan (1992) claimed that positivism is a concept which expects scientific theories to be assessed objectively and refer to empirical evidence. In the HRD field, Swanson and Holton (2005) assert that positivists are a group of researchers that assume the world is objective. Consequently, they search for facts by finding links between variables, using quantitative methods to test hypotheses. Gall, Borg, and Gall (2007) stated positivist researchers want to state bias-free observations within the natural, social world. The most appropriate philosophical paradigm for this study is positivism as it relies on “careful observation and measurement of the objective reality that exists out there in the world. Thus, developing numeric measures of observations and studying the behavior of individuals becomes paramount for a positivist” (Creswell, 2013, p. 7).

Research Design

Research design process generally begins with the hypothesis development and continues to achieve a valid conclusion of the study. In the process of research design, several stages are included such as research approach, data collection and sampling, and data analysis to achieve a valid conclusion. Nyaguthii and Oyugi (2013) affirmed that a research design is “a plan that describes how, when and where data are to be collected and analyzed” (p. 7). Research design

needs to be descriptive, explanatory and the exploratory and help to identify, how to collect, interpret and analyze data to find the answer for the research questions.

Research Approach

Choosing an appropriate methodology relies on the research objective's nature and research questions. My research questions are the base and determining factors for proper methodology selection. In quantitative research, the answer to research questions is statistically significant and researchers look for conclusive, data-driven and clear answers, while qualitative research helps a researcher comprehend underlying reasoning, motives, and desires behind the phenomena (Kothari, 2004). Using a qualitative method is not appropriate for this study, as it does not seek to explore or describe a particular phenomenon, this study is to test three aforementioned hypotheses. The quantitative research method is suitable as I aim to collect and analyze numerical data to interpret and test the relationship between the dependent variable (work engagement), mediator (employee trust) and independent variable (perceived CSR).

Swanson and Holton (2005) described quantitative methodology as the “foundation of modern science” (p. 30). They explained quantitative studies normally start with a specific theory that leads the researcher to specific hypotheses that are then quantitatively measured and analyzed based on research procedures. They stated there are four main types of quantitative research: experimental, quasi-experimental, correlational, or descriptive.

In the descriptive method, researchers seek to describe data already collected or present in nature; there will be no hypothesis at the beginning of a descriptive study. Next, experimental and quasi-experimental are seeking to establish a cause-and-effect relationship between variables. In experimental research, the investigator isolates the independent variable and controls the environment but in a quasi-experimental study, a researcher does not isolate the

independent variable, and participants are not randomly assigned. Swanson and Holton (2005) stated that “correlational research seeks to determine relationships among two or more variables without necessarily inferring causality” (p. 33). They explained correlational research is mostly observational in the data collection process and starts with a hypothesis generated from theory (Swanson and Holton, 2005).

In chapter four, I examined the relationship among variables and identified if employee trust can mediate the CSR-work engagement link; this examination will help test the hypotheses and applied theories in the context of my sample. Based on the aforementioned logic, I selected a correlational quantitative approach that draws on a positivist perspective. I used an online questionnaire survey for collecting data. After reviewing the literature, I adopted three pre-existing Likert scale instruments with established validity and reliability. Upon combining the instruments, they were validated for data collection.

Data Collection and Sampling

For data collection, I used an internet-based, self-report questionnaire from respondents. Johnson and Christensen (2019) emphasized that questionnaire is a useful tool when there is a need to collect data about individuals’ perceptions, beliefs, behaviors, feelings, thoughts, and attitudes. Dillman, Smyth and Christian (2009) declared web questionnaires are employed in research more than any other data collection method and offer great cost savings and time efficiency compared to traditional surveys (Bloch, Phellas, & Seale, 2011; Dillman, 2000). Bonds-Raacke and Raacke (2012) also support using questionnaires and claim this is the best tool to collect data from broader sample sizes (Bonds-Raacke & Raacke, 2012).

Dooley & Lindner (2003) identified that a majority of HRD studies use the following sampling strategies: convenience sampling, purposive sampling, and simple random sampling. In

convenience sampling, researchers select their sample based on availability/accessibility and purposive sampling aims to collect data from a particular portion of the population, while random sampling aims to draw a random sample from the population. In this study, I chose convenience sampling and decided to ask Texas A&M students and alumni who work in the retail industry, as first, it was almost impossible to survey all of retail employee as participants and second, Due to the supportive Aggie culture, I was more confident to receive quality data and high response rate.

Sample size is a core element of multiple correlation analysis, as it effects statistical power alongside results. The size should be large enough to infer an actual relationship with the entire population. However, one of the main barriers limiting the researcher on a larger sample size is the high cost of data collection and analysis (Swanson & Holton, 2005). Utilizing online-questionnaire allows a larger sample from the population and makes the research findings more generalizable. Dillman (2002) claimed that internet-based, self-report questionnaires are good tools to have more truthful answers to questions compared to either face-to-face or telephone interviews. He explained when respondents are interviewed about sensitive beliefs or behaviors such as their perceptions of work, they might respond more openly to a web-based questionnaire (Dillman, 2002). I administered a survey with closed-ended questions and recruited participants by using Qualtrics, a secure website.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was almost impossible to have a direct access to retail organizations. At first, I collected data by utilizing Amazon Mechanical Turk, but I was able to collect 55 responses from June 17 through July 22. At the same time, I was also sharing my Qualtrics link on social media with friends, and social groups (e.g., retail industry related groups,

Aggie former students) on LinkedIn, and Facebook but it was not successful and only generated 10 responses. At the end of this step, I only had 65 responses.

Next, I purchased LinkedIn premium membership to have access to people who work in the retail industry. With LinkedIn premium, members have access to advance search system. When I started the data collection process, I had 563 connections. At that time, LinkedIn showed it has 4,140,000 members who work in the US retail industry. In this step, I found the list of top 100 retailers in the US from National Retail Federation and only looked for those members who are currently working in the top 100 retailers. In total 1,112,000 LinkedIn members were working in the top 100 retailers and only 2,700 of them graduated from Texas A&M University. To gain a higher response rate, I approached these graduates. An initial message announcement described the study and invited potential participants to take the survey. Upon receiving their approval, I sent the anonymous link with a thank you letter. Once employees clicked on the link to the survey site, the participants were able to see the consent form and then there was a question to see if they would like to participate in the survey. Once they clicked yes, they were able to start the questionnaire. All of them were able to contact my advisor or me with any questions about my study. For respondents' awareness, we clarified that participation is voluntary and all of their responses will remain confidential. To protect company and respondent's privacy, I stored all data in my personal, password-protected computer upon finishing the data collection process. On Friday (August 7, 2020) I finished my data collection after reaching 358 responses from LinkedIn, having reached to 423 respondents.

Green (1991) suggested for correlational analysis a sample size of between 5 to 50 respondents per variable. Considering that this study has three variables, the total sample size of up to 150 is recommended (Green, 1991). However, for the purposes of this study, I used the

Cochran (2007) sampling technique that needs the population size while considering the confidence level of 95% and 5% sampling error to strengthen statistical power and reduce the likelihood of a Type 2 error. In this situation, a sample size with approximately 383 participants was desired to strengthen the statistical power of study.

Population and Sampling

The population of this study entails the US retail industry employees. According to National Retail Federation (2020), 29 million Americans directly work for the retail industry. Coolidge (2006) declared that studying the whole population is not reasonable because it is very expensive and takes a considerable amount of time. Therefore, researchers choose an alternative method by collecting a sample data from a large population (Coolidge, 2006). The Cochran (2007) sampling technique with 95% confidence level and 5% sampling error recommends for populations over one million the sample size should be at least 385. My goal was to collect at least 420 questionnaires. I used Qualtrics secure website, as our department is the subscriber of this research software. This was also a user-friendly platform for participants.

Respondents Criteria

There were two main criteria for this sampling at the beginning, participants needed to be: (a) Current retail industry workers in the US and (b) 18 years of age or older. Questionnaire respondents were from different department, including marketing, finance, HR, operation, technology and purchase departments, and part-time/full-time employees. In the first attempt at Amazon M-Turk, I had two more criteria to avoid poor quality data: (a) Participant's approval rates should be greater than 90% (b) they must have more than 50 approved submitted surveys. By creating filters, I wanted to include experienced M-Turk participants with good reputations. My survey was only available to those who were working in the US retail industry. At the same

time, I asked friends and colleagues on social media to share my invite message with the Qualtrics link to those who work in the US retail industry.

While my first attempt at Amazon M-Turk and social media was not able to generate 420 responses, I shared my link with qualified participants by sending direct messages on LinkedIn. My search on LinkedIn showed there are 4,140,000 members who work in the retail industry. For this step, I added two more criteria to increase the chance of response rate, save time and reduce effort, participants needed to: (a) work at one of the top 100 US retailers (b) be a student or alumni of Texas A&M University. The research criteria generated 2,700 potential participants and from this population only 358 Aggies responded.

I started the data cleaning process with the total number of 423. I exported data from Qualtrics to SPSS. Then, I carefully looked at the data and deleted any irregular responses. I also excluded any cases that haven't responded to one measure in full. For the rest of the data, I replaced missing values of variables by the mean of non-missing cases of that variable. After examining the responses, 32 cases were removed. I checked each case and removed (a) Questionnaires submitted in less than 90 seconds. (b) Did not answer equal or more than 15% (C) chose only one option (e.g., all agree, or all disagree) for all of the items. Due to my data collection method on LinkedIn and Amazon M-Turk my study does not have a clear response rate. A total of 391 surveys were kept for the further analysis.

Variables

Dependent and Independent Variables

The constructs to be measured included perceived CSR, employee trust, and employee engagement. The independent variable for the study was perceived CSR and dependent variable was employee engagement and its dimensions (vigor, dedication, and absorption). Employee

trust was measured as a mediator in this study. The instruments used for measuring perceived CSR, employee trust, and employee engagement are elaborated in the next section. In this study, the mediator, independent, and dependent variables were quantitative, while all demographic variables were categorical and have between two to seven categories.

Demographic Variables

The demographic variables that were collected from respondents were the following: (a) gender, (b) marital status, (c) age, (d) work type, (e) tenure in retail industry, (f) religious identity, and (g) ethnicity. The categories of all demographic variables are detailed in the following paragraphs.

Gender

Previous studies have analyzed the effect of gender on the relationship between CSR and employee engagement and found that CSR has more impacts on female engagement (Farrukh et al, 2020). In this study, I explored whether different perceptions of gender on CSR also cause variation in levels of employee trust or employee engagement. As the question of gender can pose a challenge for some individuals, I grouped genders into three categories of male, female, and other to have a more inclusive approach.

Marital Status

The objective of the insertion of marital status is to advance the understanding of the role of CSR among married and single employees. I wanted to find out if the marital status can affect the way that survey respondents answer the questions. I grouped this section in four categories of single, married, in a relationship, and prefer not to answer.

Age

Age of the survey participants is one of the most collected, reported demographic characteristics in social science studies, and it is mostly employed as a classification variable. I used a common ordinal measure of age by grouping them based on generations. Pew Research Center (2019) classified adults into five distinct groups: Generation Z, which includes anyone born from 1997 onward (for our study, from ages 18 to 23 in 2020); Millennials, which include anyone born between 1981 and 1996 (ages 24 to 39); Gen X, which includes anyone born between 1965 and 1980 (ages 40 to 55); followed by Baby Boomers, (ages 56 to 75), and the Silent generation, 76 and above.

Work type

The grouping was broadly classified into two based on part time and full-time employees. As I had no control over survey participants' work type, I wanted to find out if CSR has less impacts on part time employees' work engagement.

Tenure in retail industry

Considering high turnover rate in the retail industry and characteristics of the retail workforce, the tenure section was classified into 4 distinct groups: a) less than 6 months, b) between 6 months to 2 years, c) 2-6 years, and d) more than 6 years.

Religious identity

Since some studies stated that CSR is strongly influenced by religion (Duthler, & Dhanesh, 2018; Ronnegard, 2011), I wanted to find out if CSR has more impact on religious employees work engagement. The religious identity was classified into five groups: 1) religious, 2) spiritual, 3) spiritual but non-religious, 4) non-religious, and 5) prefer not to answer.

Ethnicity

I divided the ethnicity section into six groups of: 1) Black or African American, 2) White, 3) Hispanic or Latino, 4) Middle Eastern or North African, 5) Asian, and 6) other.

Instrumentation

The heart of any quantitative survey-based research is the questionnaire. For measurement of each variable (trust, work engagement, perceived CSR), there are several measures that different scholars have created and tested. This section explains each variable instrument and proposes items for the questionnaire. For this study, I used validated, reliable measures to assess variables. All three variables were measured by using 5-point Likert scales that had been developed and used widely in the United States. In total, 32 items explored the relationship between employee trust, work engagement, and perceived CSR. By adding the demographic section, the questionnaire consists of a total of 40 questions.

The selected measures that are stated below were regularly employed by researchers, but this was not the main reason for selection. In-depth consideration was given regarding how each measure was developed, what different instruments measured, and how each instrument needs to be administered (Birmingham & Wilkinson, 2003). In the next section, I explain measures utilized for the study in more detail.

Measures

Bonds-Raacke and Raacke (2012) declared that the questionnaire needs to be based on well-defined scales. They claimed selecting questions that are bias free can increase the questionnaire's reliability and validity. I studied all possible and available scales by asking, "How should I best measure my variables?" While several scales for work engagement, employee trust, and CSR have been developed, very few of them are well-tested in peer-

reviewed literature. I reviewed the literature and found the most accurate, cited scales for each variable. Table 3 lists the individual items used to measure each latent variable. Below is a general description of each measure.

Perceived CSR

There are various scales to measure CSR. I reviewed the literature and compared six different instruments for measuring CSR (Chatterji, Levin, & Toffel, 2009; El Akremi, Gond, Swaen, De Roeck, & Igalens, 2015; Maignan & Ferrell, 2000; Mattingly & Berman, 2006; Ong, Mayer, Tost, & Wellman, 2018; Turker, 2009). After I analyzed the literature, I found the corporate social responsibility survey developed by Turker (2009) is widely used as a reliable construct.

The questions used were based off of Turker's scale which focuses on employee perceptions of internal/external CSR activities and measures four dimensions which are environment, employees, customers, and the government (Turker, 2009). This questionnaire is used by many scholars to check the impact of perceptions of CSR on employees' behaviors or attitude (Ali, Rehman, Ali, Yousaf, & Zia, 2010; Chaudhary, 2017; Newman, Nielsen, & Miao, 2015; Sheel, & Vohra, 2016; Story & Neves, 2015).

Farooq, Payaud, Merunka, and Valette-Florence (2014) later refined the Turker scale and affirmed legal requirements are not part of CSR. They excluded the government dimension from the CSR scale and added one item related to organization contributions to charities as contributions to charities are critical to CSR. Thus, their final instrument had 16 items. They also split the first dimension of Turker (social and non-social stakeholders) into two dimensions of community and environment.

The modified version of Turker's instrument measured the employees' perceptions on CSR practices related to employees, consumers, environment, and community. I followed Farooq, Payaud, Merunka, and Valette-Florence (2014) and added one item to assess the corporation contribution to charities. The following are sample items of this measure "My company gives adequate contributions to charities" and "Our company participates to the activities which aim to protect and improve the quality of the natural environment". Survey respondents asked to indicate their level of agreement with each statement (1 = "strongly agree" to 5 = "strongly disagree").

Farooq, Payaud, Merunka, and Valette-Florence (2014) examined CSR measure validity and reliability with confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). For validity, all items achieved reasonably high factor loadings from 0.7 to 0.90. Average variance extracted (AVE) for all the CSR dimensions was greater than the recommended value of 0.50 (Farooq, Payaud, Merunka, and Valette-Florence, 2014). For reliability, Farooq, Payaud, Merunka, and Valette-Florence (2014) used Cronbach alpha – a frequently used objective measure of reliability – and it showed high internal consistency and reliability with values of 0.79, 0.92, 0.91 and 0.82 for community, environment, employee, and consumer respectively. All values are greater than the recommended value of 0.7 (Nunnally 1978).

Employee Trust

I measured the employee trust by using Robinson's (1996) 7-item scale, which is a widely used scale in organizational studies (Mulki, Jaramillo, & Locander, 2006). Robinson (1996) defined trust as "one's expectations, assumptions, or beliefs about the likelihood that another's future actions will be beneficial, favorable, or at least not detrimental to one's interests," (p. 576). An example item is "My employer is open and upfront with me." Survey

respondents indicated their level of agreement with each statement (1 = “strongly agree” to 5 = “strongly disagree”).

Robinson’s (1996) study administered the scale to 125 employees three times; when they were first hired and then after 18 and 30 months. On the first round, the Cronbach’s alpha was 0.82; on the second and third steps, it was 0.87. Robinson’s article has over 4,100 citations on Google Scholar, and her trust scale is known as a reliable measure for employee trust. Mulki, Jaramillo, and Locander (2006) used Robinson’s trust scale to survey 344 employees and investigate the effects of ethical climate and trust on job attitudes. Cronbach’s alpha for the trust scale in this study was 0.91. Agarwal (2014) also used Robinson’s scale to examine the effects of organizational justice and trust on work engagement in the pharmaceutical industry. He claimed the Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was 0.79, and his finding revealed that organizational justice positively related to work engagement with the mediation factor of employee trust.

Since the purpose of this study is to examine the mediation mechanism between CSR and work engagement, a scale measuring overall trust in the organization is more appropriate than instruments that measure trust as a multi-dimensional construct (Farooq, Payaud, Merunka, & Valette-Florence, 2014). I did not break down trust into its dimensions (e.g., integrity, competence) as I was not looking for potential different effects of CSR on trust components. Therefore, I adopted a multi-item, widely-used measurement of employee trust to fit the study purpose.

Work Engagement

The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) has been developed, validated, and popularly used across the world. As described previously, Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, and Bakker (2002) conceptualized work engagement with three key dimensions: vigor,

dedication, and absorption. Likewise, this scale includes three key dimensions. The instrument was originally developed with 17 items (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003; Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002) while a 9-item shortened version of the UWES is also available (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006). The reliability of this instrument has been excellent in many empirical studies globally (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010). Recently, Bakker and Xanthopoulou (2013) showed that reliability estimates were 0.80, 0.88, and 0.73 for vigor, dedication, and absorption.

Seppälä, Mauno, Feldt, Hakanen, Kinnunen, Tolvanen, and Schaufeli (2009) tested and analyzed both 17-item-UWES and 9-item-UWES in five different studies and found UWES-9 was significantly better than UWES-17 in all five samples and recommended the 9-item version for future studies. Shantz, Alfes, Truss, & Soane (2013) also used and recommended the shortened version of the UWES and reliability for the scale was 0.89. Several empirical studies used UWES-9 and found a high level of reliability (e.g., Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011; Ho Kim, Park, & Kwon, 2017).

In this study, I used the shorter version of employee engagement measure. The following are sample items from each scale of vigor, dedication, and absorption: “At my work, I feel bursting with energy,” “I am enthusiastic about my job,” and “I feel happy when I am working intensely.” The nine items included in this instrument are listed in table 3.

Table 3.

Employee Survey Measures

CSR (Trurker, 2009; Farooq, Payaud, Merunka, and Valette-Florence, 2014)
Environment CSR

1. Our company participates to the activities which aim to protect and improve the quality of the natural environment
2. Our company makes investment to create a better life for the future generations

3. Our company implements special programs to minimize its negative impact on the natural environment
4. Our company targets a sustainable growth which considers to the future generations

Community CSR

5. Our company supports the non-governmental organizations working in the problematic areas
6. Our company contributes to the campaigns and projects that promote the well-being of the society
7. Our company gives adequate contributions to charities

CSR to employees

8. Our company encourages its employees to participate in voluntarily activities
9. Our company policies encourage the employees to develop their skills and careers
10. The management of our company is primarily concerned with employees' needs and wants
11. Our company implements flexible policies to provide a good work and life balance for its employees
12. The managerial decisions related with the employees are usually fair
13. Our company supports employees who want to acquire additional education

CSR to customers

14. Our company protects consumer rights beyond the legal requirements
15. Our company provides full and accurate information about its products to its customers
16. Customer satisfaction is highly important for our company

Employee Trust (Robinson, 1996)

1. I believe my employer has high integrity.
2. I can expect my employer to treat me in a consistent and predictable fashion.
3. In general, I believe my employer's motives and intentions are good.
4. My employer is open and upfront with me.
5. My employer is not always honest and truthful. (R)
6. I don't think my employer treats me fairly. (R)
7. I am not sure I fully trust my employer. (R)

Employee work engagement (UWES-9) (Schaufeli, Bakker & Salanova, 2006)

Vigor

1. At my work, I feel that I am bursting with energy
2. At my job, I feel strong and vigorous
3. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work

Dedication

4. I am enthusiastic about my job
5. My job inspires me
6. I am proud of the work that I do

Absorption

7. I feel happy when I am working intensely
 8. I am immersed in my work
 9. I get carried away when I'm working
-

This instrument used a 5-point Likert scale from 1 ('strongly disagree') to 5 ('strongly agree') for all subscales.

Assessment of Reliability and Validity

Johnson and Christensen (2019) declared the researchers need to choose measurement instruments that provide an accurate measure of the variables. Bonds-Raacke and Rackee (2012) emphasized the reliable instrument is able to provide similar results constantly. Johnson and Christensen (2019) also affirmed the reliability test shows that instrument test scores are consistent, while validity of instrument illustrates the properness of the explanations or results that comes from the test score.

Reliability

For examining internal consistency of the scale, I used Cronbach's alpha which is the most widely used method to check how closely a set of items are related as a group. When average inter-item correlation increases, Cronbach's alpha increases and vice versa. Internal consistency shows how all of the items in a test measure the same concept or construct; thus, it is connected to inter-relatedness of items within the test. Reliability estimates also indicate the amount of measurement error. In other word, the reliability test can show the correlation of test with itself. The Cronbach's alpha results are presented in the next chapter.

Validity

Validity refers to the instrument's ability to measure what it is supposed to measure (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2002). As I mentioned in the measures section, each of the three scales are well-established instruments that have been tested independently by other scholars. But in this study, I combined them. Therefore, to confirm the rightness of the questionnaire, I asked two

academics to review for the clarity of the questionnaire. The experts review confirmed the clarity of the questionnaire and they provided minimal edits.

I also used exploratory factor analysis to test the factor structure and examine the internal reliability to consider possible changes to the chosen measure. In this study, EFA was assumed appropriate because the three scales drawn from previously validated instruments had not been studied before in this combination with each other. The EFA results are presented in the next chapter. The mentioned analysis can help to confirm the items are understandable and to check if items are measuring what they are intended to measure.

Human Subject Protection

Before starting the data collection step, I received an authorization from Texas A&M University Institutional Review Board (TAMU IRB) to conduct the study (Appendix D). The main purpose of IRB form is to make sure the rights of survey respondents and their confidentiality are protected. At the beginning of the survey, there was study description and informed consent sheet (Appendix A) to provide a brief and introductory information related to my dissertation and basic element of data collection to clarify: what is my research, voluntary nature of their participation, and what will happen during and after the research has taken place. The form was at the beginning of the survey to help the participants decide whether the study is of interest to them and whether they are interested to participate or not. During my data collection through LinkedIn, I was sending an initial message announcement to briefly describe the study and invite potential participants to take the survey (Appendix C). Upon receiving their approval, I sent the anonymous link with a thank you letter. Once employees clicked on the link to the survey site, the participants were able to see the Consent Form and then there was a question to see if they would like to take the survey.

Data Screening

After data collection, it is important to check collected data to identify and prevent any possible issues before data analysis. Several scholars recommended screening the original data before conducting any basic analysis (e.g., Kline, 2011). Consequently, upon data collection I screen data for missing data, and outliers. First, I carefully looked at the data and deleted any irregular responses. I also excluded any cases that haven't responded to one measure in full. For the rest of the data, I replaced missing values of variables by the mean of non-missing cases of that variable.

Data Analysis

Johnson and Christensen (2019) specified that data analysis needs different tools to transform the raw data into useful information, these tools can also help to test the study hypotheses and explain the results. The use of data analysis tools relies on the chosen research design. In this study, for analyzing the reliability of the constructs, and examining the results, I used SPSS 28 software. The Hayes PROCESS macro (version 3.5; Hayes, 2018) within SPSS was utilized to conduct regression analysis of the predictor, mediating, and outcome variables to determine direct and indirect effects of the employee trust on the relationship between perceived CSR and employee engagement. The key advantage of this method is that it does not make assumptions about normal distribution and is also helpful in studies with limited sample sizes (Preacher and Hayes, 2008). The analysis was performed through SPSS 28 using PROCESS Macro, model 4, with 5,000 bootstrap samples (Hayes, 2018). In addition, I used STATA v16 and structural equation modeling (SEM) to confirm findings from PROCESS macro analysis.

The questionnaire for this study has four sections of questions. The first section consists of eight demographic questions such as age, gender, race, marital status, work type (full/part-time), length of work experience, and religious preference. The other parts of the questionnaire included measures for perceived CSR, employee trust, and work engagement. The measures planned for the variables are from existing scales and all of the collected measures are five-point Likert scale.

Swanson and Holton (2005) suggested designing a respondent-friendly survey, give financial incentives, and reduce survey length for a higher response rate. To reduce the chance of a low response rate, I chose the most accurate scales with less items to shorten the questionnaire length. I also explained my study's purpose, and how I am going to use their feedback in the consent form. The data was collected during the COVID-19 pandemic between June to August 2020. During this time, the U.S. retail industry and its employees were highly under pressure. This situation might positively or negatively impact on employee judgments toward their employer. Therefore, the results might be different in other situations.

Limitations

Regarding the sampling method, there are several limitations that need to be considered. In convenience sampling, the target group that meet certain conditions, similar to easy accessibility, or the willingness to participate are included for the purpose of the sampling method (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). But there is a possibility that the sampling frame does not represent the whole population correctly. Swanson and Holton (2005) mentioned that inconvenience sample selection, it is not clear "how representative the information collected about the sample is about the population as a whole" (p.51). Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim (2016) pointed out that convenience sampling method is very likely to be biased and scholars cannot

estimate how well the sample can represent the whole population regarding their vulnerability to hidden biases.

Other limitations include not being able to collect data from employees who choose not to respond, and this result may only generalize employees willing to respond to the survey. Therefore, the result cannot guarantee “representativeness” for all groups of interests in the organization. For example, if the minorities from a specific group (e.g., Muslim employees) don’t respond to this survey, I might face the no-response error due to data collection failure from all selected population elements. It can be the issue of a sample frame if some population elements are not included.

Table 4.

Data Analysis Procedures Broken by Research Questions

Research Questions	Dependent, Independent, and Mediator Variables	Statistical Tool
RQ1. What relationship (if any) exists between CSR and employee work engagement?	DV: Total EE IV: Total Perceived CSR	Pearson’s Correlation
RQ2. Does employee trust mediate the relationship between CSR and employee work engagement?	DV: Total EE IV: Total Perceived CSR DV(Mediator): Trust	Mediation

Summary

This chapter contains an explanation of research procedures for the study that aims to assess the mediating effect of employee trust on the relationship between perceived CSR and work engagement. In chapter 3, I restated the purpose statement and research questions,

described the research design, explained variables and instrument that I used to measure them, described data collection, sampling and target population, explained validity and reliability of instruments, followed by an outline of data analysis procedures and limitation of sampling method. This quantitative study adopted a positivism approach. This chapter explained that the correlational quantitative approach is appropriate for this study due to its nature and research questions. It also further discussed the statistical operations adopted to comprehend the relationship between perceived CSR, trust and employee engagement among retail industry employees.

For data analysis, I used Cronbach's alpha to determine reliability of items in the questionnaire, I also used exploratory factor analysis to conduct a common variance analysis for examining common method biases followed by conducting the descriptive statistics and correlation analyses by SPSS. To find the mediation effect, I used Model 4 of Hayes (2018) PROCESS macro with the specific aim to test mediating effect of employee trust. This macro uses bootstrapping method for testing mediating effect, which performs better than the traditional causal steps approach (Hayes, 2018). The bootstrap method based on 5,000 samples was extracted to obtain bias-corrected and accelerated 95% confidence intervals for a conditional indirect effect. To confirm findings from the bootstrap method, I used STATA v16 and structural equation modeling (SEM) standard mediating analysis to confirm findings from PROCESS macro. Chapter 4 provides a detailed report of results by using descriptive and inferential statistics.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The collected data was statistically analyzed, according to the research design described in Chapter III. The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to expand CSR literature by addressing whether CSR can contribute to employee work engagement through mediation of employee trust and to what degree. The research questions guiding this study are:

1. What relationship (if any) exists between CSR and employee work engagement?
2. Does organizational trust mediate the relationship between CSR and employee work engagement?

I used Qualtrics for distribution of questionnaire and data collection in the US retail industry. I utilized Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS Statistics 27) software to analyze data and determine the frequency, percentage distributions, corresponding correlations between variables, and to test the mediation by Andrew Hayes' PROCESS macro. I also used STATA v16 and structural equation modeling (SEM) to test mediation for a second time to confirm findings from PROCESS macro. The research was conducted on LinkedIn (N=358), Amazon Mechanical Turk (N=55), and social media (N=10) and reached a total 423 responses. During data cleaning process, 32 cases were removed and a total of 391 surveys were kept for further analysis. Here, I report Cronbach's coefficient alpha, EFA, the descriptive statistics, and correlation and mediation analysis. The main statistical analyses were conducted to answer research questions and results of analyses are reported in two parts. First, descriptive statistics and reliabilities of measurements are reported. Second, statistical analyses are reported using correlations and mediation results. An alpha (significance) level of 0.05 was set for all statistical analysis ($p < .05$).

Cronbach's coefficient alpha

In this study, reliability of scales was conducted for three utilized instruments and summarized in Table 5. Cronbach's alpha, associated with variation accounted for by a true score of a hypothetical variable measured (Santos, 1999), was used to check internal consistency of items in constructs. 0.70 ($\alpha > .70$) is generally considered as the cutoff value of Cronbach's alpha for internal consistency of an instrument (Kline, 2011). As illustrated in Table 5, all instruments and their sub-dimensions were reliable.

Table 5.

Summary of Reliability for Each Measure

Construct	Items	Reliability (α)
Employee trust	7	.914
Employee engagement	9	.911
Vigor	3	.861
Dedication	3	.852
Absorption	3	.768
Corporate social responsibility	16	.928
Environment	4	.881
Employee	5	.870
Community	4	.822
Consumer	3	.780

Exploratory Factor Analysis

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to determine how items utilized in this study related or loaded onto various constructs. As illustrated in Table 6, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity were utilized to ensure

whether sample data met minimum criteria for factor analysis. Kaiser (1974) recommended that values greater than 0.5 as acceptable. However, Hutcheson and Sofroniou (1999) stated that values between 0.5 and 0.7 are mediocre, values between 0.7 and 0.8 are good, values above 0.8 are great. The KMO for combined items (KMO=.944) in this study exceeded the .9 value, therefore factor analysis is appropriate for this data. Similarly, a significant Bartlett test implies that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix. Therefore, there are some relationships between variables that can be included in the analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). For this data, Bartlett’s test is highly significant ($p < 0.001$), and therefore factor analysis is appropriate.

Table 6.

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.874
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1887.417
	Df	28
	Sig.	.000

Communalities were inspected to determine how well the solution (i.e., constructs extracted) accounted for variance of each item. The communalities in the column labelled extraction reflect common variance in data structure. For example, 67.5% of the variance associated with question CSR-1 is common, or shared variance. The communalities for the 32 items are shown in Table 7. Communalities exceeded the minimum criterion value of .30 (Warner, 2013), indicating that variance in each item was sufficiently captured in the factor solution.

Table 7.

Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
CSR-1: ENVIRONMENT	1.000	.675
CSR-2: EN	1.000	.710
CSR-3: EN	1.000	.760
CSR-4: EN	1.000	.684
CSR-5: COMMUNITY	1.000	.496
CSR-6: COM	1.000	.602
CSR-7: COM	1.000	.513
CSR-8: COM	1.000	.628
CSR-9: EMPLOYEE	1.000	.640
CSR-10: EM	1.000	.567
CSR-11: EM	1.000	.711
CSR-12: EM	1.000	.456
CSR-13: EM	1.000	.525
CSR-14: CONSUMER	1.000	.592
CSR-15: CON	1.000	.540
CSR-16: CON	1.000	.576
TRUST I	1.000	.758
TRUST 2	1.000	.657
TRUST 3	1.000	.791
TRUST 4	1.000	.730
TRUST 5	1.000	.562
TRUST 6	1.000	.519
TRUST 7	1.000	.718
EE_1: VIGOR	1.000	.635
EE_2: VIGOR	1.000	.660
EE_3: VIGOR	1.000	.679
EE4: DEDICATION	1.000	.769
EE5: DEDICATION	1.000	.705
EE6: DEDICATION	1.000	.485
EE7: ABSORPTION	1.000	.552
EE8: ABSORPTION	1.000	.700
EE9: ABSORPTION	1.000	.492

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Descriptive Statistics

A total of 42 survey questions were used in this study, which are comprised of 16 items for corporate social responsibility, 7 items for employee trust, 9 items for employee engagement, and 7 items for demographic variables. Table 8 presents distribution of participants' answers to the demographic questions. Study participants were individuals employed in retail industry across United States, mostly graduated from Texas A&M University. The demographic variables included in the study are: (a) gender, (b) age, (c) marital status, (d) tenure in retail industry, (e) religious preference, (f) ethnicity, and (g) work type. Of the total 391 participants, 192 were male, and 198 were female, which was a corresponding distribution of 49.1% and 50.6% respectively, only one participant did respond to this question. The age range of participants with the highest level of participation was 24 to 39 years (Millennials, n=217, 55.5%) followed by 18 to 23 (Gen Z, n=83, 21.2%), 40 to 55 (Gen X, n=70, 17.9%), and (Baby Boomers, n=21, 5.4%). For marital status, 164 (41.9%) were single, 146 (37.3%) married, and 81 (20.7%) in a relationship. For tenure in retail question, 138 participants (35.3%) were in retail industry between 2- 6 years, which was closely followed by 135 (34.5%) participants who were in the retail industry for more than 6 years, 81(20.7%) between 6 months to 2 years, and 37 (9.5%) less than six months. 176 (45%) of them were religious, 79 (20.2%) non-religious, 71 (18.2%) spiritual but non-religious, 43 (11%) spiritual, and 22 (5.6%) preferred not to answer to religion question. The majority were white (n=234, 59.8%) followed by Hispanic/Latino (n= 94, 24%), Asian (n=28, 7.2%), Black/African American (n=20, 5.1%), other (n=8, 2%), and Middle Eastern or North African (n=7, 1.8%). The sample was comprised of mostly full-time employees (n=300, 76.7%).

Table 8.

Demographic Characteristics

<i>Participants Demographics</i>		<i>N</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	
Gender	Male	390	192	49.1	
	Female		198	50.6	
Age	18-23	391	83	21.2	
	24-39		217	55.5	
	40-55		70	17.9	
	56-75		21	5.4	
Marital status	Single	391	164	41.9	
	Married		146	37.3	
	In a relationship		81	20.7	
Tenure in retail industry	Less than 6 months	391	37	9.5	
	Between 6 months to 2 years		81	20.7	
	Between 2 to 6 years		138	35.3	
	More than 6 years		135	34.5	
Religious preference	Religious	391	176	45.0	
	Spiritual		43	11.0	
	Spiritual but non-religious		71	18.2	
	Non-religious		79	20.2	
	Prefer not to answer		22	5.6	
Ethnicity	Black or African American	391	20	5.1	
	White		234	59.8	
	Hispanic or Latino		94	24.0	
	Middle Eastern or North African		7	1.8	
	Asian		28	7.2	
	Other		8	2.0	

Work Type	Part-time	391	90	23.0
	Full-time		300	76.7

The following table shows means and standard deviations for all variables.

Table 9.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
CSR	391	1.00	5.00	3.92	.78696
Trust	391	1.00	5.00	3.96	.99765
Engagement	391	1.00	5.00	3.71	.86631
Valid N (listwise)	391				

Correlations

A bivariate correlation matrix of the demographic variables and main construct of the study is illustrated in Table 9. The interpretation of the correlation coefficients varies: for example, Evans (1996) stated when the coefficient value lies between ± 0.60 and ± 1 , it is a strong correlation and when it lies between ± 0.40 and ± 0.59 , it is a moderate and anything between $- 0.39$ and $+ 0.39$ is a weak correlation. Scholars have affirmed that in social sciences if the coefficient value is greater than $+ 0.49$ it is considered a strong correlation, and if it is between ± 0.28 and ± 0.49 , then a medium correlation, and correlational coefficients between -0.28 and $+ 0.28$ are weak (Cohen, 1988). In this study, I interpret the values by using ratings from Cohen (1988).

Table 10 illustrates correlations between main constructs (perceive CSR, employee engagement, and employee trust) and demographic variables (gender, age, marital status, work type, ethnicity, tenure in retail, and religious preference). The table displays that CSR was significantly correlated with employee engagement ($r=0.601$, $p <.01$) and employee trust ($r=0.751$, $p <.01$), which means that those who have a high perception of CSR activities tend to be more engaged

with their work and also have a high level of trust toward their organization. Employee engagement was also significantly correlated with employee trust ($r=0.571$, $p < .01$), which manifests that when employees trust their employers they tend to have a greater work engagement. Results suggested a strong (Cohen, 1988) positive relation among the main constructs and very weak relation among demographic variables and three main variables.

Table 10.

Correlation Matrix

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Gender										
2. Marital	.112*									
3. Age	-0.038	0.092								
4. Work Type	-0.060	0.085	.327**							
5. Tenure in retail	0.031	.124*	.437**	.266**						
6. Religion	-.118*	0.038	0.010	-0.004	0.076					
7. Race	0.027	-0.076	-.102*	-0.079	-.229**	.108*				
8. CSR	0.018	-0.014	-.103*	0.067	-.100*	-.163**	0.013			
9. Trust	0.043	-0.052	-0.095	-0.026	-.186**	-.146**	0.047	.751**		
10. Engagement	0.019	0.054	0.067	.116*	-0.098	-.193**	0.009	.601**	.571**	

Note N=391

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

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

Relationship between CSR and employee engagement

The study's first research question was: What relationship (if any) exists between CSR and employee work engagement?

As shown in Table 11, the relationship between perceived CSR and employee work engagement exhibited a strong degree of positive correlation at .60 with a confidence interval of 95% and a

statistical significance of $p \leq 0.01$. This means the higher the employee's perceptions of CSR, the higher their overall level of work engagement within the organization.

Table 11.

Correlation between Perceived CSR and employee engagement

		Perceived CSR	Employee Engagement
Pearson Correlation	Perceived CSR	1	.601
	Employee Engagement	.601	1
Sig.	Perceived CSR	.	.001
	Employee Engagement	.001	.
N	Perceived CSR	391	391
	Employee Engagement	391	391

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Sub-constructs between CSR and employee work engagement

Based on the main purpose of this study, I did not have to include sub-constructs for each step of data analysis. But in order to make sure all of the sub-constructs of CSR have significant and positive relationship with employee engagement, I used SPSS to check the correlation. Table 11A illustrates how CSR sub-constructs correlates with employee engagement. As the results of this section indicated all of the sub-constructs are significantly correlated and numbers are almost in one range, I will focus of dependent and independent variables without measuring the sub-constructs effects.

Table 12A.

Sub-constructs correlations between CSR and employee engagement

CSR sub-construct	Vigor	Dedication	Absorption
Environment	.497**	.528**	.369**
Employee	.545**	.542**	.398**
Community	.412**	.440**	.374**
Consumer	.398**	.391**	.316**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Trust mediation between CSR and employee work engagement

The second research question for this study was: Does employee trust mediate the relationship between CSR and employee work engagement?

Direct relationships were investigated between perceived CSR and employee engagement; perceived CSR and employee trust; and employee trust and employee engagement. The mediating effect of employee trust on perceived CSR was the independent variable and employee engagement was the dependent variable. A bootstrapping method with PROCESS macro (version 3.5) by Hayes (2018) on SPSS 28 was used. Model 4 of PROCESS macro, dealing with mediation, was employed and demographic variables (gender, age, marital status, work type, ethnicity, tenure in retail, and religious preference) were controlled during mediation analysis.

As shown in table 12, the direct effect ($B = .65$, $p < .0001$, $CI = .56$ to $.73$) and indirect effect are both significant ($B = .24$, $CI = .12$ to $.33$). This indicated that employee trust partially mediates the relationship between perceived CSR and employee engagement. Employee trust accounted for part of the relationship between perceived CSR and employee engagement, but, perceived CSR still predicted employee engagement even when taking employee trust into account. The first variable represented the constant (Y intercept), height of regression line when

it crossed employee engagement axis. In other words, this is the predicted value when other variables are zero. (B stands for unstandardized coefficient and CI is confidence interval).

Table 13.

Total effects between Perceived CSR and employee engagement

<i>Outcome variable: employee engagement</i>						
R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.64	.40	.46	32.30	8.00	380.00	.0000
Main Model						
	Coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	.86	.30	2.85	.0047	.27	1.46
Perceived CSR	.65	.04	14.42	.0000	.56	.73

Table 13 and figure 3 show that perceived CSR positively, significantly impacts employee trust (B =.95, $p < .0001$, CI=.86 to 1.03) and employee engagement (B =.43, CI=.29 to .55) in my proposed model.

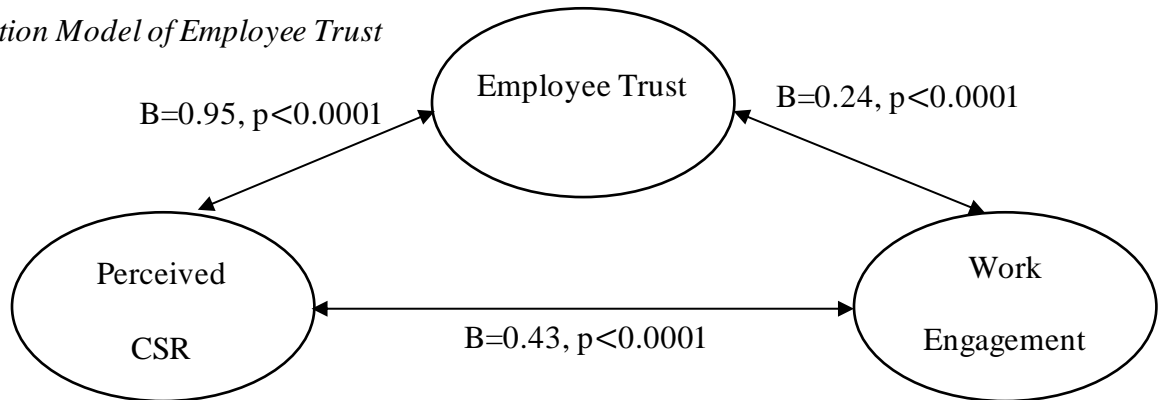
Table 14.

Direct and indirect effects

Model	Coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Perceived CSR → Trust	.95	.42	22.04	.0000	.86	1.03
Trust → Engagement	.24	.052	4.54	.0000	.13	.33
Perceived CSR → Engagement	.43	.06	6.40	.0000	.29	.55

Figure 3.

Mediation Model of Employee Trust



Mediation Analysis Using SEM

In this step, I decided to double check my findings by using STATA 16 and the capability of structural equation modelling (SEM) for mediation. The Stata package provides a post-estimation command testing mediational hypotheses using Baron and Kenny's (1986) approach modified by Iacobucci et al. (2007), this is after estimating the concerned mediational model with the built-in SEM command of Stata. I checked the direct and indirect impacts of CSR on employee engagement and the result was almost

similar to what we found by using PROCESS. The findings from structural equation modeling analysis method through STATA v16 software are shown in table 14 and figure 4. This method also showed employee trust partially mediates the relationship between perceived CSR and employee engagement.

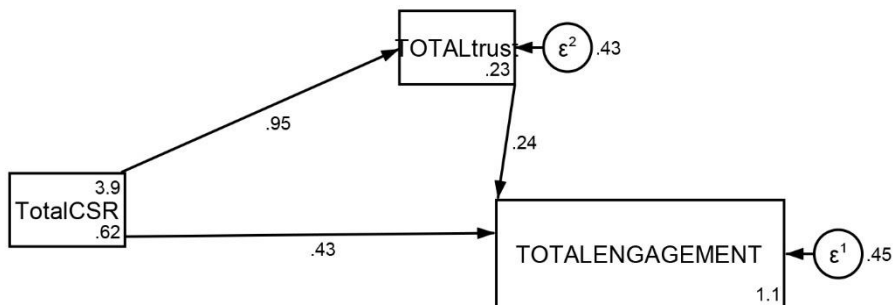
Table 14.

Direct and indirect effects

Composite	Coeff	SE	p	95% CI
Perceived CSR → Trust	.95	.04	.0000	.87; 1.03
Trust → Engagement	.24	.05	.0000	.14; .34
Perceived CSR → Engagement	.43	.06	.0000	.30; .56

Figure 4.

SEM Path Model for the Relationship Between Perceived CSR, employee trust, and employee engagement



Summary

In this chapter, I presented the study's findings and results of the research. These results show a statistically significant correlation between perceived CSR (independent variable), employee engagement (dependent variable), and employee trust (mediator).

The mediation analysis was

conducted using SPSS v28 with the PROCESS version 3.5 macro (Hayes, 2018) and structural equation modeling (STATA v16) to test for direct and indirect effects.

Findings from both analyses indicated that while there is a statistically significant relationship between perceived CSR and engagement, employee trust partially mediated this relationship among retail industry employees. The results also indicated importance of employee perception on CSR activities as well as employee trust to improve employee work engagement. The occurrence of mediation effects in the proposed model is further confirmed with STATA (Sobel-test method), This was intended to further confirm and validate the first result obtained via PROCESS macro (bootstrap confidence interval method). Chapter 5 contains a summary of the key findings, implications for practice, and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, I discuss main findings obtained based on research questions and main objectives. Initially, I revisit the study's primary purpose and the research questions. I also intend to discuss the research findings regarding previous empirical evidence available in the literature. In this chapter, theoretical and practical implications of the results are also presented. Moreover, limitations, suggestions for future research, and conclusion sections will be at the end of the chapter.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this dissertation is to expand CSR literature by addressing whether CSR can contribute to employee work engagement. In addition, mediating effects of employee trust was examined in this relationship. The research questions guiding this study are:

1. What relationship (if any) exists between CSR and employee work engagement?
2. Does organizational trust mediate the relationship between CSR and employee work engagement?

Summary of the Study

While CSR practices are pervasive, there is little research on whether employee perceptions on CSR could have an impact on employees' attitudes and behaviors in the workplace. Although CSR has become one of the most important business trends for sustainability and competitiveness, there is not enough evidence to show how employees' perceptions on CSR can improve employee work engagement. In a

competitive environment, it is essential that corporations try to motivate their employees for higher work engagement. Hence, it is imperative to understand how employee perceptions of CSR impacts work engagement.

Review of the literature highlighted that CSR practices result in more engaged employees, but it did not provide a clear understanding of underlying mechanisms, because most researchers have focused on the direct relationship of CSR activities with employee behaviors. In this study, the mediating role of employee trust is also tested to discover its impacts on the relationship between employees' perception of CSR and employee engagement.

All of participants were working in the US retail industry. The research was conducted on LinkedIn (N=358) and Amazon Mechanical Turk (N=55) and reached a total 423 responses. During data cleaning process, 32 cases were removed and a total of 391 surveys were kept for data analysis. Respondents were 49% male and 51% female. Age-wise, 55.5% of participants were Millennials, 21.2% Gen Z, 17.9% Gen X, and 5.4% were Baby boomers. Regarding ethnicity, 60% were white, 24% Hispanic, 7% Asian, 5% African Americans, 2% other, 2% Middle Eastern or North African. The sample was comprised of mostly full-time employees (77%). In addition, 45% of participants were religious, 20% non-religious, 18% spiritual but non-religious, 11% spiritual, and 6% preferred not to answer the religion question. Also, for years of employment in the retail industry, data indicated that 70 percent of participants had been working in this industry for more than 2 years.

To find answers for research questions, which involved the mediation effect,

PROCESS (Hayes, 2018) was used to analyze data. The findings from this study indicated that there is a significant relationship between employee's perception of CSR and employee work engagement. In this study, I also found that employee trust partially mediates the relationship between perceived CSR and employee engagement. Through study, I was also able to fill a gap in the literature by providing data to support the relationship between perceived CSR and employee work engagement by highlighting importance of employee trust.

Discussion

Guided by theory and research, in this section I discuss results for each research question. The findings affirmed that there are statistically significant, meaningful relations between perceived CSR and employee engagement and employee trust partially mediates relationship between CSR and employee engagement. The results also indicated that there is no significant relationship between demographic data and the model's main variables. My data collection process started on June 17th and ended on 7th of August of 2020. During this time, the US retail industry was undergoing the COVID-19 crisis. By analyzing _results, I found when corporations engage in socially responsible initiatives and express care and concern for the society, employees develop trust toward their organizations and become more engaged in their duties.

Relationship Between CSR and Employee Work Engagement

In the first research question, my goal was to discover if there is a relationship between CSR and employee work engagement in the US retail industry. The correlation analysis results revealed that the answer was positive, as there is a strong degree of

positive correlation between the two variables. Which means the more employees perceive that their company is engaging in socially-responsible activities, the more they are engaged in their duties. This is not surprising, as CSR activities have been identified as a predictor of employees' positive attitudes and behaviors in the workplace (Hameed et al, 2019; Jung, & Ali, 2017; Lu et al 2020).

While the majority of researchers agreed that there is a positive relationship between CSR and employee work engagement, the results are varied based on the country and industry. One study surveyed Procter & Gamble and Unilever employees in Greece illustrated there is a weak relationship ($B = 0.251$, $p < 0.05$) between perceived CSR and employee work engagement (Tsourvakas and Yfantido, 2018). Another study conducted by Yeo and Carter (2018) in Malaysia, where they surveyed 250 small and mid-size enterprises employees and found there is a moderate relationship ($B = 0.424$, $p < 0.001$) between perceived CSR and employee engagement. Moreover, Glavas (2016) surveyed 15,184 workers from a US professional service company and found there is a very strong relationship ($B = 0.837$, $p < 0.001$) in this subject.

The result from my study showed that there is a strong relationship ($B = 0.646$, $p < .0001$) between perceived CSR and employee engagement, which is in agreement with findings from previous studies (Chaudhary, 2017; Ferreira, & Oliveira, 2014; Hosseini et al, 2021; Kaewchird et al, 2021). While many CSR related studies have focused on CSR impacts on employee engagement and financial performance, little research has determined how and why CSR activities influence employees' work engagement and underlying mechanisms are not clear (Farrukh et al, 2020).

Based on my data analysis, I found there is strong relationship between perceived CSR and employee engagement. These findings make me to ask the question of why the results are different in different studies? What are the factors that cause to achieve different results? Could we conclude that the correlation between perceived CSR and employee engagement is stronger in the US compare to other countries or other factors such as employee awareness, the quality of CSR activities, CSR communication, organizational culture, and the nature of industry might have positive or negative impacts on employee perceptions.

Discussing Results for Mediating Effect Relationship

In the second research question, my goal was to discover if employee trust mediates the relationship between CSR and employee work engagement in US retail industry. In this stage, my finding revealed that employee trust has a positive relationship with perceived CSR and employee engagement. The responses provided suggested that employee trust partially mediated the relationship between perceptions of CSR and employee engagement. I found that greater engagement in CSR activities leads to greater employee trust ($B=0.95$, $p < 0.001$) in the US retail industry. This finding is consistent with previous studies from other industries (Bugandwa et al., 2021; Farooq et al., 2014; Yadav et al., 2018) and highlights the importance of employee trust. I was able to show there is a strong connection between perceived CSR and employee trust in the US retail industry. We can also conclude that US employees in the retail industry trust their organizations' CSR activities.

The positive impact of employee trust on employee engagement supports previous studies. While majority of scholars have found a positive correlation between employee trust and engagement, strength of the relationship between variables were different. For example, Wang and Hsieh (2013) surveyed 386 Taiwanese employees from manufacturing industry and Gaji et al (2017) surveyed 520 Nigerian employees from banking industry; both groups of scholars found a strong relationship between employee trust and employee engagement respectively $B=0.64$ and $B=0.714$. Soni and Mehta (2020) examined 485 employees across selected banks in India and Kaewchird et al (2021) surveyed 633 Thai employees from 100 companies found a weak ($B=0.13$) and moderate ($B=0.43$) relationship between employee trust and employee engagement. In my study the direct correlation between employee trust and engagement was strong ($B=0.75$). By comparing different studies, we can find employee trust can have strong moderate or weak correlation with employee engagement in different organizations or industries.

While employee trust partially mediated the relationship between perceptions of CSR and employee engagement, it is still one of the important factors that can significantly impacts on CSR-engagement linkage. It also offers useful insights into the underlying mechanism of CSR–employee engagement connection and can help to improve employee work engagement.

Implications

In this section, practical and theoretical implications of this study are discussed from a general perspective. The study explored the relationship between perceived CSR

and employee engagement. The findings could be beneficial to the areas of CSR, employee engagement and the integration of CSR and engagement; and would be beneficial to retail industry by providing insights to the perceptions of organizational CSR initiatives and helping business leaders to ascertain the impact of CSR programs on employee attitudes and behaviors.

Implications for Practice

The existing literature, as well as this study, have shown that the positive perception of CSR strongly influences employee work engagement. With this evidence, it would be a good strategy for business leaders to maintain CSR as an integral part of their organization. This means they need to have CSR in organization's business strategy, as part of their goals and values, and part of their organizational culture. This suggestion goes beyond adopting CSR as a marketing tool and emphasis to foster authentic practices. Business leaders need to operate their organizations in a socially responsible manner to have the highest impact on their employees' engagement. Due to the strong connection between CSR and employee engagement, I suggest business leaders to communicate their CSR activities with their employees and include them in implementation and design stages. For effective communication about CSR initiatives, they can use company websites, social media, bulletin boards, internal communication channels, emails, and presentations.

I found that employee trust can partially mediate the relationship between perceived CSR and employee engagement, and as such have strong implications for practice. Even though employee trust was not the full mediator, and the study was

conducted in context of the US retail industry, results can highlight the value of CSR practices to increase employee trust which positively improve engagement. Based on these results, we can also suggest that organizational leaders across countries from different industries should plan for practical strategies to increase employee awareness in CSR activities. This study also has practical implications for HRD professionals as it highlights the importance of CSR activities in terms of learning/training opportunities. Increasing employee awareness about their employer's socially responsible practices during training and development programs can positively impact employee's engagement.

In this study, I discovered that perceived CSR is a strong predictor of employee trust. Employee trust is one of the most valuable assets that any organization could have (Edelman Global Trust Barometer, 2018). Trust is an essential factor to create employee engagement in any organization (Vragel, 2013). Previous researchers stated that employee trust can improve operational efficiency, increase exchange of knowledge and information between employees and leads to constructive workplace behaviors, and reduce organizations' costs (Chughtai and Buckley, 2009). Organizational leaders can benefit from this research by realizing that employees feel engaged when their organization contributes to society. The results would also be useful for policymakers to formulate organizations' main strategies, emphasizing on CSR practices. Furthermore, results provide an important management implication that organizations, through CSR, can cultivate trust of employees in the organization, to influence positive behavior such as employee engagement.

Implications for Theory

I was able to contribute to the existing literature for CSR and employee engagement by providing empirical evidence that there is a significant positive relationship between the perceived CSR and overall employee engagement. This relationship demonstrates that the stronger the employee's perception of CSR, the stronger their self-reported employee engagement at their current place of employment. While the results are varied in different studies and previous scholars have reported weak, moderate, and strong relationship between CSR and employee engagement, it will be beneficial to discover the underlying reasons for these differences. It is also not clear if employees who work in different industries have different reactions towards CSR programs. Researchers can also compare impacts of specific CSR activities to see what programs might have higher impacts on employee engagement.

This study is an important bridge between CSR and employee engagement, as a majority of previous scholars linked CSR to customer-related outcomes or financial profits. The findings can also illustrate a new direction for future researchers to examine more perceptual moderators or mediators (in addition to organizational trust) to identify impacts on links between CSR and employee engagement. The finding of this research was also aligned with the concept of social exchange theory. As employees perceive CSR activities, the transaction in the social exchange relationship obligates them to have higher trust and reciprocate through employment engagement.

Limitations

Although results of this study appear to be promising with regards to the significant role of employee trust in promoting employee engagement, there are some limitations that have to be considered. First, this study was conducted in the US retail industry. In addition, results obtained in the US cannot be generalized for other countries and cultures. Hence, future studies need to be undertaken to validate variables' relationship in other cultures.

Second, the study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the US retail industry and its employees were under high financial pressure. This situation might positively or negatively impact employee judgments toward their employer. Some organizations might have stopped their CSR activities due to their financial instability, and grocery stores and pharmacies were struggling with labor shortages. Studies were also showing the pandemic increased work-family balance issues and mental health issues among US employees. Lan et al (2021) pointed the need for mental healthcare for grocery store workers. due to risk of anxiety and depression.

Third, employees might answer based on their perceptions on the level of their work engagement, which could be different from reality as "the healthy person is prone to self-deceptive positivity" (Paulhus, & Reid, 1991, p. 307). Therefore, direct observations or interviews might achieve different level of engagement. In addition, survey questions might not be able to estimate the exact value of each construct, and some variables such as employee engagement are deeper than it could be measured by any scale.

Forth, I was not able to collect data from employees who choose not to respond, and this result may only generalize employees willing to respond to the survey. Therefore, the result cannot guarantee “representativeness” for all groups of interests in the organization. For example, if the minorities from a specific group don’t respond to this survey, I might face the no-response error due to data collection failure from all selected population elements. Last, the length of survey or form of survey questions also could be another limitation, which might cause answering without enough consideration.

Suggestions for Future Research

These results contributed to the research on CSR and employee engagement by exploring the partial mediation of employee trust. Based on results and limitations of this study, the following suggestions are made for the future research: All participants were from US retail industry. Replicating the study using different samples from other industries/countries, using different formats of data collection, as well as using different methods of data collection, such as in depth/qualitative observations can show the generalizability of the results. Future studies can also determine how additional mediating factors impact the relationship between CSR and employee engagement. I recommend testing mediating effects of supportive culture, justice environment, ethical climate, value congruence, work–life balance, and organizational commitment to discover underlying mechanisms of CSR–employee engagement connection. While demographic data did not have any considerable impact on CSR– employee engagement relationship, I recommend other researchers replicating this study to examine the role of participants’ education level. Finally, I recommend future researchers to determine if

communicating CSR activities with employees or ethics training could improve the impact of CSR on employee engagement.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to expand CSR literature by addressing whether CSR can contribute to employee work engagement through mediation of employee trust and to what degree. This study was aimed to address two research questions. First, was to explore if there is any correlation between CSR and employee engagement, and the second was to examine the mediating role of employee trust between CSR and employee work engagement. The results suggest that a strong degree of correlation exists between perceived CSR and employee engagement, and employee trust partially mediates the relationship between perceived CSR and employee engagement.

The retail industry is the main contributor to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in many countries. In the US, this industry supports one in four jobs and contributes over \$2.6 trillion to the US annual GDP, which shows that retail industry is the daily barometer for the nation's economy. Simultaneously, retail is infamous as an unhappy industry that has one of the highest employee turnover rates in the US, due to demanding work environment and low pay. Previous studies also showed high levels of turnover, and low employee satisfaction can negatively impact employee engagement while CSR activities can improve the work engagement level.

Upon concluding this study, I can affirm that these results may motivate retail industry leaders to increase their level of participation in CSR practices and promote socially-responsible activities to improve employee engagement, thereby strengthening

the organizational foundations that promote economic prosperity and employee wellbeing.

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APPENDIX A

STUDY DESCRIPTION AND INFORMED CONSENT

How social responsibility programs impacts employee

You are invited to participate in this study, as we are trying to identify if corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities can contribute to employee trust and work engagement in organizations. This study aims to collect data from employees who are working for a retail company. Participants must be 18 years of age or older.

The information will be collected for a Ph.D. dissertation. The results of the research study may be published but participants will not be identified, as no direct personal identifiers will be collected.

Qualtrics is the platform utilized for the survey, and the company's confidentiality policy is here: <https://www.qualtrics.com/security-statement/>.

Your participation in this survey will provide a better understanding concerning the purpose of this survey and result will help with Identifying the importance of corporations participation in socially responsible activities and its impacts on employee feelings and behaviors toward their organization.

If you have any questions regarding this research, feel free to contact the project PI Dr. Khalil M. Dirani at the e-mail: dirani@tamu.edu or by phone: (979) 845-5356

if you continue to participate in the study, It indicate that you understand this information and give consent to participate in the survey. If you do not wish to participate, please close the page and discontinue.

Really appreciate your time and support.

APPENDIX B

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Demographic Information

This section attempts to obtain demographic information about respondents. Please select one

appropriate response or provide one answer to each question.

Q1 What is your gender?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)
- Other (3)

Q2 Martial status

- Single (1)
- Married (2)
- In a relationship (3)
- Prefer not to answer (4)

Q3 What is the age group that best fits you?

- 18-23 (1)
- 24-39 (2)
- 40-55 (3)
- 56-75 (4)
- 76 and above (5)

Q4 What is your Work Type

- Part time (1)
- Full time (2)

Q5 Tenure in retail industry

- Less than 6 months (1)
- Between 6 months to 2 years (2)
- Between 2 to 6 years (3)
- More than 6 years (4)

Q6 Tenure in retail industry

- Less than 6 months (1)
- Between 6 months to 2 years (2)
- Between 2 to 6 years (3)
- More than 6 years (4)

Q7 How do you describe yourself:

- religious (1)
- spiritual (2)
- spiritual but non-religious (3)
- non-religious (4)
- Prefer not to answer (5)

Q8 What is your race/ethnicity?

- Black or African American (1)
- White (2)
- Hispanic or Latino (3)
- Middle eastern or north African (4)
- Asian (5)
- Other (6)

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY SURVEY

Part one: Please rate your **level of agreement** with the statements below:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Our company participates in activities which aim to protect and improve the quality of the natural environment. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our company makes investment to create a better life for future generations. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Our company implements special programs to minimize its negative impact on the natural environment. (3)



Our company targets sustainable growth which considers future generations.



(4)

Our company supports nongovernmental organizations working in problematic areas.



(5)

Our company contributes to campaigns and projects that promote the well-being of the society. (6)



Our company encourages its employees to participate in voluntarily activities. (7)



Our company policies encourage the employees to develop their skills and careers. (8)



The management of
our company is
primarily concerned
with employees
needs and wants. (9)

Our company
implements flexible
policies to provide a
good work & life
balance for its
employees. (10)

The managerial
decisions related
with the employees
are usually fair. (11)

Our company
supports employees
who want to acquire
additional education.

(12)

Our company respects consumer rights beyond the legal requirements.

(13)

Our company provides full and accurate information about its products to its customers. (14)

Customer satisfaction is highly important for our company. (15)

Our company gives adequate contributions to Charities. (16)

EMPLOYEE TRUST SURVEY

Part two, Please rate your level of **agreement** with the statements below:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I believe my employer has high integrity. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can expect my employer to treat me in a consistent and predictable fashion. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In general, I believe my employers motives and intentions are good. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My employer is open and upfront with me. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

My employer is not
always honest and
truthful. (5)

I dont think my
employer treats me
fairly. (6)

I am not sure I
fully trust my
employer. (7)

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Part three (Last part) Please rate your level of **agreement** with the statements below:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
At my work, I feel that I am bursting with energy. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
At my job, I feel strong and vigorous. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am enthusiastic about my job. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My job inspires me. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am proud of the work that I do. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel happy when I am working intensely. (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I am immersed in my
work. (8)

I get carried away when
I am working. (9)

Thank you for your participation.

Please press the "NEXT" button.

APPENDIX C

EMAIL/MESSAGE TO RETAIL INDUSTRY EMPLOYEES

Subject: Ph.D. candidate from Texas A&M University seeking survey assistance

Dear Mr./Mrs.

Hope you are doing well. I am requesting your assistance to complete my Ph.D. dissertation from Texas A&M University on corporate social responsibility. My research is on CSR's impact on an employee's trust, value congruence, sense of justice, and organizational engagement.

If you are willing to participate in my brief survey, we can identify valuable inputs, such as:

1. How your firm's CSR activities influence an employee's level of trust.
2. If employees feel their values align with the company structure and leadership.
3. If CSR contributes positively with an employee's sense of justice regarding the organization.
4. If CSR motivates the employee, causing higher job engagement.

These are valuable inputs for an HR department in an organization, as this academic-level data can be utilized to further develop CSR programs. The data will be categorized by gender, age, education level, ethnicity, and work experience. Furthermore, we can also identify the employee's perception of the ethical climate in your organization.

Responses are confidential, with only the aggregate data included in my dissertation. I

will gladly share the results of my study if you want. Here is the web-link to access the survey:

https://tamucehd.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4G8pf3hn4NLxWYJ

If you have any questions regarding this research, feel free to contact Dr. Khalil M.

Dirani, my advisor, at dirani@tamu.edu or 979-845-5356. He is the Human Resource Development chair at Texas A&M University. Your assistance is necessary to complete my academic journey, and I would be highly grateful if you decide to help me.

Sincerely,

IRB NUMBER: IRB2019-1419M

IRB APPROVAL DATE: 01/31/2020

Amin Alizadeh

Doctoral student and graduate assistant

Educational Administration and Human Resource Development

Texas A&M University

Phone: 979-446-4562

Email: [ameen59@tamu.edu.com](mailto:ameen59@tamu.edu)

INITIAL MESSAGE ON LINKEDIN

Howdy dear fellow Aggie,

I hope my message finds you well and healthy,

This is Amin from A&M University. Since January 2020, I am in the process of collecting data for my dissertation, which is on corporate social responsibility and

employees' trust in the retail industry. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, it has become almost impossible to have direct access to retail organizations.

Therefore, I am having to change my data collection strategy. I wanted to ask if you could take my survey? It has 37 questions (with agree-disagree answers). My research seeks to highlight the importance of social responsibility and create a more functional workplace, and your input can help me highlight the important points.

The survey can be accessed by clicking this weblink: <https://lnkd.in/ekvakGk>

If you have any questions regarding this research, feel free to contact Dr. Khalil M. Dirani, my advisor, at dirani@tamu.edu or 979-845-5356. He is the Human Resource Development chair at Texas A&M University.

This research proposal was approved on January 31, 2020, TAMU IRB Number 2019-1419M. I sincerely appreciate your assistance in completing my academic journey.

Amin Alizadeh

Texas A&M PhD. Candidate and Graduate Teaching Assistant

APPENDIX D

TEXAS A&M IRB APPROVAL

DIVISION OF RESEARCH



EXEMPTION DETERMINATION (Common Rule –Effective January, 2018)

May 28, 2020

Any study that requires in person or face-to-face study visits may not begin or resume until your site has an approved plan that adheres to the re-opening guidelines posted on the Division of Research's VPR website: <https://vpr.tamu.edu/covid-19>. This plan is to be sent to your Department Chair and Dean, then forwarded to the Clinical Research, Education and Service Advisory Committee for approval.

Type of Review:	IRB Amendment
Title:	Measuring Mediating Effects of Trust on Perceived Corporate Social Responsibility and Work Engagement
Investigator:	Khalil Dirani
IRB ID:	IRB2019-1419M
Reference Number:	109699
Funding:	Internal Funds
Documents Reviewed:	IRB- Mturk Survey Consent Script-AMIN 1.0 email_for_participants COVID19 1.0
Review Category	Category 2: Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met: i. The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; ii. Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or iii. The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by .111(a)(7).

Dear Khalil Dirani:

The HRPP determined on May 28, 2020 that this research meets the criteria for Exemption in accordance with 45 CFR 46.104.

This determination applies only to the activities described in this IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. Please use the reviewed, stamped study documents (available in iRIS) for applicable study procedures (e.g. recruitment, consent, data collection, etc...). If changes are needed to stamped study documents or study procedures, you must immediately contact the IRB. You may be required to submit a new request to the IRB.

750 Agronomy Road, Suite 2701
1186 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-1186

Tel. 979.458.1467 Fax. 979.862.3176
<http://rcb.tamu.edu>

Your exemption is good for three (3) years from the Approval Start Date (01/31/2020). Thirty days prior to that time, you will be sent an Administrative Check-In Notice to provide an update on the status of your study.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRB Administrative Office at 1-979-458-4067, toll free at 1-855-795-8636.

Sincerely,
IRB Administration