

Social Exclusion and CSR Brand Warmth – An Embodied Cognition Approach

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Abstract

While social exclusion is mainly driven by a lack of sense of belonging, socially excluded people also physically feel cold. Due to the substitutability of physical and social warmth, this paper argues a CSR brand can positively contribute to socially excluded consumers' well-being and reduces the cost of social support. Our four studies jointly suggest this is because the brand warmth associated with a CSR brand makes socially excluded consumers feel closely connected to it. This, in turn, reduces their subsequent needs for physical and social warmth. However, this is moderated by perceived CSR motive, more evident when CSR motive is considered genuine. More important, our results also demonstrate coping with physical coldness is different from anthropomorphizing brands to establish need for belongings.

Keywords: *social exclusion; CSR; brand warmth*

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