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Customers' corporate social responsibility awareness as antecedent of repeat behaviour intention

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Abstract

The aim of the study is mainly to investigate the influence of hotel customers' perception and awareness of corporate social responsibility (CSR) concerning the environmental practices of hotels on the image of the establishments and on repeat behaviour intention (RBI) by said customers. Accordingly, a research model is established which allows an understanding of the underlying mechanism of perceived CSR practices, CSR awareness, hotel image and RBI. The growing interest shown by practitioners to understand the mechanism to achieve sustainable competitive advantage for hotels through their environmental policies and the scarce number of studies analysing customer CSR awareness and its influence on customer green hotels' engagement justify this study. Hence, the study strives to overcome this gap in the CSR literature. Data were collected from hotel guests who have stayed at green hotels in Spain over the last 12 months. The research model was estimated using a variance-based structural equation modelling approach. The findings achieved and future research avenues derived from the study are of great value for both theorists and managers to achieve a sustainable development. The research model proposed can be applied to other tourist agents other than hotels and provide valuable knowledge for practitioners to understand to what extent their managerial CSR practices and their effort to communicate them are perceived by their stakeholders, which in turn influence the stakeholder engagements with those agents with a greater commitment to the environment.

KEYWORDS

CSR awareness, CSR perception, environmental policy, green hotel, hotel image, repeat behaviour intention, stakeholder engagement, sustainable development

1 | INTRODUCTION

In recent years, from an entrepreneurial and social perspective, discussion about corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices towards society has received major and significant attention in the academic literature (González-Rodríguez, Díaz-Fernández, Rueda Elias Spers, & Da Silva Leite, 2016; González-Rodríguez, Díaz-Fernández, & Simonetti, 2013; González-Rodríguez, Díaz-Fernández, & Simonetti, 2016; Rivera, Bigne, & Curras-Perez, 2016). Growing requirements by society towards those practices of firms with a greater orientation

towards their various stakeholders has become evident in all activity sectors (Maignan & Ferrell, 2004). Hence, this continuous pressure from different stakeholders in firms and society as a whole has generated greater concern among managers about the essential aspects required for a company to grow and survive (González-Rodríguez, Díaz-Fernández, & Simonetti, 2015; Rhou, Singal, & Koh, 2016). Thus, major managerial recognition of CSR tasks has emerged and therefore more and more companies are employing CSR in their strategic actions as the best competitive way to obtain optimal outcomes (Suárez-Cebador, Rubio-Romero, Pinto-Contreiras, & Gemar, 2018).

Accordingly, CSR managerial practices are being leveraged by many of these firms to gain not only social legitimacy and reputation but also a source of competitive advantage to guarantee the achievement of their long-term success (Serra-Cantallops, Peña-Mirando, Ramón-Cardona, & Martorell-Cunill, 2018).

Furthermore, CSR practices have also generated great academic interest and consideration. In the same vein, it is worth highlighting how CSR research has evolved, that is, from papers focussing mainly on the relationship between CSR tasks and corporate performance to a new orientation in which social and environmental needs have become the centre of attention (González-Rodríguez, Díaz-Fernández, & Simonetti, 2018). Thus, a new approach to CSR awareness and consumer behaviour has been claimed in the literature (Agarwal & Kasliwal, 2017; Lee, Hsu, Han, & Kim, 2010; Martínez, Pérez, & Rodríguez del Bosque, 2014). In the academic literature on management, it is possible to find a vast number of papers examining the relationship between CSR and corporate performance (Benavides-Velasco, Quintana-García, & Marchante-Lara, 2014; de Grosbois, 2012; Font, Walmsley, Cogotti, McCombes, & Häusler, 2012; Qu, 2009, 2014; Valmohammadi & Ahmadi, 2015; Zhu, 2013), as well as on CSR consumer perceptions and their behaviour towards companies (Gao & Mattila, 2014; Kucukusta, Mak, & Chan, 2013; Li, Fu, & Huang, 2015; Liu, Wong, Shi, Chu, & Brock, 2014; Tsai, Tsang, & Cheng, 2012). However, there are insufficient studies on CSR in the hotel industry (Aminudin, 2013; Cherapanukorn & Focken, 2014; García-Rodríguez & Armas-Cruz, 2007; Henderson, 2007; Holcomb, Upchurch, & Okumus, 2007; Mensah, 2006; Pérez & del Bosque, 2015) and even fewer regarding CSR customer awareness (Golob, Podnar, Koklič, & Zabkar, 2019; Rhou et al., 2016). Academics, such as Liu et al. (2014) and Park and Levy (2014), have pointed out that research on CSR and the hotel industry is not yet conclusive because the number of papers is very limited. Therefore, the findings regarding the influence of CSR on customer response in academic literature is insufficient to date. In this regard, Levy and Park (2011) claimed that a future research avenue is necessary to investigate how CSR affects customer behaviour and consequently, corporate performance, in a specific tourist context such as the hotel industry.

The relevance of the analysis of CSR in the tourism industry (Cheema, Afsar, Al-Ghazali, & Maqsoom, 2019; Kasim, 2006), and in particular, in the hotel industry (Huimin & Ryan, 2011) can be justified on two grounds: by their significant role in the local and global economy and their relevant impact on the local communities. In addition, by increasing recognition of consumer power and high customer concentration in the tourist industry (Bohdanowicz & Zientara, 2009; Gu, Ryan, Bin, & Wei, 2013; Martínez, Pérez, & del Bosque, 2014; Njite, Hancer, & Slevitch, 2011; Serra-Cantallops et al., 2018). Additionally, from a managerial perspective, the interest in analysing CSR is justified because CSR has positive effects on company reputation leading to brand preference and high levels of customer trust and identification with the company. Likewise, these effects will increase customer satisfaction, loyalty, and advocacy. CSR becoming a source of corporate competitive advantage (Fu, Ye, & Law, 2014; Kucukusta et al., 2013; Martínez & del Bosque, 2013; Raub & Blunschi, 2014).

However, it is also necessary to bear in mind that consumers should be aware of the value that these CSR initiatives have for them, for the environment and the local community and, therefore, how customer awareness can influence their CSR perception and behaviour (Pomeroy & Dolnicar, 2009) and consequently on the achievement of a company's results (Amores-Salvado, Martín-de Castro, & Navas-Lopez, 2014).

Based on previous arguments, this study focuses on a deep understanding of the role of CSR in the hotel industry. Accordingly, the main aim of this research is to investigate and to strive to advance in the knowledge necessary to cover an important and existing gap in CSR and hotel industry literature to date on customer awareness and repeat behaviour intention (RBI) (Serra-Cantallops et al., 2018). In this respect, an important issue in our study is customer CSR awareness. Its relevance in the study can be explained using the following arguments. In general, hotel chains advocate allocating part of their budgets to promoting their CSR policies via different channels: corporate websites, social mass media, virtual sites, social networks, among others; however, it is difficult for them to have detailed knowledge about whether potential customers, or even their own customers, are really aware of the hotel management CSR practices. In this case, if consumers are not aware of them, these CSR practices will probably not have a desirable effect on their attitudes and behaviour (Pomeroy & Dolnicar, 2009; Serra-Cantallops et al., 2018) and hence on corporate results. Thus, this study strives to analyse the relationship between CSR customer awareness and customer RBI such as willingness to pay (WTP) more for staying at socially responsible hotels because this relationship is still under-researched (Kang, Stein, Heo, & Lee, 2012).

A research model has been proposed to meet our research requirements. The specification of the model has been based on a broad and thorough review of the literature covering papers that meet the dual condition of focusing mainly on the hotel industry and addressing the issue of CSR from an environmental perspective. The research model is justified by the need to explore the mechanism underlying CSR in the hospitality industry (Bohdanowicz & Zientara, 2009; Font et al., 2012; Holcomb et al., 2007; McGehee, Wattanakamolchai, Perdue, & Calvert, 2009; Tsai, Hsu, Chen, Lin, & Chen, 2010). The proposed model has been tested by using a sample of visitors who have stayed at Spanish green hotels over the last 12 months. This population was asked to rate the main magnitudes of the model: their awareness about environmental practices the hotel follows, perception of hotel environmental practices, the hotel's overall image, and the RBI. Data gathered were analysed using a variance-based structural equation modelling (SEM) approach.

Based on the research model, the following research questions were formulated: (a) Do customers have a better perception of environmental CSR due to a greater awareness of the hotel's environmental practices? (b) Do customers perceive a better hotel image (HI) due to their greater awareness of environmental issues? (c) To what extent does customer awareness of environmental practices influence their RBI such as willingness to pay more for staying at a green hotel and recommending it to others? (d) Do customers perceive a better HI due

to a better awareness of the practices implemented by the hotel? (e) To what extent does a better perception of environmental CSR practices influence customer RBI? And (f) To what extent does HI influence customer RBI? Additionally, the mediating effects in our model are also analysed: (a) Does awareness of environmental issues affect customers' WTP more due to environmental CSR perception? and (b) Does environmental CSR perception affect the customer's willingness to pay more due to a green HI perception?

The importance of the topics analysed in the research model and the tourist agent involved in this study, the hotel industry, endow this study with added value for theorists and practitioners and from both a consumer perspective (marketing) and a company perspective (corporate business-performance) (Serra-Cantalops et al., 2018).

The article is organized as follows. After the introductory section, a literature review supporting the design of the research model and hypotheses is addressed. The method and data collection are presented and then the results from estimating the model are discussed. The final section presents conclusions and reflections on theoretical and practical implications derived from the research model as well as limitations of the study which in turn lead to future research avenues.

2 | LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 | CSR awareness, CSR perception and RBI

Companies from the traditional industry sector related to primary and secondary economic tasks of the tourism sector are increasingly engaged with CSR practices (Coles, Fenclova, & Dinan, 2013). Lately, a growing number of consumers are more aware of environmental issues which is fostering an increasing demand for corporate CSR practices to be adopted by these consumers in most countries (Bonilla Priego, Najera, & Font, 2011; de Grosbois, 2012; Diehl, Terlutter, & Mueller, 2016; Smerecnik & Andersen, 2011). Although a large number of papers in the literature have widely paid attention to the influence of CSR practices on consumer behaviour (González-Rodríguez, Díaz-Fernández, Rueda Elias Spers, & Da Silva Leite, 2016), the idea that consumer behaviour is influenced by CSR practices only if the consumer is really aware of these practices would appear to have been defended strongly over the last decade (Homburg, Koschate, & Hoyer, 2005; Pomeroy & Dolnicar, 2009; Serra-Cantalops et al., 2018). Following Maignan and Ferrell (2004, p. 17) and considering that, "businesses cannot hope to enjoy concrete benefits from CSR unless they intelligently communicate about their initiatives to relevant stakeholders", an appropriate approach to address how consumer CSR awareness influences their attitude and behaviour appears to be essential for practitioners and academics. In the hotel industry context, although the role played by online CSR communication is essential to meet CSR consumer awareness, its study is still under-researched (Coles et al., 2013; Ettinger, Grabner-Kräuter, & Terlutter, 2018; Line & Runyan, 2012).

Furthermore, in the tourism context, the relationship between CSR awareness and CSR customer perception has not been

sufficiently studied in the past. From the beginning of the last decade, researchers have called for empirical studies to analyse to what extent this relationship is reliable in the context of hotel industry tourism (Maignan and Ferrell, 2001; Mohr, Webb, & Harris, 2001; Jiang & Kim, 2015; Karavasilis, Nerantzaki, Pantelidis, Paschaloudis, & Vrana, 2015). In other words, it becomes necessary to analyse to what extent CSR consumer awareness, in respect of effective and clear communication of CSR records by corporations, influences CSR perception.

In the literature, few papers have paid attention to the relationship between customer CSR awareness and their behaviour intention, such as WTP a higher price for environmentally friendly products/services (Kang et al., 2012; Laroche, Bergeron, & Barbaro-Forleo, 2001; Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007). In fact, WTP has been viewed, as considered by Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996), as crucial in generating favourable consumer behaviour with high levels of CSR environment concerns and awareness.

Social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) defends that customers having a high level of CSR awareness and being well aware of CSR managerial green initiatives influences their behaviour intention and therefore the latest consumer behaviour (Junior, Satolo, Gabriel, & da Silva, 2014; Brown & Dacin, 1997). In addition, in the hospitality industry, consumer CSR perceptions have been understood as an essential stimulus for their actual behaviour (Agarwal & Kasliwal, 2017; Dutta, Umashankar, Choi, & Parsa, 2008; Kang et al., 2012; Verma & Chandra, 2016). Furthermore, Ogbeide's (2012) findings reveal there is a positive relationship between CSR perception and customer behaviour intention in green hotels, in the sense that these consumers would be willing to pay a higher price in these hotels than in conventional hotels. In addition, Mensah and Dei Mensah (2013) explain this result when consumers perceive a high responsible environmental attitude by the hotel.

Based on previous statements, the following hypotheses are tested:

- H1: Customer CSR awareness will be positively and significantly related to better customer environmental CSR perception.
- H2: Customer CSR awareness will be positively and significantly related to a more favourable customer behaviour intention.
- H3: A more favourable CSR perception will be positively and significantly related to repeat customer behaviour intention.
- H4: A positive perception of CSR practices leads to more favourable customer behaviour intention for high level of CSR awareness.

2.2 | CSR awareness, CSR perception, overall image and behaviour intention

There is a growing interest in quantitative research that strives to understand customer awareness of environmental issues and the impact of pro-environmental managerial actions on environment beliefs (Karavasilis et al., 2015; Olsson, Gericke, & Chang Rundgren, 2016; Powell, Stern, Krohn, & Ardoin, 2011; Vagias, Powell, Moore, & Wright, 2012). Thus, theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 2011) states

that there are several factors such as an individual's knowledge and opportunity to be engaged with environmental actions beyond their personal concerns for this issue which influences the individual's attitude towards environmentally friendly products or services.

Increasingly, there is a greater awareness of the scarcity of natural resources and how human activities and corporate decision making affect it, leading to a higher commitment to CSR practices which turn into social and economic development (UNESCO, 2005). Many articles advocate the communication or dissemination of the principles of sustainable development (Tilbury, 2012) as well as the experiences that might allow people to acquire knowledge, skills and values necessary to shape a sustainable future (Biasutti & Frate, 2017).

Consumer CSR awareness is acquired over their life time in different ways depending on their educational and professional background or their own personal experience and the CSR information provided by companies (reporting, advertising campaigns, and so on). Based on the relevant role of customer CSR awareness, companies take advantage of their communication power to improve their image by means of an effective, transparent and trustworthy projection of their CSR actions. Furthermore, greater CSR awareness achieved through accurate communication positively influences customer CSR perception and therefore their final behaviour. Acceptance of CSR practices by consumers is more favourable when they are more aware of those CSR practices due to accurate corporate communication and when they perceive that CSR implementation is designed to achieve public benefits (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014). This positive relation is achieved in the hospitality industry through greater visibility of green practices (Dutta et al., 2008; Li & Wei, 2014), such as hotel reports and empirical studies (Namkung & Jang, 2017).

It is widely recognized that with a determined effort to reinforce customer CSR perception, the value of the company's CSR practices will increase which, in turn, will positively influence or reinforce the firm's overall image in the consumer's mind (Hartmann & Ibáñez, 2006). Accordingly, in marketing literature, papers reveal that many organizations use managerial instruments such as green brand image, which incorporate CSR green practices to influence favourable customer behaviour towards the firm (Chen, 2009; Su, Huang, van der Veen, & Chen, 2014). In fact, the overall image created through a green brand image is one of the most relevant company intangible assets to influence consumer behaviour (Han, Hsu, & Lee, 2009a, 2009b; Penny, 2007). In the hotel industry, Lee et al. (2010) showed that consumers' overall image leads to a more favourable consumer initial behaviour intention and subsequent actions such as WTP a premium, word-of-mouth and revisit intention.

The above arguments lead to the formulation of the following hypotheses:

- H5: Customer CSR awareness will be positively and significantly related to HI.

- H6: HI will be positively and significantly related to more favourable customer behaviour intention.
- H7: A more favourable CSR perception will be positively and significantly related to HI.
- H8: A positive perception of CSR practices leads to a more positive image for a high level of CSR awareness.

2.3 | The conceptual research model

Focused on a review of the literature, the research model includes hotel guests' environmental CSR awareness, their CSR environment perception and the HI that they have as the potential stimulus or motivating factor for their RBI. Specifically, the role played by these stimuli on the influence of RBI (Brow, Ham, & Hughes, 2010; Kang et al., 2012; Kuminoff, Zhang, & Rudi, 2010; Tanford, Raab, & Kim, 2012) is analysed. The research model comprises both main effects and the moderating effect of CSR awareness. Previous research and the well-known theories such as the behavioural theory of the firm (Cyert & March, 1963) in social sciences and the stimulus-response framework widely used in the tourism sector (Ali & Kim, 2015; Hsu, Chang, & Chen, 2012) support the research model and hypotheses derived.

Based on the research model, this article seeks to deepen our understanding of how and to what extent hotel guests' stimuli (hotel guests' push motivations) generated by CSR awareness, CSR perception and HI lead to hotel guests' response (RBI). In addition, as mentioned in the introduction, the article strives to shed light on CSR and the current gap in tourism literature on the topic of consumer CSR awareness and its influence on customer RBI in Green Hotels, scarcely studied despite their relevance and value for the achievement of managerial goals and thereby corporate results.

3 | METHODOLOGY

The target population comprises hotel guests who have stayed in Spanish green hotels over the last 12 months. Some 432 responses were collected and used for analysis (Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Gudergan, 2017). Participants were asked to rate their awareness for environmental issues, hotel guests' perception of hotel environmental practices, the perception of the HI, and the RBI for staying at these hotels. The questionnaire for the constructs involved in the research model was elaborated from previously validated measurement scales in the literature and the wordings were slightly modified depending on the study scenario. Participants' responses were measured on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from "1: completely disagree" to "7: completely agree." The measurement of HI has been based on the framework posed by Chen (2009) and Namkung and Jang (2017). The perception of CSR environmental practices (CSR-environment) was adapted from Kasim (2006), Schubert, Kandampully, Solnet, and Kralj (2010) and Kang, Lee, and Huh (2010). CSR environmental awareness (CSR-awareness) has been measured with five items adopted from

Hustvedt and Kang (2013), Kang and Hustvedt (2014) and Kim and Kim (2016). The measurement of RBI has been based on behavioural intention literature reviews such as Zeithaml et al. (1996), Baker and Crompton (2000) and Lee (2010). The questionnaire items for all variables are displayed in Table 2.

Partial least squares (PLS), a variance-based SEM (PLS-SEM), approach has been used to test the hypotheses. PLS-SEM is aimed at maximizing the explained variance of the dependent latent variables, unlike covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) whose objective is to reproduce the theoretical covariance matrix (Hair et al., 2017). PLS-SEM path modelling has been chosen in the present study for the following reasons. The choice of the PLS-SEM approach is firstly mainly motivated by the nature of the constructs involved in the research model (Sarstedt, Hair, Ringle, Thiele, & Gudergan, 2016). Composite measurement models have been selected for all variables included in this study because each construct is made up of its indicators (Rigdon, 2012). All the variables, CSR-environment, CSR-awareness, HI, and RBI have been modelled as composites estimated in Mode A characterized by correlation weights, because the items are expected to be correlated (Henseler, 2017). Secondly, PLS allows for modelling the moderating effect of CSR environmental awareness in both the relationship between CSR-environment perception and RBI, and the relationship between CSR-environment perception and HI. Thirdly, variance-based SEM such as PLS-SEM appears to be more adequate than a CB-SEM for exploratory studies when certain relationships are insufficiently investigated and the theoretical background is scarce (Hulland, Ryan, & Rayner, 2010). In fact, a vast number of papers have used PLS-SEM when analysing research relationships that have not been sufficiently explored in tourism literature (Dominguez-Quintero, González-Rodríguez, & Paddison, 2018; Gallarza, Arteaga, Del Chiappa, & Gil-Saura, 2015; González-Rodríguez, Jiménez-Caballero, Martín-Samper, Köseoglu, & Okumus, 2018; Kang, Chiang, Huangthanapan, & Downing, 2015; King, So, & Grace, 2013; Prud'homme & Raymond, 2013). Lastly, the abnormality of the variables of the research model (Hair et al., 2017) makes PLS-SEM more suitable (Table 1).

4 | RESULTS

4.1 | Measurement model

Measurement model (inner model) assessment enables analysis if the theoretical concepts or constructs are measured correctly using the items observed. The assessment of the measurement model for composites Mode A entails the validity of the scales and the reliability of the inner model. Thus, item reliability (factor loadings, λ), construct reliability (composite reliability [CR]) to evaluate internal consistency, average variance extracted (AVE) to assess convergent validity and the construct's discriminant validity evaluated using heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations are obtained (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 2 shows that the construct indicators meet the reliability and convergent validity requirements: the outer loadings are higher

TABLE 1 Sample demographic characteristics

Demographic profile	Percentage of sample (%)
Gender	
Male	46.3
Female	53.7
Age	
Under 30 years	24.5
30-59 years	49.2
60 years older	26.3
Education	
High school	25.5
Some college	12.7
Graduate	31.6
Postgraduate	30.2
Previous experience with a green hotel	
Experienced	50.5
Inexperienced	48.2
Not sure	1.3
Employment	
Employed full time	56.3
Employed part time	18.3
Homemaker	16.9
Unemployed	3.1
Full-time student	5.4

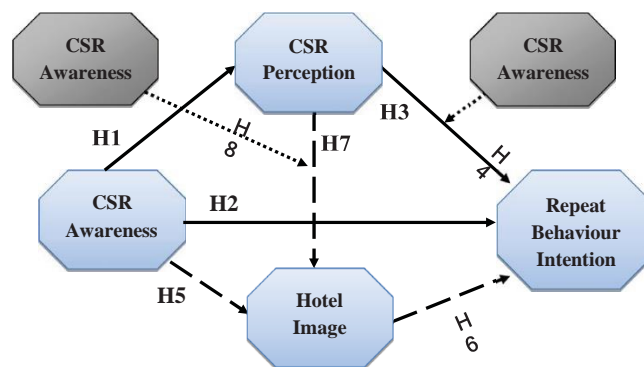


FIGURE 1 Research model [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

than 0.774 ($\lambda > 0.7$) as recommended (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011). CRs are greater than 0.8 which confirms the constructs' internal consistency following Nunally's (1978) guidelines. Convergent validity was evaluated using the AVEs. As recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981), the construct's AVEs were greater than 0.5, ensuring that at least 50% of the variance of the indicators is accounted for the constructs.

Discriminant validity can be evaluated through HTMT criterion ($HTMT_{85}$) and a statistical test. From Table 3, the values of the HTMT are not over the threshold of 0.85 which shows that all constructs achieve discriminant validity by following the $HTMT_{85}$

TABLE 2 Measurement model composite Mode A: weights, loadings, construct reliability and convergent validity

	Weight	Loadings	CR	AVE
CSR-awareness (composite Mode A)			0.897	0.678
Information about hotel's CSR practices is easily	0.235	0.878		
It is easy to obtain sufficient information about the hotel's CSR practices	0.189	0.801		
This hotel would be honest and sincere in addressing their CSR practices	0.209	0.892		
I can rely on the hotel to solve environmental issues	0.301	0.798		
The hotel would make an effort to improve environmental issues	0.294	0.697		
CSR-environment (composite Mode A)			0.925	0.702
The hotel provides environmentally friendly services	0.234	0.811		
The hotel has an efficient recycle management system	0.298	0.873		
The hotel uses clean energy sources	0.310	0.923		
The hotel actively promotes the ideas of green initiatives to their guest	0.315	0.907		
HI (composite Mode A)			0.842	0.649
The hotel is a benchmark/standard of environmental commitment	0.392	0.774		
The hotel is professional in terms of its environmental performance	0.375	0.831		
The hotel is successful in terms of its environmental performance	0.386	0.893		
The hotel environmental concerns are well established.	0.287	0.7991		
The hotel is trustworthy in terms of its environmental promises	0.324	0.804		
RBI (composite Mode A)			0.889	0.758
In the near future, I will prefer to stay in a hotel with CSR practices/programs	0.391	0.808		
I will choose a hotel that has CSR programs even if at the cost of sacrificing location convenience or paying a price premium	0.387	0.789		
I will recommend a hotel which has CSR programs to whom may seek hotels	0.456	0.864		

Abbreviations: AVE, average variance extracted; CR, composite reliability; CSR, corporate social responsibility.

TABLE 3 Discriminant validity: composites Mode A

	HTMT			
	CSR awareness	CSR perception	HI	RBI
CSR perception	0.584		0.447	0.383
HI	0.401	0.528		
RBI			0.432	0.418

Note: HTMT₈₅ criterion.

Abbreviations: CSR, corporate social responsibility; HI, hotel image; HTMT, heterotrait-monotrait; RBI, repeat behaviour intention.

criterion (Clark & Watson, 1995; Hair et al., 2011; Kline, 2011). Furthermore, a statistical test (HTMT_{inference}) has also been used to assess discriminant validity. The bootstrapping procedure allows confidence intervals for the HTMT to be obtained in order to test

the null hypothesis (H₀: HTMT ≥ 1) against the alternative hypothesis (H₁: HTMT < 1). A confidence interval containing a value of 1 indicates a lack of discriminant validity (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015). The confidence intervals obtained did not contain the value one, and hence this result suggests that each construct is distinct from other constructs. (Gefen, Straub, & Boudreau, 2000). Discriminant validity is confirmed by using HTMT as a criterion and as a statistical test.

4.2 | Structural model

Once the reliability and validity of the construct measures are confirmed, the second step is to address the assessment of the structural model. First, the potential collinearity between the constructs are analysed (collinearity assessment). For each partial multiple regression,

TABLE 4 Bootstrap estimation of the structural model

	Mean sub-sample path coefficients	SE	Expected sign (hypotheses)
$R^2_{CSR} = .235/Q^2_{CSR} = 0.125$; $R^2_{image} = .681/Q^2_{image} = 0.430$; $R^2_{BI} = .712/Q^2_{image\ WTP} = 0.382$			
H1: CSR awareness à CSR perception	0.334***	0.038	Support
H2: CSR awareness à RBI	0.201***	0.056	Support
H3: CSR perception à RBI	0.422***	0.035	Support
H4: CSR perception × CSR awareness à repeat behaviour Intention	0.178***	0.049	Support
H5: CSR awareness à HI	0.129**	0.063	Support
H6: HI à RBI	0.489***	0.027	Support
H7: CSR perception à HI	0.387***	0.039	Support
H8: CSR perception × CSR awareness à HI	0.233***	0.029	Support

Note: 5,000 bootstrap samples.

Abbreviations: CSR, corporate social responsibility; HI, hotel image; RBI, repeat behaviour intention.

** $p < .05$; *** $p < .01$ (based on t statistics, one-tailed test).

the VIF index for the exogenous constructs of each endogenous latent variable has been obtained being lower than 3.0 and hence, confirming that multicollinearity is not an issue in the research model. We then analyse the structural model's main effect relations and the moderating effects as well as their significance (structural model path coefficient assessment). To test for significance of the path coefficients, a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 subsamples to generate t statistics has been used (Hayes & Scharkow, 2013; Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009). The results obtained are presented in Table 4.

Table 4 reports path coefficients, SE and the coefficient of determination (R^2) of the endogenous and the cross-validated redundancy measure (Q^2) (Hair et al., 2011). All the Q^2 values are positive, thereby indicating predictive relevance for the endogenous constructs of the research model: CSR-environment, HI and RBI.

The standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) is used as a goodness of fit measure for PLS-SEM (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2016) that can be used to avoid model misspecification. The SRMR value is 0.043 (below the conservative threshold of 0.08) indicating the data fit the model well (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

The findings from Table 4 show that all the path coefficients have the expected sign and being significant at the 0.05 (**) and 0.01 (***) levels. The findings reveal that CSR-awareness has a significant and positive effect on both CSR-environment perception ($\beta = .334, p < .01$), RBI ($\beta = .201, p < .01$) and HI ($\beta = .129, p < .01$). Hence, hypotheses H1, H2 and H5 are supported. Likewise, a favourable CSR-environment perception has a significant and positive influence on RBI ($\beta = .422, p < .01$) and HI ($\beta = .387, p < .01$). H3 and H7 are then supported. HI has a significantly positive effect on RBI ($\beta = .489,$

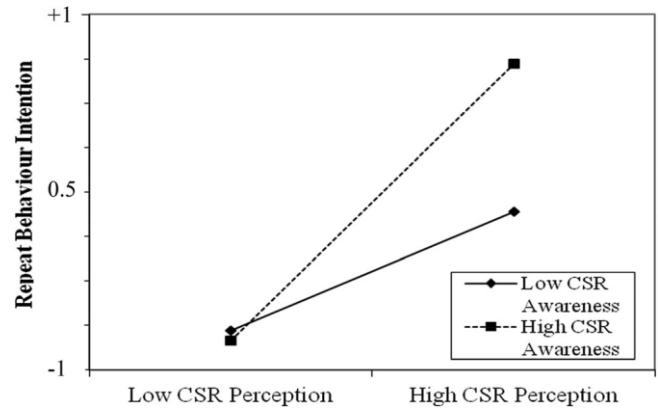


FIGURE 2 Moderating effect of CSR awareness in the relation CSR perception and RBI

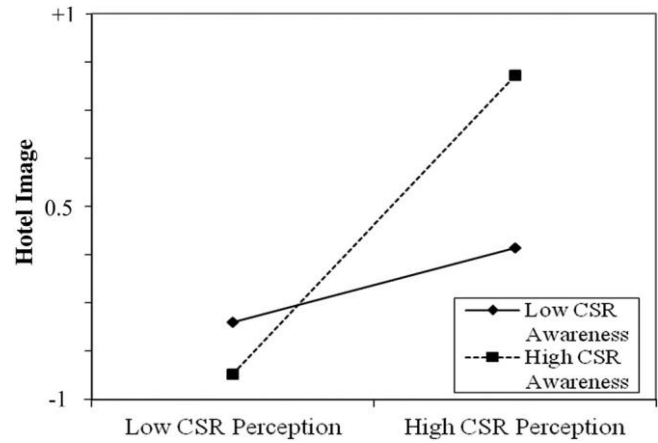


FIGURE 3 Moderating effect of CSR awareness in the relation CSR perception and HI

$p < .01$), thereby supporting H6. Lastly, the relationship between CSR-environment perception and RBI and the relationship between CSR-environment perception and HI become stronger for high values of CSR-awareness. Thus, H4 and H8 are also supported. The moderating effects are displayed in Figures 2 and 3.

5 | DISCUSSION

The findings are supported by previous hotel industry literature. Customers are a crucial stakeholder for hotels and therefore a group with special relevance in HI and hotel outcomes. Particularly, in green hotels, customers expect a fulfilment of the ethical and environmental practices and therefore that the services provided satisfy their concern of environmental issues beyond expectations. A high commitment to environmental practices favoured good customer perceptions of the environmental practices leading to an enhanced HI (Martínez, Pérez, & del Bosque, 2014; Wu & Wang, 2014). Likewise, a positive HI through a positive CSR perception leads customers to choose hotels with environmental CSR practices even if, at the cost of sacrificing location

convenience or paying a price premium, and to recommend these hotels to others which, in turn, boosts the hotel's sustainable competitiveness advantage (Kim & Kim, 2016; Lee et al., 2010).

Social and organization theories, such as the social identity theory, help us to understand how CSR practices generate support for companies. According to this theory, those customers who feel more closely identified with the hotel and who become more engaged in the environmental practices will manifest favourable attitudes and hence a positive behaviour intention towards the hotel (Kang et al., 2012; Marin & Ruiz, 2007; Namkung & Jang, 2017). Ramasamy and Yeung (2009) already recognized that the influence of CSR perception on positive behaviour intention towards companies depends on corporate efforts in communicating environmental initiatives. Hence, the importance of customers' CSR awareness is emphasized in this study by being a moderating variable in the relationship between CSR perception and RBI. The idea that the influence of CSR perception on HI becomes stronger when CSR practices are communicated appropriately and effectively has been recognized in the academic literature (Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Marin & Ruiz, 2007), although scarcely investigated particularly in the hotel industry.

6 | CONCLUSIONS

A new social movement traditionally called the "green revolution" (Friedman, 2008) has emerged following accelerated environmental degradation. This situation has led to significant changes in the business world due to engagement factors: (a) The major social pressure exerted by those persons well known as green consumers who are highly concerned with and aware of environmental problems. Green consumers are even willing to pay a higher price to enjoy green products and services. (b) The growing managerial concerns relative to novel corporate opportunities that the new green environment context can provide for their companies. These opportunities are mainly based on the fresh vast managerial assumptions associated with the fact that firms can take advantage of implementing new competitive advantage sources more aligned with meeting society's requirements and not only focused on the achievement of financial ratios strictly linked to corporate performance. These goals can guarantee companies' long-term success. In that respect, the hotel industry is not exempt, but rather participating actively in the growing trend.

Over the last few years, the world's leading hotel brands have increased their efforts to respond to environmental issues and invested significantly in going green (Kang et al., 2012; Tanford et al., 2012). Therefore, it becomes necessary to analyse the relevant role played by consumers in the hotel industry to understand their influence in terms of their awareness and perception of CSR practices on corporate results such as brand image, WTP extra and recommending hotels to others. This constitutes an issue in the hospitality industry to be addressed (Serra-Cantalops et al., 2018) what justify our proposed research model. The findings allow hotel managers to understand the relevance role played by the hotel guests' awareness regarding their sustainability-related activities on the achievement of its sustainable competitive advantage. The hotel guests awareness of CSR practices

influence on the hotel performance not only by a main effect but also through the moderating effect on the relation between CSR perception and RBI. This knowledge encourages the hotels for a better communication of their sustainable initiatives that promote the search and the achievement for sustainability.

6.1 | Theoretical implications

CSR environmental awareness plays an important role in shaping customers' CSR perceptions and their beliefs, these elements being determinant in the adoption of a rational choice (Schuler & Cording, 2006). CSR practices and customers' CSR awareness have generally been viewed by many theorists and practitioners from various industry sectors to date as a potential source of competitive advantage that might lead and guarantee a firm's success in the long term (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004; Hu, Huang, & Chen, 2010; Maignan & Ferrell, 2001; McWilliams & Siegel, 2001; Servaes & Tamayo, 2013). Accordingly, the research model proposed, which includes CSR awareness and its effect on a firm's image and RBI, provides a solid knowledge base for researchers and future relevant managerial implications which determine what element can act as a value stimulus to achieve corporate outcomes.

Organizations such as hotels have made an effort to alter classic products/services to offer new ones to be more eco-friendly and thereby, to adapt to the new environmental and social requirements in connection with the emergence of growing contemporary consumer needs is strongly linked to well-known green phenomena (Chan, 2011, 2013; D'Souza & Taghian, 2005; Jiang & Kim, 2015; Ottman, 1992). Customer perception of these CSR practices thus becomes a crucial factor in achieving hotel performance and sustainable competitive advantage (Barnett, 2019; DiPietro, Cao, & Partlow, 2013; Miao & Wei, 2016). Hence, from the research model proposed, testing the relationship between CSR perception and HI, and CSR perception and RBI provides both theorists and hotel managers with more information for implementing CSR strategies to meet the market requirements thus leading to favourable customer CSR perceptions. Thus, hotels are able to attract loyal customers willing to pay a premium price for products/services or to recommend the hotel to others because they feel identified with the hotel's social and environmental concerns. This similarity in social awareness leads to better customer CSR perceptions. The relations studied might shed light on what and how consumer final behaviour may be affected. This knowledge might be the basis for future demand and a requirement for this type of hotels by customers; customers who would be willing to pay a higher price and even sacrifice the convenience of hotel location in order to be in a green hotel.

6.2 | Managerial implications

Namkung and Jang (2017) and Golob et al. (2019) noticed, that as a consequence of the growing social cultural shift towards health and wellness products and services, the sustainability-related practices in the tourism sector, particularly in green hotels, are actually in great

demand with the expectation of positive growth in the future. Hence, in the present study, we strive to provide hotel managers with more knowledge by reporting on knowledge based on customer CSR awareness, CSR perception, HI, and RBI.

Despite the fact that a growing number of organizations, including hotels, are leading green and social initiatives, it is widely recognized that there has been inadequate communication of these CSR initiatives from the beginning (Pomeroy & Dolnicar, 2009). In fact, over recent decades, a number of researchers have recognized a lack of knowledge of these practices by customers, and the influence of the customers' CSR awareness on their behaviour intention (Hoeffler & Keller, 2002; Panapanaan, Lannanen, Karuonen, & Phan, 2001; Warner, 2004). On the one hand, society has been increasingly aware of environmental problems and therefore demanding more information on firms' CSR practices. On the other hand, companies have gradually recognized the importance of this knowledge as a key factor in consumer behaviour as an essential part of their business strategies to achieve business goals (Dawkins, 2004; McWilliams & Siegel, 2000, 2001; Porter & Kramer, 2002; Ramanathan & Ramanathan, 2011). In this vein, hoteliers have to learn how to communicate persuasively the CSR practices more accurately as demanded by their target market according to their environmental values and concern. Specifically, hoteliers should improve the design and content of their webpage site and their social media tools (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter), besides of taking advantage of the benefits of the mass communication and travel meta-search engines such as Booking.com (González-Rodríguez, Díaz-Fernández, & Font, 2019).

6.3 | Limitations and future research directions

Despite its contributions and managerial implications, several limitations need to be addressed regarding this research. First, the study is conducted in Spain and therefore caution should be exercised when generalizing these findings to other geographic locations where hotels' environmental CSR practices and CSR awareness might be different, depending on variables specific to the country such as idiosyncrasy, culture, green political and legal measures, among others.

The present study has focused on customers as a relevant stakeholder group for hotels. However, in the literature, little attention has been devoted to identifying potential different reactions to CSR among other stakeholders such as employees and the local community. To overcome this limitation, segmentation studies appear to be necessary for a better understanding of the underlying mechanism that links CSR perceptions and different stakeholders' attitudes and behaviour towards hotels. Serra-Cantalops et al. (2018) have also recognized that segmentation studies are important for organizations to reformulate CSR initiatives in order to achieve a better impact on stakeholder behaviour and thereby on corporate outcomes.

The research model proposed has only considered the CSR environmental dimension. However, CSR encompasses other perspectives

beyond this dimension concerning the local community, employees and so on. Because of this limitation, in future research we propose to test a model where other CSR dimensions, apart from the environmental dimension, are considered to explore in greater depth how and to what extent the perception of the different CSR initiatives affects favorable RBI towards hotels.

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