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How Do Resource Scarcity Reminders Influence Consumers' CSR Engagement?

Abstract

Purpose – This research aims to 1) understand consumers' reactions to hospitality corporate social responsibility (CSR) campaigns under different resource scarcity reminders, an important but overlooked contextual factor, and 2) examine how such scarcity reminders interact with message framing, a widely used technique in CSR communication.

Methodology – Three experimental studies were conducted. Studies 1-2 examined the main effect of resource scarcity reminders (environmental vs. personal) on consumer engagement via self-other orientation. Study 3 further investigated the interactive effect between resource scarcity reminders (environmental vs. personal) and message framing (gain vs. loss) with hope as a key mediator.

Findings – Studies 1-2 show that environmental (vs. personal) scarcity activates a more salient other orientation, subsequently increasing consumers' donation and word-of-mouth intentions. Study 3 reveals that environmental (vs. personal) scarcity makes people more hopeful with gain-framed messages. Moreover, the elevated hope enhances perceived efficacy (attitude toward the company), leading to higher donation (word-of-mouth) intention.

Practical implications – Hospitality marketers could remind consumers of the harsh environment to elicit other-orientation and encourage CSR participation. Using gain-framed messages or other hope-inducing appeals would be particularly advantageous in engaging consumers in CSR campaigns during heightened environmental scarcity.

Originality – Focusing on consumer responses to CSR campaigns, this research is the first to reveal reminders of resource scarcity as a novel antecedent factor and further uncover how such reminders interact with message framing to affect CSR engagement.

Keywords Resource scarcity, CSR, Self-other orientation, Message framing, Hope, Donation

1. Introduction

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) marketing has received growing attention in the hospitality industry (Gao *et al.*, 2020; He *et al.*, 2022; Smith *et al.*, 2020; Wu *et al.*, 2017; Yoo *et al.*, 2022). Implementing socially responsible activities can enhance society's welfare and benefit the company through increased customer satisfaction and loyalty (Martínez and Rodríguez del Bosque, 2013; Huang and Liu, 2020). During recent major crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and natural disasters, CSR practices have become even more prevalent and important (He and Harris, 2020; Huang and Liu, 2020). For example, airline companies such as American and Delta launched fundraising campaigns (e.g., soliciting donations from customers) to help fight Covid and to support Ukraine refugees (Thomaselli, 2021; Delta, 2022). Global Hotel Alliance and its hotel brands accelerated responsible tourism initiatives, offering opportunities for travelers to support various charities (De Brito, 2022). Many restaurants raised funds from customers to help frontline workers and vulnerable populations (Lev-Tov, 2020). Importantly, such prosocial initiatives differ from other CSR tactics in requiring consumer engagement (i.e., donating) and thus can't be successful without consumer support. Prior research has examined various elements of donation appeals in developing CSR marketing strategies for hospitality businesses, such as message framing, typeface design, emotional appeals, visual cues, and benefit type (Gao *et al.*, 2020; He *et al.*, 2022; Huang and Liu, 2020; Wu *et al.*, 2017). However, little is known about when or if incidental contextual factors, such as the widespread reminders of resource scarcity, might influence consumers' responses to CSR campaigns.

From the empty shelf space in the stores to recent news on severe droughts and water shortages, or from the empty wallet to the busy lifestyle, consumers are surrounded by cues that emphasize the limited nature of resources (Fan *et al.*, 2019; Salerno and Escoe, 2020). These reminders activate an overall perception of scarcity, further accelerated to unprecedented levels during the COVID-19 pandemic (Hamilton, 2021). Although there is a surge of interest in general consumer research regarding the behavioral consequences of scarcity perceptions elicited by incidental cues (Goldsmith *et al.*, 2020a), little attention has been paid to the role of scarcity reminders in the hospitality context. Moreover, the mainstream research on resource scarcity has mostly investigated consumption-related behaviors and compared certain consumer outcomes (e.g.,

product preferences) when scarcity reminders are present versus absent (Gong *et al.*, 2021; Wang *et al.*, 2021; Yang and Zhang, 2022). However, there is a lack of research on consumers' prosocial decisions, and it is unknown whether distinct types of resource scarcity make a difference as feelings of resource scarcity can be temporally evoked by the salience of different scarce resources (e.g., money, time, and natural resources) (Cannon *et al.*, 2019; Goldsmith *et al.*, 2020a). The present research addresses these gaps by investigating consumers' responses to hospitality companies' CSR activities across two types of resource scarcity reminders (i.e., scarcity triggered by insufficient environmental resources versus personal resources).

Drawing from the resource scarcity literature (Cannon *et al.*, 2019; Mullainathan and Shafir, 2013) and agency-communion theory (Bakan, 1966), we propose that reminders of environmental (vs. personal) resource scarcity will activate a salient other orientation, subsequently leading to higher levels of prosocial engagement and more favorable reactions to the company. Studies 1-2 provide evidence supporting these predictions. Study 3 further examines message framing (i.e., gain versus loss) as a boundary condition, considering that framing is commonly used in CSR communication (Nan *et al.*, 2018). The findings demonstrate the interaction between resource scarcity type and message framing and uncover hope as a key mediator driving the corresponding downstream effects on consumer responses (i.e., hope → perceived efficacy (attitude toward the company) → donation (WOM) intention).

The present research contributes to the hospitality literature on CSR marketing and consumer engagement by revealing reminders of resource scarcity as a novel antecedent and further demonstrating how such reminders interact with message frames to affect consumer behaviors. The study findings offer implications for hospitality organizations on engaging consumers in their CSR campaigns, particularly during times of crisis with heightened scarcity perceptions.

2. Literature Review

2.1 CSR marketing and consumer engagement in the hospitality industry

CSR refers to "a company's commitment to minimizing or eliminating any harmful effects and maximizing its long-run beneficial impact on society" (Mohr *et al.*, 2001, p. 47). There is a large body of literature on how corporate CSR activities can result in cognitive, affective, and

behavioral consequences for consumers (Sen *et al.*, 2006). CSR activities have been considered particularly important in the hospitality industry partially due to hospitality services' hedonic and intangible nature (Huang and Liu, 2020; Singal and Rhou, 2017). Moreover, CSR has been acknowledged as a significant facet influencing brand image, and it positively impacts brand equity and brand loyalty (Martínez and Del Bosque, 2013; Martínez and Nishiyama, 2019). This stream of research has mostly focused on one-way CSR communication (e.g., consumers are informed what the company has done) and its downstream effects on consumer responses to the company.

Many hospitality organizations have recently tried to involve consumers in their CSR efforts, such as fundraising campaigns during recent major crises (Delta, 2022; Lev-Tov, 2020). In such circumstances, the company's consumers are donating, so consumer engagement becomes critical to the CSR campaign's success. To provide insight into encouraging consumer participation, a small stream of hospitality research has examined various elements of donation appeals, such as message framing, typeface design, emotional appeals, visual cues, and benefit type (Gao *et al.*, 2020; He *et al.*, 2022; Huang and Liu, 2020; Wu *et al.*, 2017). For example, Huang and Liu (2020) reveal that warmth-focused (competence-focused) messages in handwritten (machine-written) typeface can maximize donation. Gao *et al.* (2020) demonstrate that self-benefit (vs. other-benefit) appeals generate higher consumer engagement when combining a prevention-focused (promotion-focused) message with a cute (aggressive) visual design. The present research adds to past work by further examining the role of widespread scarcity reminders in the environment (Goldsmith *et al.*, 2020a; Hamilton, 2021).

2.2 Resource scarcity, self-other orientation, and CSR engagement

We use the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework as a theoretical lens (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974). Specifically, we look at how personal and environmental scarcity reminders (stimulus) shape individuals' self-other orientation (organism), which in turn leads to CSR engagement outcomes (response).

Resource scarcity refers to "sensing or observing a discrepancy between one's current level of resources and a higher, more desirable reference point" (Cannon *et al.*, 2019, p.105). Feelings of resource scarcity can be triggered by contextual cues that temporally evokes the salience of

different scarce resources (e.g., money, food, time, products, and natural resources) (Cannon *et al.*, 2019; Goldsmith *et al.*, 2020a). Mullainathan and Shafir (2013) suggest that scarcity can trigger cognitive changes by focusing consumers' attention on the scarce source, thus resulting in limited cognitive resources available for other tasks. From the self-regulatory perspective, Cannon *et al.* (2019) argue that making resource scarcity perceptions salient motivates individuals to cope with the undesirable discrepancy that may threaten personal control. Consequently, scarcity perceptions shape various consumption behaviors such as increased preference for lucky products (Wang *et al.*, 2021), choosing minority-endorsed brands (Gong *et al.*, 2021), and avoiding counterhedonic experiences (Yang and Zhang, 2022). Previous research tends to generalize consumer responses to scarcity across different types of scarce resources (Goldsmith *et al.*, 2020a). However, a recent study reveals that individuals respond differently to gift cards linked to money versus time scarcity (Lee-Yoon *et al.*, 2020). This suggests that people's reactions to scarcity may vary by the scarce resource in certain contexts.

The current research contrasts two different types of resource scarcity (i.e., environmental versus personal). Building on the definition of resource scarcity (Cannon *et al.*, 2019), we conceptualize personal resource scarcity as perceiving a discrepancy in personal resources (e.g., money, time) while environmental resource scarcity is sensing insufficiency in natural resources (e.g., water, oil). Both types of scarcity cues are widespread in real-life situations, such as when people receive unpaid bills (i.e., personal) or read news articles on drought/water scarcity (i.e., environmental). While previous research has focused on either personal resource scarcity (Roux *et al.*, 2015) or environmental resource scarcity (Gu *et al.*, 2020), we directly compare these two types of scarcity in the context of CSR engagement. Unlike self-dominant consumption settings, prosocial decisions such as CSR engagement also involve consideration of others.

Correspondingly, self-other orientation, which reflects people's concern for the self vs. others (De Dreu and Nauta, 2009), is a relevant driving force of consumer responses.

The agency-communion theory depicts that agentic individuals are more self-oriented and strive for separation from others, whereas communal individuals are more other-oriented and strive for cooperation and social relationships (Bakan, 1966; Wiggins, 1991). Although extant literature has focused more on chronic differences in self and other considerations, recent research suggests that contextual factors can temporarily activate a self vs. other orientation (Simpson *et al.*, 2021).

We propose environmental and personal scarcity reminders as another antecedent of self-other orientation.

We argue that reminders of environmental (vs. personal) resource scarcity will activate a stronger other orientation, leading to a heightened focus on the interpersonal aspect of the self. This is because scarcity focuses individuals' attention on the scarce source (Goldsmith *et al.*, 2020a; Mullainathan and Shafir, 2013). Specifically, when the perceived discrepancy in personal resources elicits scarcity perceptions, the self will be more likely to occupy one's mind, making people more concerned about their personal goals and self-interests (i.e., self-oriented). This is consistent with Roux *et al.* (2015), showing that recalling personal incidents of scarcity motivates individuals to advance their welfare in subsequent tasks. In contrast, environmental concerns will be relatively more salient when feelings of scarcity are triggered by perceived insufficiency in natural resources. Previous research suggests a positive correlation between environmental concerns and an interdependent self-view (i.e., viewing oneself as part of a social context and more connected to others) (Arnocky *et al.*, 2007). Thus, we propose that environmental (vs. personal) scarcity reminders will make people less self-oriented and more concerned about others.

The existing literature generally supports a positive relationship between other orientation and prosocial behavior, such as engagement in corporate sustainability programs (Simpson *et al.*, 2020) and willingness to support prosocial causes (Vaidyanathan *et al.*, 2013). Similarly, we expect that the heightened other orientation due to environmental (vs. personal) resource scarcity reminders will increase consumer intention to support charitable initiatives. Furthermore, previous research has documented the positive effect of CSR engagement on word-of-mouth and revisit intention (Giebelhausen *et al.*, 2017; Huang and Liu, 2020). When consumers feel their interpersonal goals and affiliative needs are satisfied by engaging in prosocial activities, they may react more favorably to the company. We propose that the positive carry-over will be enhanced with reminders of environmental resource scarcity. Taken together, we put forth the following hypotheses:

H1. Reminders of environmental (vs. personal) resource scarcity will activate a more salient other orientation.

H2. The heightened other orientation will shape consumer responses to the company's charitable campaigns, leading to a) higher donation intention and b) more positive word-of-mouth.

2.3 Message framing as a boundary condition

Gain versus loss framing has generated considerable interest in communication and persuasive research (Nan *et al.*, 2018). According to Tversky's and Kahneman's (1979) prospect theory, a gain-framed message highlights the positive outcomes of performing the recommended behavior (e.g., "With your donation, children's lives will be greatly improved"). In contrast, a loss-framed message emphasizes the negative consequences of inaction or noncompliance (e.g., "Without your donation, children's lives will be miserable"). Loss-framed messages may evoke negative emotions (e.g., distress, guilt, empathic concern) that increase helping behaviors (Chang and Lee, 2010; Fisher *et al.*, 2008). But they can also be perceived as freedom-threatening, resulting in reactance that decreases compliance (Cho and Sands, 2011; Reinhart *et al.*, 2007). Hospitality researchers have examined the relative effectiveness of gain- versus loss-framed messages, but the findings are mixed (Stadlthanner *et al.*, 2022). For example, Randle *et al.* (2019) reveal that gain-framed CSR messages are more effective in increasing online accommodation bookings, while Kim and Kim (2014) find the opposite for green hotels. Therefore, further research is needed to examine how message framing may interact with other variables (Xu and Huang, 2020).

Applying the SOR framework, we further investigate the interactive effect between scarcity reminders and CSR message frames (stimuli) on donation and WOM (response) by focusing on hope (organism) as a key underlying mechanism. Hope is a positive emotion and emerges when there is a possibility for a desirable outcome (Winterich and Haws, 2011). Previous research suggests that gain-framed messages can elicit feelings of hope by outlining potentially desirable outcomes (Bilandzic *et al.*, 2017; Nabi *et al.*, 2018). In the context of CSR messaging, the positive outcomes are for donation recipients rather than the self. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that feelings of hope will be stronger when the person is more concerned about others.

Moreover, people reminded of environmental (vs. personal) scarcity are expected to have a more salient other orientation. Consequently, we propose that reminders of environmental (vs. personal) scarcity combined with a gain-framed CSR message will induce higher levels of hope.

In contrast, loss-framed messages reduce hope and often lead to negative emotions, emphasizing the undesirable outcomes of not helping (Bilandzic *et al.*, 2017). Scarcity perceptions are generally aversive and thus motivate individuals to avoid stimuli potentially evoking negative feelings (Cannon *et al.*, 2019; Sarial-Abi and Ulqinaku, 2020). Thus, both personal and environmental scarcity reminders are likely to activate avoidance motivation, making people less responsive to loss-framed messages and perceiving similar (low) levels of hope.

H3. Reminders of environmental (vs. personal) resource scarcity will make individuals perceive more hope from the ad using gain-framed messages, while such a difference will be attenuated with loss-framed messages.

Additionally, we expect the interactive effect on hope to carry over to consumer responses. According to the affect-as-information theory (Schwarz and Clore, 2003), a particular emotion has informational value in guiding judgment and decision-making. Following this logic, Nabi and Myrick (2019) suggest that feelings of hope can boost self-efficacy and serve as a cue that the recommended helping behavior is worth pursuing. In our context, experiencing hope should enhance consumers' belief that their support for the fundraising campaign will make a difference, thus motivating them to act. Accordingly, we predict that hope will increase donation intention via perceived efficacy. Moreover, recent studies show that CSR communications stimulating hope can strengthen customers' perceived connection with the organization and lead to a more positive attitude, increasing behavioral intention (Ahn, 2021; Stadlthanner *et al.*, 2022). Similarly, we hypothesize that hope will increase word-of-mouth intention via attitude toward the company.

H4. Hope will enhance perceived efficacy, which subsequently leads to higher donation intention.

H5. Hope will enhance consumers' attitudes toward the company, leading to more positive word-of-mouth.

3. Methodology

3.1 Overview of Studies

Three scenario-based experimental studies were conducted to test our predictions in the context of fundraising campaigns initiated by a restaurant (Studies 1-2) and a hotel (Study 3). Study 1 tests the hypothesis that reminders of environmental resource scarcity, compared to personal resource scarcity, elicit an enhanced other orientation, leading to higher donation and positive word-of-mouth intentions (H1-H2). Study 2 replicates Study 1 by adding a control condition as a baseline reference, thus allowing us to examine whether environmental or personal scarcity reminders drive the effect of resource scarcity type on self-other orientation. Study 3 examines the moderating role of message framing by comparing consumer responses to corporate charitable campaigns employing a gain-framed versus loss-framed appeal (H3-H5).

An overview of our research is presented in Figure 1. In all studies, respondents were US adults, and they were randomly assigned to one of the experimental conditions. We chose America as our study context, as it is the originator of CSR, and CSR campaigns are frequently developed and launched by businesses (Chu et al., 2020).

[Figure 1 here]

3.2 Study 1

3.2.1 Study design and sample

Study 1 utilized a single-factor experimental design with two cells (environmental vs. personal resource scarcity). We recruited 120 American participants via Amazon Mechanical Turk. We implemented several measures to ensure data quality including HIT approval rate, number of HITs approved, and attention check questions (Smith *et al.*, 2016; Mattila *et al.*, 2021). After eliminating those failing attention checks, 101 participants remained. 80% were between 18 and 49, 64% were male, 82% had a four-year college degree, and 53% earned more than \$50,000 annually.

3.2.2 Procedures

All participants first completed a writing task adapted from Roux *et al.* (2015) as a manipulation of the resource scarcity type. Specifically, participants in the environmental scarcity condition were instructed to write down three statements indicating that "natural resources are scarce", whereas those in the personal scarcity condition were asked to write down three incidents making them feel that their "personal resources are scarce". Then participants rated their momentary sense of control (e.g., "To what extent do you feel you have control over things at this moment?"; 1 = very little, 7 = very much; Yang and Zhang, 2021), power (1 = powerless, 7 = powerful), and general mood (1 = sad, 7 = happy) (Choi *et al.*, 2017). We measured these variables as covariates, as previous research suggests that resource scarcity can lead to reduced control, diminished agency, and negative mood (Cannon *et al.*, 2019; Salerno and Escoe, 2020; Yang and Zhang, 2022). Self-other orientation was captured via three items adapted from Simpson *et al.* (2021) (e.g., 1 = I am focusing on myself, 7 = I am focusing on others; $\alpha = 0.81$), with higher ratings indicating a more salient other orientation.

Next, participants imagined waiting in a local restaurant for their take-out order and noticed a flyer depicting a collaboration between the restaurant and a local food bank to combat hunger (adapted from Huang and Liu, 2020). Donation intention ($\alpha = 0.85$) was measured using two items adapted from White and Peloza (2009): "How willing are you to make a donation?" (1 = very unwilling, 7 = very willing) and "How likely are you to make a donation?" (1 = very unlikely, 7 = very likely). WOM intention was captured via three items adapted from Babin *et al.* (2005) (i.e., "I would say positive things about this restaurant to other people", "I will recommend this restaurant to someone who seeks my advice", and "I will encourage friends and relatives to visit this restaurant"; 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree; $\alpha = 0.78$). As a manipulation check, participants rated the extent to which they felt "my personal resources were scarce" and "natural resources were scarce" while completing the writing task.

3.2.3 Results

Manipulation Check. One-way ANOVA was performed with scarcity type (1 = personal, 2 = environmental) as the independent variable and personal or natural resource scarcity perception as the dependent variable. Results show that participants in the personal scarcity condition felt that their personal resources are scarce to a larger extent than those in the environmental scarcity

condition ($M_{personal} = 5.65$, $M_{environmental} = 4.75$; $F(1, 99) = 8.89$, $p = 0.004$). Participants in the environmental scarcity condition felt that natural resources are scarce to a larger extent than those in the personal scarcity condition ($M_{environmental} = 5.62$, $M_{personal} = 5.13$; $F(1, 99) = 3.16$, $p = 0.08$). To compare the relative salience of environmental versus personal scarcity in each condition, we computed a difference index with a score larger (less) than zero presenting environmental (personal) scarcity perception as more salient than personal (environmental) scarcity perception. As expected, participants in the environmental (personal) scarcity condition perceived relatively stronger natural (personal) resource scarcity ($M_{environmental} = 0.87$, $M_{personal} = -0.52$; $F(1, 99) = 15.82$, $p < .001$).

Self-other orientation. To test H1, a one-way ANOVA was conducted on self-other orientation. Results reveal that participants in the environmental scarcity condition indicated a more pronounced activation of other orientation compared with those in the personal scarcity condition ($M_{environmental} = 5.08$, $M_{personal} = 4.35$; $F(1, 99) = 6.47$, $p = 0.01$), supporting H1. In contrast, no significant differences were found between the two conditions in terms of perceived control ($p = 0.90$), perceived power ($p = 0.68$), and general mood ($p = 0.59$).

Mediation analyses. Mediation was tested using Process Model 4 (Hayes, 2017). Results indicate that the indirect effect of resource scarcity type on donation intention through self-other orientation was significant (Effect = 0.40, 95% CI: [.077, .811]). The indirect effect of resource scarcity type on positive word-of-mouth through self-other orientation was also significant (Effect = 0.24, 95% CI: [.040, .511]). Thus, H2a and H2b are supported.

3.3 Study 2

3.3.1 Study design and sample

Study 2 employed a single-factor experimental design with three cells (scarcity type: personal vs. environmental vs. control). One hundred sixty-six American participants were recruited via Prolific with zero failing attention checks. 81% of the participants were between 18 and 49, 50% were male, 53% had a four-year college degree, and 56% earned more than \$50,000 annually.

3.3.2 Procedures

Participants first completed the same writing task as in Study 1. Additionally, those in the control condition described three things they did during the past week. Then, all participants were exposed to the same restaurant CSR stimulus and responded to the same measures as in Study 1.

3.3.3 Results

Manipulation Check. One-way ANOVAs were conducted on personal and natural resource scarcity perception with scarcity type (0 = control, 1 = personal, 2 = environmental) as the independent variable. Results reveal a significant effect of scarcity manipulation ($F(2, 163) = 26.50, p < .001$ for personal resource scarcity perception; $F(2, 163) = 27.21, p < .001$ for natural resource scarcity perception). Participants in the personal scarcity condition perceived stronger personal resource scarcity than those in the environmental scarcity condition ($M_{personal} = 5.05$ vs. $M_{environmental} = 3.40; p < .001$) or the control condition ($M_{personal} = 5.05$ vs. $M_{control} = 2.50; p < .001$). In contrast, participants in the environmental scarcity condition perceived stronger natural resource scarcity than those in the personal scarcity condition ($M_{environmental} = 5.18$ vs. $M_{personal} = 3.62; p < .001$) or the control condition ($M_{environmental} = 5.18$ vs. $M_{control} = 2.66; p < .001$). Thus, the manipulation of the scarcity type was successful.

Self-other orientation. A one-way ANOVA results indicate that the main effect of scarcity type was significant ($F(2, 163) = 6.15, p < .001$). Participants in the environmental scarcity condition exhibited a more pronounced other orientation compared to those in the personal scarcity condition ($M_{environmental} = 4.33$ vs. $M_{personal} = 3.55; p = 0.01$) or in the control condition ($M_{environmental} = 4.33$ vs. $M_{control} = 3.27; p = 0.001$). The difference in self-other orientation between personal scarcity and control conditions was insignificant ($p = 0.39$). Again, H1 is supported.

Moreover, the manipulation of resource scarcity reminders influenced personal control ($F(2, 163) = 2.96, p = 0.06$), power ($F(2, 163) = 2.63, p = 0.08$), and mood ($F(2, 163) = 5.25, p = 0.01$).

Personal scarcity reminders led to a reduced sense of control ($M_{personal} = 4.02$ vs. $M_{control} = 4.82; p = 0.02$), power ($M_{personal} = 3.82$ vs. $M_{control} = 4.41; p = 0.04$), and more negative mood ($M_{personal} = 4.53$ vs. $M_{control} = 5.41; p = 0.004$) compared to the baseline condition. Environmental scarcity reminders elicited similar negative effects on the sense of control ($M_{environmental} = 4.25$ vs. $M_{control} = 4.82; p = 0.09$), power ($M_{environmental} = 3.86$ vs. $M_{control} = 4.41; p = 0.06$), and mood ($M_{environmental}$

= 4.62 vs. $M_{control} = 5.41$; $p = 0.009$). However, no significant difference was found between the two types of scarcity reminders in terms of sense of control ($p = 0.49$), power ($p = 0.90$), and mood ($p = 0.76$). In other words, an individual's sense of control, power, and mood can be ruled out as confounding factors.

Mediation analyses. Mediation effects via self-other orientation were tested using Process (Hayes, 2017), with scarcity type (0 = control, 1 = personal, 2 = environmental) as the multi-categorical independent variable. When the dependent variable was donation intention, the indirect effect of environmental (vs. personal) scarcity through self-other orientation was significant (Effect = 0.22, 95% CI: [.025, .497]). The mediation effect is also significant for the environmental scarcity (vs. control) condition (Effect = 0.29, 95% CI: [.069, .589]), but insignificant for the personal scarcity (vs. control) condition (95% CI: [-.099, .291]). Similar results were observed when the dependent variable was WOM intention (see Table 1). Taken together, H2a and H2b are validated.

[Table 1 here]

Consistent with our hypotheses (H1-H2), environmental (vs. personal) resource scarcity elicits an enhanced other orientation, leading to higher donation and positive word-of-mouth intention. Moreover, personal and environmental scarcity reminders both decrease people's momentary sense of control and power compared to a baseline condition, but only environmental scarcity reminders elicit a higher other orientation. In other words, the effect of scarcity type on prosocial engagement via self-other orientation is mainly driven by the environmental scarcity reminders' activation of other orientation.

3.4 Study 3

3.4.1 Study design and sample

Study 3 utilized a 2 (scarcity type: personal vs. environmental) by 2 (message framing: gain vs. loss) between-subjects design. Two hundred American adults participated in this study via

Prolific. Thirteen participants failing attention checks were excluded from further analysis. 84% of the remaining participants were between 18 and 49, 47% were male, 50% had a four-year college degree, and 60% earned more than \$50,000 annually.

4.4.2 Procedures

Participants first completed the same writing task as manipulation of resource scarcity type. Next, they were exposed to a hotel company's advertisement advocating donations to a fictitious non-profit organization named ChildFrontier to help needy children. Following previous research (Xu, 2019), the message frame was operationalized by emphasizing the positive outcomes of making a donation or the negative consequences of not donating. Except for the message content, the ad stimuli were identical in other aspects (e.g., size, layout, and background).

Participants rated the extent to which they experienced four emotions on a seven-point scale (1 = not at all, 7 = extremely): two capturing hope (i.e., "hopeful" and "optimistic", $\alpha = 0.95$) and two measuring overall affect (i.e., "positive" and "pleasant", $\alpha = 0.92$) (Pham and Septianto, 2019). Donation intention ($\alpha = 0.94$) and WOM intention ($\alpha = 0.97$) were captured using the same items as in studies 1 and 2. Perceived efficacy (three items from Tsiros and Irmak, 2020; e.g., "If I make a donation, I would personally make a difference to the supported cause", $\alpha = 0.92$) and attitude toward the hotel company (Mitchell and Olson, 1981; 1 = bad/dislike/unfavorable, 7 = good/like/favorable, $\alpha = 0.97$) were measured as the posited mediators. Message involvement was captured as a covariate, as previous research suggests that resource scarcity may affect information processing (Goldsmith *et al.*, 2020b). As a manipulation check of message framing, participants indicated whether the message primarily focuses on a potential loss or gain (1 = potential loss, 7 = potential gain).

3.4.3 Results

Manipulation check. A two-way ANOVA was conducted on message perception. Results reveal a significant main effect of message framing: participants in the gain-framed (loss-framed) appeal condition perceived the message focusing on potential gain (loss) ($M_{\text{gain-framed}} = 4.65$, $M_{\text{loss-framed}} = 3.62$; $F(1, 183) = 96.36$, $p < 0.001$). Neither the main effect of scarcity type ($p = 0.57$) nor the interaction effect ($p = 0.41$) is significant. Thus, our manipulation of message framing was successful.

Hope. To test H3, a two-way ANCOVA was conducted on hope, with scarcity type, message framing, and their interaction as independent variables and message involvement as a covariate. Results reveal a significant interaction effect between scarcity type and message framing ($F(1, 183) = 4.96, p = 0.027$). When the campaign ad employed a gain-framed message appeal, participants reminded of environmental scarcity felt greater hope than those reminded of personal scarcity ($M_{\text{environmental}} = 4.06, M_{\text{personal}} = 3.43; F(1, 182) = 4.06, p = 0.045$). In contrast, the ad employing a loss-framed message appeal decreased hope across both scarcity conditions ($M_{\text{environmental}} = 2.61, M_{\text{personal}} = 2.96; F(1, 182) = 1.27, p = 0.26$). The interaction effect on overall affect was not significant ($p = 0.17$). Thus, H3 is supported.

Moderated mediation analyses. We ran two Process models (Hayes, 2017; Model 83) to test the moderated mediation effects on consumers' reactions to the campaign (resource scarcity type \times message framing \rightarrow hope \rightarrow perceived efficacy \rightarrow donation intention) and the company (resource scarcity type \times message framing \rightarrow hope \rightarrow attitude toward company \rightarrow WOM intention). Message involvement was included as a covariate. When the dependent variable was donation intention, the moderated mediation index was significant (Effect = 0.31, 95% CI: [.034, .612]). Specifically, the serial mediation path via hope and perceived efficacy is significant when the message is gain-framed (Effect = 0.20, 95% CI: [.006, .407]), but insignificant when the message is loss-framed (95% CI: [-.310, .077]). When the dependent variable was WOM intention, the moderated mediation index was also significant (Effect = 0.24, 95% CI: [.026, .497]). Similarly, the serial mediation path via hope and attitude toward the company is significant when the message is gain-framed (Effect = 0.15, 95% CI: [.004, .331]), but insignificant when the message is loss-framed (95% CI: [-.246, .067]). Taken together, H4 and H5 are supported.

Study 3 provides evidence for our prediction that message framing moderates the effects of resource scarcity type. Environmental (vs. personal) scarcity reminders made people more hopeful when the message was gain-framed. Such differences were not observed with loss-framed messages. Further, the heightened feelings of hope boost perceived efficacy and generate a more favorable attitude toward the company, leading to a greater intention to donate and spread positive WOM.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

4.1 Conclusion

This research demonstrates the distinct impact of personal versus environmental resource scarcity reminders on consumer responses to companies' CSR campaigns. Studies 1-2 show that environmental (vs. personal) resource scarcity reminders enhance other orientation, subsequently increasing donation and WOM intention. Study 3 further reveals the interactive effect between resource scarcity cues and message framing, with hope as a key mediator. Two serial mediation paths (“resource scarcity type \times message framing \rightarrow hope \rightarrow perceived efficacy \rightarrow donation intention” and “resource scarcity type \times message framing \rightarrow hope \rightarrow attitude toward the company \rightarrow WOM intention”) demonstrate the underlying processes.

4.2 Theoretical implications

First, this research contributes to the hospitality literature by extending previous research on CSR marketing and consumer engagement. The existing literature has largely focused on company-related responses (e.g., brand image, customer loyalty) after consumers are informed about the company's CSR practices (Martínez and Del Bosque, 2013; Su *et al.*, 2015; Zhang and Hanks, 2017). More recently, a few studies have investigated how to encourage consumer participation in charitable campaigns (e.g., donation intention) (Gao *et al.*, 2020; Huang and Liu, 2020; Wu *et al.*, 2017). Our work adds to previous research by considering reminders of resource scarcity as a novel antecedent factor and investigating consumer support for both the campaign (i.e., donation) and the company (i.e., WOM). The findings reveal the distinct impact of environmental versus personal resource scarcity. Consistent with previous studies (Wang *et al.*, 2021; Yang and Zhang, 2022), environmental and personal scarcity reminders decreased consumers' sense of control and power. However, only environmental scarcity reminders elicited a higher other orientation, which significantly drives consumer reactions to CSR initiatives. By focusing on consumers' prosocial decisions (i.e., CSR support) and by distinguishing between two types of resource scarcity reminders (i.e., environmental vs. personal), we also enrich past work on resource scarcity, which mainly focuses on consumer decision-making contexts in isolation from others and assumes a consistent effect of scarcity perception regardless of resource type (Fan *et al.*, 2019; Wang *et al.*, 2021).

In addition, the effectiveness of messages is critical for hospitality businesses implementing CSR marketing (He *et al.*, 2022; Huang and Liu, 2020). While hospitality researchers have examined the impact of gain vs. loss-framed environmental messages on pro-environmental behaviors (e.g., reuse coffee cup; Stadlthanner *et al.*, 2022) and purchase intention (Randle *et al.*, 2019), scant attention has been paid to consumer responses to companies' donation campaigns during the times of crisis. We add to this stream of work by further investigating the interplay between message frames and scarcity reminders. This is particularly insightful as the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the notion of scarcity in people's lives (Hamilton, 2021). The findings suggest that consumers reminded of environmental (vs. personal) scarcity feel more hopeful with gain-framed CSR messages. More importantly, the heightened hope further drives the downstream effects on consumer responses via two serial mediation paths “hope → perceived efficacy (attitude toward the company) → donation (WOM) intention”. By bridging literature on resource scarcity, message framing, and hope, the present research offers a more in-depth understanding of the underlying mechanisms that explain consumers' CSR engagement in response to resource scarcity reminders.

Lastly, this paper enhances our understanding of resource scarcity and its implications for prosocial consumer behavior. Roux *et al.* (2015) and Goldsmith *et al.* (2020b) were the first to investigate how resource scarcity may affect consumers' prosocial decisions. Whereas Roux *et al.* (2015) focused on the motivational consequences (i.e., resource scarcity activates a competitive orientation that leads to selfish behaviors), Goldsmith *et al.* (2020b) examined information processing outcomes (i.e., resource scarcity elicits a more abstract construal that favors messages congruent with social values). The present research extends their work by further distinguishing two types of resource scarcity and considering message framing as a boundary condition. Moreover, demonstrating hope as a key emotional driver underlying the joint effects of resource scarcity reminders and message frames, we address a recent call by Goldsmith *et al.* (2020b) for more research on emotions associated with scarcity. In addition, the study findings contribute to the literature on message framing and charitable giving by revealing scarcity reminders as a novel situational factor that interacts with message framing. We thus help to resolve the ambiguity on the impact of message framing on charitable appeals (Xu and Huang, 2020).

4.2 Practical implications

The study findings offer implications for hospitality marketers. On the one hand, the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and recent natural disasters have elevated people's feelings of both personal resource scarcity and environmental resource scarcity (Antwi *et al.*, 2021; Omar *et al.*, 2021). For example, store shelves were once empty of hand sanitizer, toilet paper, and other supplies. Many hourly workers lost their job and experienced a scarcity of financial resources. Meanwhile, newspaper headlines documented shortages of natural gas accelerated by the Ukraine war (Bloomberg, 2022), as well as shortages of water due to scorching weather (BBC, 2021). On the other hand, companies are increasingly expected to be socially responsible (Martínez and Rodríguez del Bosque, 2013; Sen *et al.*, 2006). The prominence and importance of CSR marketing have escalated for hospitality organizations during these times such as global crises, and customer participation is a key determinant of its success (He and Harris, 2020; Huang and Liu, 2020; Wu *et al.*, 2017). Inspired by these trends, this research provides insightful suggestions for customer engagement in such initiatives. For instance, marketers could remind consumers of the harsh environment and highlight the collective benefits of small prosocial actions to enhance other orientation, which in turn can increase consumer participation.

In addition, hospitality operators should consider adjusting their communication strategies depending on the external environment. Specifically, loss-framed messages should be avoided in donation appeals when resource scarcity perceptions are salient (e.g., during recession and social crises). Instead, gain-framed messages or other hope-inducing appeals would more effectively elicit desirable consumer outcomes by boosting perceived efficacy and generating positive perceptions of the company. Based on our findings, such advantageous effects could be even stronger when there is a heightened sense of environmental resource scarcity (e.g., increased media coverage of natural disasters). That certainly is the case in today's world threatened by global warming. While hotel brands are increasingly interested in responsible travel initiatives (De Brito, 2022), they may consider incorporating such scarcity reminders into their future campaign design. One possible example is broadcasting recent news on environmental scarcity issues in public areas (e.g., hotel lobbies) as an incidental cue when launching charitable campaigns.

4.3 Limitations and future research

This research has several limitations. First, it only focuses on one categorization of resource scarcity: environmental versus personal. There are other ways to compare scarce resources (Cannon *et al.*, 2019). For instance, time and money are personal resources; however, one is tangible, and the other is intangible. Future studies can examine whether scarcity perceptions evoked by insufficient time versus money lead to similar or distinct psychological and behavioral outcomes. Second, CSR activities can take various forms, such as cause-related marketing, advocacy advertising, socially responsible employment, ethical manufacturing, and corporate volunteering in community activities (Menon and Kahn, 2003). While our studies mainly employed donation advocacy appeals in the stimuli, future research can investigate whether the effects of resource scarcity reminders are similar or distinct from other CSR activities. Third, hospitality companies support various social causes (e.g., human health, disaster relief, animal welfare, and environmental issues) (Kim *et al.*, 2016). It would be interesting to examine if there is a matching effect between scarcity type (e.g., personal versus environmental) and cause type (e.g., humanitarian versus environmental).

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Table 1. Indirect effects via self-other orientation.

Y	X	M	Effect [95% CI]
Donation intention	environmental (vs. personal)	Self-other orientation	0.22 [.025, .497]
	environmental (vs. control)		0.29 [.069, .589]
	personal (vs. control)		n.s. [-.099, .291]
WOM intention	environmental (vs. personal)	Self-other orientation	0.14 [.017, .308]
	environmental (vs. control)		0.19 [.035, .407]
	personal (vs. control)		n.s. [-.056, .200]

Note: Y=Dependent variable, X=Independent variable, M=Mediator

(Studies 1-2: H1 & H2)

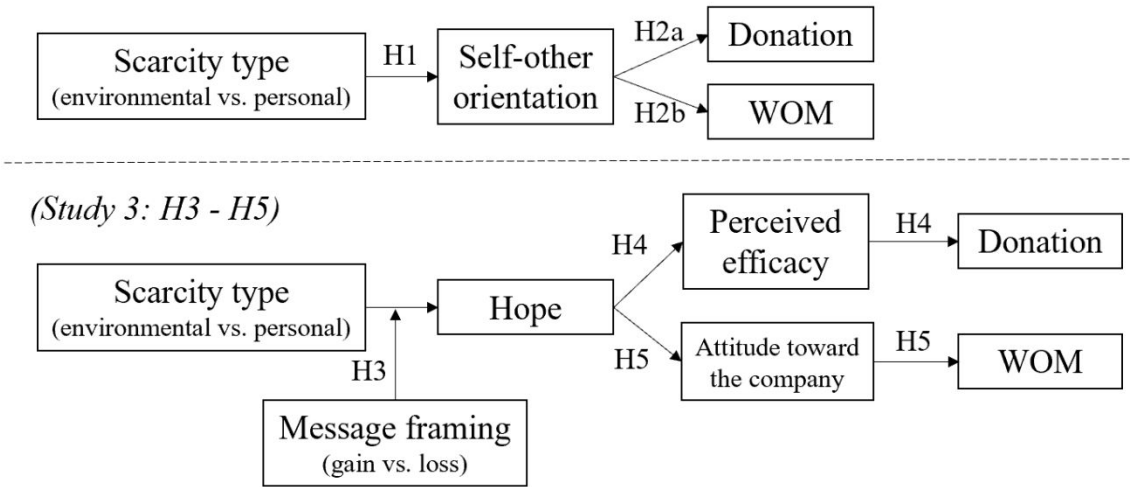


Figure 1. Overview of studies