

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND CONSUMER PURCHASE INTENTION

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

The act of buying is a vote for an economic and social model, for a particular way of producing goods. We are concerned with the quality of the goods and the satisfactions we derive from them. But we cannot ignore the conditions under which products are made—the environmental impact and working conditions. We are linked to them and therefore have a responsibility for them. (Anwar Fazal, President, International Organisation of Consumer Unions, 1986)

Ranked seventh in *Fortune* magazine's top ten socially responsible companies for 2007, Starbucks is widely recognized for its socially responsible efforts and is committed to conducting business in "ways that are good to the earth and each other." In the past, Starbucks has been renowned for ethical, responsible business practices involving fair trade, environmental stewardship and the bettering of communities where they produce their coffee and also where Starbucks products are sold. Currently, Starbucks' "Shared Planet" campaign has set the following goals for 2015: 100 percent of Starbucks coffee will be responsibly grown and ethically traded, 100 percent of coffee cups will be reusable and recyclable and one million community service hours will be contributed each year.

While Starbuck's efforts are worthy of our respect and recognition, does that change our intent as consumers to purchase Starbuck's coffee for five dollars a cup versus 99 cents from the average gas station? Starbuck's, among many companies using profits toward socially responsible practices, will inevitably contemplate the financial value of their efforts. After all, the bottom line in business will always be profitability.

Introduction

Modern corporate social responsibility (CSR) has many names, such as corporate citizenship, corporate philanthropy, corporate giving, corporate community involvement, community relations, community affairs, community development, corporate responsibility, global citizenship and corporate social marketing. Likewise, the definition of CSR changes from researcher to researcher. For example, CSR can be generally defined as the organization incurring responsibilities to society beyond profit maximization. (Pava and Krausz 1995, 1) A more specific definition of CSR is offered by Business for Social Responsibility: "operating a business in a manner that meets or exceeds the ethical, legal, commercial, and public expectations that society has of business" (Kotler and Lee 2005, 3).

Purchase intention can most readily be understood as the likelihood that a consumer intends to purchase a product. The concept of purchase intention is rooted in psychological and behavioral studies; therefore, the theory of reasoned

action works well for identifying and understanding associations between CSR and purchase intentions for this study. Armitage and Christian (2004) explained that the theory of reasoned action holds that “behavior is solely dependent on personal agency (i.e., the formation of an intention), and that control over behavior (e.g., personal resources or environmental determinants of behavior) is relatively unimportant” (p. 6). In other words, the theory of reasoned action was designed to deal with relatively simple behaviors in which the prediction of behavior required only the formation of an intention.

Rationale

Although the core of CSR is concerned with responsibilities beyond profit maximization, the relationship between an organization’s involvement in socially responsible practices and its effects on the financial performance of organizations have yet to be conclusively determined. Because an organization’s profits are generally derived from product sales, it is important to recognize the relationship between consumers’ purchase intentions and organizations’ involvement in socially responsible programs. This relationship is important to understand because often CSR is dismissed as merely another public relations tool. However, understanding the underlying reasons consumers make purchases in relation to CSR would contribute to the understanding of CSR as a strategic management function overall.

A wealth of literature is available for understanding CSR as an isolated concept; however, very little research is available to understand CSR as a

strategic management function aimed at increasing revenue. Furthermore, the literature addressing CSR in relation to an organization's financial performance is conflicting; however, the majority of literature recognizes that a positive association exists between CSR and organizations' financial performance. Auger et al. (2007) posited that, "The literature on the importance of social product attributes is much less developed than the branding literature. Most research, both commercial and academic, on the importance of these attributes suggests that a growing number of consumers are taking ethical and social issues into account when purchasing products" (p. 2). To put this in numbers form, Harrison (2003) found that, "By 1996, 67 percent of adults were claiming to consider a company's ethical stance when buying a product and 55 percent would not deal with a company if they disliked its ethics" (p. 129). More importantly, however, Harrison (2003) cited that in 2001, 80 percent of consumers surveyed in the UK believed that companies should attach at least as much importance to social responsibility as profitability when making business decisions. (p. 129) Despite evidence that consumers appear to feel so strongly about organizational involvement in socially responsible programs, Abouzeid and Weaver (1978) determined that social responsibility was not a dominant goal in any of the 220 companies they studied.

Therefore, this study sought to go straight to the source of an organization's financial performance, the consumer. Most indicative of the need for this study, Thompson (1995) stated that, "...knowledge about marketing ethics has increased substantially over the last several years, in large part

because of the many empirical studies that have been conducted. However, the majority of this research has analyzed the ethical judgments of marketing professionals—consumers’ considerations of ethical issues has been neglected” (Creyer and Ross 1997, 422).

A gap exists in the research and studies conducted on CSR overall in regards to examining purchase intention, and specifically in examining consumer perspectives using interview methodology. At the most basic level, it will be important to determine how many consumers are even aware of specific organizations’ involvement in socially responsible programs. The final section of this study focused on this area. Consumers were interviewed and surveyed in regards to the influence of CSR on their purchasing decisions.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to produce understanding and analyze results on this topic, it is important to identify and describe applicable scholarly research and studies on corporate social responsibility, consumer purchase intention and corporate social responsibility as it relates to financial performance and the theory of reasoned action. Also, it is important to cite research and studies that support and undermine the aforementioned areas.

Corporate Social Responsibility

The concept of ethical business practices can be traced back to Biblical times. CSR, however, is a twentieth-century invention. Pava and Krausz (1995) posited that, “The twentieth century has seen an unprecedented growth in the size, importance, and power of the corporation. Corporations have proven to be extremely efficient at producing goods and services. It is the success of the corporation that has necessitated the development of the idea of CSR” (p. 4).

CSR, itself, has historically been an extremely controversial topic. Berle and Means (1933) were among some of the earliest researchers to identify the

massive changes taking place in organizations. Berle and Means posited that "...the corporations have a conscience...This conscience must be built into institutions so that it can be invoked as a right by the individuals and interests subject to the corporate power" (p. 114). However, not all researchers agreed with Berle and Means. One of the most commonly cited critics of CSR, Friedman (1970), thoroughly believed that the acceptance of CSR as a legitimate organizational component would undermine the foundations of our free society. Friedman posited that the sole responsibility of the corporation should be to make as much money for their stockholders as possible.

CSR is no longer so controversially linked. Most major organizations have fully embraced their responsibilities to society. Pava and Krausz (1995) add that, "The core idea of CSR, the notion that companies have a responsibility beyond legal requirements, is by now deeply embedded in the corporate cultures of the largest U.S. companies. Our major conclusion, based on the historical record, can be summarized as follows: at this stage, we believe that the question of whether or not corporations have a social responsibility has already been answered affirmatively" (p. 7). However, it is important to recognize that much of the early literature on CSR focuses on the controversy between traditionalist views such as Friedman's and nontraditional views such as Berle and Means' of these responsibilities. Furthermore, Pava and Krausz (1995) recognize that, although organizations have fully embraced CSR, the traditionalist view of corporations as primarily concerned with profit maximization is still the main objective of the modern-day corporation.

As CSR continues to grow and change with social attitudes, corporations are expected to contribute more and more to society. No longer are small donations and short-term philanthropy acceptable. Rather, corporations are expected to make massive donations and long-term partnership agreements. For example, community partnerships are a common, modern-day area of CSR. However, while corporations are now generally expected to participate in socially responsible programs, it is important to understand whether that expected participation influences the purchase intentions of consumers, resulting in better financial performance for the corporations.

Corporate Social Responsibility and Financial Performance

A majority of research in this area has focused on the financial aspects of the topic. McGuire et al. (1988) offered an excellent overview of the dilemma encountered when examining the relationship between CSR and financial performance: “One view is that firms face a trade-off between social responsibility and their financial performance. Those holding this view propose that firms incur costs from socially responsible actions that put them at an economic disadvantage compared to other, less responsible firms” (p.854). Thus, many organizations see involvement in socially responsible activities as a negative association.

Contrary to this viewpoint, McGuire et al. suggested the alternative view that the cost of CSR is minimal and that firms may actually benefit. Likewise, in interviews with corporate executives, Holmes (1976) found that, “A significant

change in executive opinions and corporate philosophies of social responsibility has occurred over the past five-year period. Executives anticipated more positive than negative outcomes from the social efforts of their firms, and almost all executives believed that corporate reputation and goodwill would be enhanced through social endeavors” (p. 40). Therefore, CSR and financial performance was viewed by many organizations as having a positive association.

A third and final perspective suggested by McGuire et al. stated that no association could be seen between CSR and financial performance or “that the costs of socially responsible actions are significant but are offset by a reduction in other firm costs” (854). The relationship between CSR and financial performance is controversial; however, the majority of research and studies have revealed a positive association between CSR and financial performance.

For example, Pava and Krausz (1995) analyzed 21 noteworthy studies related to CSR and financial performance. Their results indicated that of the 21 studies analyzed, the majority revealed a positive association, and more studies revealed that no association existed than that a negative association existed.

Numerous similar studies using content analyses methodology to show a positive association between CSR and financial performance have been done. Bragdon and Marlin (1975) conducted one of the earliest studies of CSR as it relates to financial performance studies. The researchers used measures of financial accounting in comparison to levels of pollution to show that lower levels of pollution had a positive association with better financial performance. Belkaoui (1976) also used pollution as a CSR topic of choice to show that stock returns

were higher for firms that disclosed pollution control information in annual reports than for a control sample. In addition, Cotrill (1990) used *Fortune* magazine's annual survey of corporate reputations in comparison to market share. Cotrill concluded a positive association existed between CSR and market share. Also, Roberts (1992) tested the stakeholder theory (McGuire et al. (1988) explained that, "Stakeholder theory suggests that a firm must satisfy not only stockholders and bondholders, but also those with less explicit, or implicit, claims" (p.854)) using financial accounting measures to conclude, once again, that a positive association existed between CSR and financial performance. Finally, Cochran and Wood (1984) used accounting data across five years and compared it to three categories of socially responsible corporations (best, honorable mention, and worst) identified by Moscovitz (1975). Cochran and Wood concluded that with operating earnings/sales as the financial performance measure, firms with "best" rankings outperformed "honorable mention" firms, which, in turn, outperformed "worst" ranked firms. Therefore, a positive association between CSR and financial performance was recognized.

However, research and studies on the association between CSR and financial performance have not always revealed a positive association, and it is important to address some prominent studies that have concluded that the relationship between CSR and financial performance has been identified as negative or nonexistent. One of the earliest and most commonly cited studies concluding that the relationship between CSR and financial performance is negative was Vance (1975). Vance used Moskowitz's (1975) social responsibility

index in comparison to a percentage change in stock prices. He concluded that a negative association existed between CSR and financial performance. Vance is one of very few researchers to find a negative association.

More studies have found that no association existed at all than that a negative association existed as posited by Vance (1975). For example, Sturdivant and Ginter (1977) used Moscovitz's (1975) social responsibility index in comparison with earnings per share growth information to show that not only do the attitudes of top management relate to involvement in CSR programs, but also, that "It would appear that a case can be made for an association between responsiveness to social issues and the ability to respond effectively to traditional business challenges...A company management group which reflects rather narrow and rigid views of social change and rising expectations might also be expected to respond less creatively and effectively in the traditional but also dynamic arenas in which business functions. Hence there is the stronger economic performance." (p. 38). While Sturdivant and Ginter did not conclusively determine whether the association was positive or negative, the fact that an association was quite possibly present was recognized.

Recognizing that an association between CSR and financial performance was assumedly present, Bowman and Haire (1975) performed a content analysis, examining the annual reports of 82 firms in the food processing industry between 1969 and 1973. By examining the amounts of attention given to CSR in the firms' annual reports, they divided the firms into upper, middle and no mention of CSR categories. Then the groups were compared to returns on

equity percentages. Bowman and Haire (1975) concluded that the mean return on equity for firms in the middle group was 14.3 percent, while the mean return on equity for firms with no mention of CSR was 9.1 percent. Therefore, Bowman and Haire posited that at least a moderate amount of involvement in socially responsible programs increased financial performance. However, Bowman and Haire were unable to conclusively show that the upper-grouped firms produced a higher mean return on equity than firms in the middle group.

Likewise, Alexander and Buchholz (1978) used Moskowitz's (1975) social responsibility index in comparison to market-based returns to conclude that "no significant relationship exists between social responsibility ratings and market-based returns" (Pava and Krausz 1995, 156), and Freedman and Jaggi (1982) examined the Council on Economic Priorities air and water pollution measures in comparison to various financial accounting measures to conclude that, "In general there is no association between pollution measures and financial performance" (Pava and Krausz 1995, 157).

While the majority of studies in CSR and financial performance indicated a positive association, the literature clearly lacks an examination of purchase intentions in relation to CSR. Because an organization's profits are generally derived from product sales, it is important to recognize the relationship between consumers' purchase intentions and organizations' involvement in socially responsible programs. In addition, it is interesting that studies have focused on the analyses of financial data rather than going to the primary source of an

organizations' revenue, the consumer. Thus, in addition to CSR, it is important to address purchase intention in this review of the literature.

Purchase Intention

Purchase intention can most readily be understood as the likelihood that a consumer intends to purchase a product. The concept of purchase intention is rooted in psychological and behavioral studies; therefore, an introduction to behavioral theory is necessary for this study. Ajzen and Fishbein are prominent figures in behavioral studies, and thus, their extensive research and studies will guide this literature review as it pertains to purchase intentions. More specifically, Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) theory of reasoned action will be used as the framework for shaping this study.

It is important for this research to recognize that a connection has been realized between consumer attitudes and behavior. Using the theory of reasoned action, Ajzen et al. (1982) conducted a study linking attitude to behavior. Contrary to widely held beliefs at the time, Ajzen et al. concluded that "people do act in accordance with their attitudes." [...] To predict a single behavior we have to assess the person's attitude toward the behavior in question" (p. 427).

Armitage and Christian (2004) explained that the theory of reasoned action holds that "behavior is solely dependent on personal agency (i.e., the formation of an intention), and that control over behavior (e.g., personal resources or environmental determinants of behavior) is relatively unimportant"

(Armitage and Christian 2004, 6). In other words, the theory of reasoned action was designed to deal with relatively simple behaviors in which the prediction of behavior required only the formation of an intention. Sheppard et al. (1988) found the theory of reasoned action possesses adequate predictive validity in consumer behavior. Therefore, the theory of reasoned action was used for the identification and understanding of associations between CSR and purchase intentions for this study.

More specifically, Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) analyzed consumer behavior in what they termed the beginnings of the “consumer movement.” Ajzen and Fishbein posited that, “The mounting interest in consumer behavior can be attributed in part to the desire of business firms to obtain a competitive advantage by basing their marketing decisions on information about the factors that determine the consumers’ preferences among products. At the same time, consumers have organized to express their dissatisfaction and demand political action to ensure, among other things higher standards of quality and safety, lower prices, and better service. The consumer movement further underscores the need to gain a better understanding of the factors that determine the behavior of individuals who consume the products of our economy” (p. 149).

Results of the rising “consumer movement” have ultimately been the emergence of consumer behaviors as a distinct area of research and study, and research in this area has most commonly dealt with the processes that underlie consumers’ decisions to purchase a specific product or service. Auger et al. (2007) added that, “Several factors including the emergence of pressure groups,

increasing focus on [CSR] by major corporations, and the availability of better quality ‘ethical’ products have been proposed as factors contributing to the growing popularity of social issues in business.”

Harrison (2003) recognized the growing importance of the consumer movement and cited the first European ethical consumption study performed by the United Kingdom Consumers’ Association in 2003. The study invited the 700,000 members of Europe’s largest consumer group to integrate company ethical performance into their buying decisions for the first time. Furthermore, the study presented some important results relevant to this study. Results are presented in the following chart.

Table 2.1 Consumer Behavior Index

Consumer Behavior Index		
	Percent done at least once	Percent done at least four times
Recycled materials/waste	73	59
Bought to support local shops/suppliers	61	37
Talked to friends/family about company’s behavior	58	23
Recommended a company because of responsible reputation	52	14
Chosen product/service on a company’s responsible reputation	51	17
Avoided product/service because of company’s behavior	44	14
Bought primarily for ethical reasons	29	9
Actively sought info on company’s behavior/policy	24	6
Felt guilty about unethical purchase	17	3
Actively campaigned about environmental/social issue	15	2

Source: Mason, Tania. “The importance of being ethical.” *Marketing*, 26 October 2000, 27.

The UK survey data exemplifies the growing emphasis consumers were placing on the behaviors of organizations. In addition, it is important to note that research by the Corporate Register.com ranks the UK as having the largest CSR reporting effort by all companies in countries analyzed since 1992. (“Top 20 Countries...” 2007) Therefore, the survey above is comprised of data from more organizations and industries than that of any other country. Further proof of the rising interest of consumers in organizations’ involvement or lack there of in socially responsible programs is the creation of websites such as Corporate Register.com, CSRwire.com, and Global Reporting.org that allow consumers to access everything from individual companies’ CSR reports to the latest CSR news releases.

Ajzen and Fishbein’s (1980) study results revealed that the most important determinant for purchase intention was the participants’ attitude toward the behavior. To explain, Ajzen and Fishbein noted that, “Much of the research in the area of consumer behavior has focused on what we consider to be a target element: brands and products. The major effort has gone into identifying attributes of the brands or products that serve as evaluative criteria which distinguishes between people who buy or prefer different brands within a given product class. Estimates of attitudes based on these evaluative criteria are often used to explain and predict consumer preference and choice” (p. 171). Not only does this reinforce the need for the study at hand, but also, Ajzen and Fishbein noted major problems with the key criteria used in consumer behavior research and study.

Primarily, Ajzen and Fishbein determined that the reasons for buying or not buying a product are not the same as the reasons for liking or not liking it. The researchers offered the following explanation for clarity: “Many parents who detest breakfast cereals buy them regularly...” (p. 171). Thus, this study sought to eliminate brand and product determinants in order to eliminate respondent bias.

Unfortunately, in regards to attitudes and purchase intention specifically, information is often conflicting. Harrison (2003) explained, “[The] majority level support for CSR issues in opinion polls has, in most cases not been matched by majority market shares for specifically ethical products. [Harrison believes] that consumers like to believe that ethical matters figure heavily in their purchasing decisions, but in reality care only about price and quality...there has been much debate about the reliability of surveys in these circumstances” (p. 129)

Obviously having the same notion as Harrison (2003), Auger and Devinney (2005) examined the survey methodology primarily used in studies linking CSR and purchase intention (what Auger and Devinney term “ethical consumerism”) and how well asking consumers the extent to which they care about a specific social or ethical issue related to how they would behave in a more constrained environment where there is no socially acceptable response. Auger and Devinney employed structured choice experiments in which consumers were forced to trade-off product attributes (including ethical attributes) against one another. They cited the sensitivity of consumers to ethical issues, for

example child labor or animal testing, as a motivation to answer questions in a socially acceptable way.

A minimal number of studies have been done directly linking CSR and purchase intention and these are important to note. Brown and Dacin (1997) studied the effects of two general corporate associations on product responses, one of which was the company's perceived social responsibility. The results of three studies by Brown and Dacin demonstrated that what consumers know about a company could influence their beliefs about and attitudes toward new products produced by that company, corporate ability associations and CSR associations may have different effects on consumer responses to products and the products of companies with negative associations will not always receive negative responses. (p. 68) Likewise, Creyer and Ross (1997) studied consumers' expectations regarding the ethicality of corporate behavior, how consumers believe their purchase behavior would be influenced by ethical and unethical corporate actions, and the relationship between expectations about the ethicality of a corporate behavior and how consumers would likely respond to ethical and unethical acts. Creyer and Ross's survey results indicated that, "the ethicality of a firm's behavior is an important consideration during the purchase decision, ethical corporate behavior is expected, [consumers] will reward ethical behavior by willingness to pay higher prices for that firm's product, and although they may buy from an unethical firm, they want to do so at lower prices which, in effect, punishes the unethical act" (p. 428). It is important to note that, while this study seems quite similar to the study at hand, a difference exists in the

underlying marketing theory (prospect theory) used by the authors of this study and that survey respondents were all parents of elementary school children, which may have created an unintentional bias in the results as parents are not representative of consumers in general.

In order to measure purchase intention for this study, the theory of reasoned action was used, and, thus, must also be identified in this review of the literature.

The Theory of Reasoned Action

In order to predict the importance CSR plays in consumer's purchase intentions, it is necessary to review some basic information and the relevant research and studies in behavioral theory. Specifically, this study is foundationally based on Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) theory of reasoned action; however, the theory is complex and controversial. Therefore, it is important to specifically address attitudes as they are capable of predicting behavior through the theory of reasoned action.

Historically, attitudes have been assumed to be direct predictors of behavior, thus the emergence of attitude scales such as the Thurstone (1931), Likert (1932), Guttman (1944) and Osgood (1957) scales. After a review of the current literature, Allport (1935) concluded that, the social psychological study of attitudes has been one of the core areas of discipline for decades, and that, "No other term appears more frequently in the experimental and theoretical literature" (798). Moreover, Armitage and Christian (2004) posit that although attitudes

serve a great number of functions, attitudes as they serve to guide people's behavior account for the vast majority of research on the topic. (1)

LaPiere's (1934) study is perhaps one of the first and most widely cited examples of discrepancy between attitudes and behavior. LaPiere toured the United States with a young Chinese couple during times of anti-Chinese sentiment. After visiting 250 different establishments, the group was denied service on only one occasion; however, when LaPiere subsequently wrote the same establishments, 118 of the 128 replies claimed that they would not accept members of the Chinese race as guests in their establishment. LaPiere concluded, "Only a verbal reaction to an entirely symbolic situation can be secured by the questionnaire. It may indicate what the responder would actually do when confronted with the situation symbolized in the question, but there is no assurance that it will. [...] If social attitudes are to be conceptualized as partially integrated habit sets which will become operative under specific circumstances and lead to a particular pattern of adjustment they must, in the main, be derived from a study of humans behaving in actual social situations. They must not be imputed on the basis of questionnaire data" (236-7). Likewise, Whitlow (1935) used questionnaires to predict the behavior of approximately 600 high school students over a six-year period. Whitlow concluded, "A particular student may behave in a way directly opposed to his attitude; or with respect to a particular item of conduct the behavior of the students in the aggregate may contradict their attitude. In other words, a professed attitude is not a criterion for predicting behavior" (491).

Following LaPiere (1934) and Whitlow's (1935) conclusions, many researchers shifted their focus and concentrated on developing attitude measurements and theoretical positions on the measurement of attitudes, as they were capable of predicting behaviors. Perhaps, the most prominent of these studies is Wicker (1969). Wicker (1969) examined 42 studies (not necessarily using the theory of reasoned action) to determine that attitudes only generally correlate with behaviors, $r = .15$, and that corresponding correlations rarely exceed $r = .30$. (Armitage and Christian 2004, 2) Moreover, Corey (1937) assessed attitudes toward cheating using, what was considered at the time, a highly reliable measure of attitudes toward behavior. Corey (1937) found only $r = .02$ between attitude toward cheating and overt behavior.

Triandis (1967) concluded that, "there is a gap between those who are primarily concerned with the measurement of attitudes and those who have written theoretically about the measurement of attitudes. The former frequently rest their case after providing us with a single score, whereas the latter make a large number of theoretical distinctions but do not provide us with precise and standard procedures for measurement" (228). In so much, theoretical research was further split into examining potential moderators versus variables that might mediate the attitude-behavior relationship.

Baron and Kenney (1986) defined the difference between moderator and mediator measurements. A moderator variable "partitions a focal independent variable into subgroups that establish its domains of maximal effectiveness in regard to a given dependent variable" (1173). However, mediator refers to a

variable “which represents the generative mechanism through which the focal independent variable is able to influence the dependent variable of interest” (1173). Armitage and Christian (2004) add that “as far as they are aware, only one variable has been investigated in this regard, namely, behavioral intentions” (4).

Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) stated, “Behavioral intentions are regarded as a summary of the motivation required to perform a particular behavior, reflecting an individual’s decision to perform a particular behavior, reflecting an individual’s course of action, as well as an index of how hard people are willing to try and perform the behavior. The idea that behavioral intentions mediate the attitude-behavior relationship represents a significant move away from the traditional view of attitudes: rather than attitudes being related directly to behavior, attitudes only serve to direct behavior to the extent that they influence intentions” (Armitage and Christian 2004, 4-5).

Thus, deriving from Fishbein’s extension of Dulaney’s theory of propositional control (1967), researchers Icek Ajzen and Martin Fishbein introduced the theory of reasoned action in 1967 (See Dulaney 1967 and Fishbein 1967). Originally termed the Fishbein model, the theory of reasoned action is based on the assumption that human beings are usually quite rational and make systematic use of information available to them with the ultimate goal being the prediction and understanding of behavior. The theory is founded on the idea that the influence of attitude on behavior is mediated through behavioral intentions, and that behavioral intention is a function of two basic determinants:

attitude toward the behavior and subjective norms. A person's attitude toward a behavior is basically the individual's positive or negative evaluation toward performing the behavior, and subjective norms are the individual's perception of the social pressures from relevant referents to perform (or not perform) the behavior.

Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) posit that a person's beliefs underlie a person's attitudes. Ajzen and Fishbein add that, "Although a person may hold a large number of beliefs about any given object, it appears that he can attend to only a relatively small number of beliefs—perhaps five to nine—at any given moment. According to our theory, these salient beliefs are the immediate determinants of the person's attitude" (63).

Therefore, according to the theory of reasoned action, the first step in predicting behavior is elicitation of salient beliefs, and because elicitation usually produces sets of beliefs that differ from respondent to respondent, Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) recommend eliciting beliefs from a representative sample of the population and selecting the most frequently elicited beliefs to create a modal set for the population, termed "modal behavioral beliefs." Next, the strength of beliefs is measured through weighting. For example, respondents are asked to indicate the likelihood that performing the behavior will result in a given outcome. According to the theory of reasoned action "a person's attitude toward a behavior can be predicted by multiplying their evaluation of each of the behavior's consequences by the strength of their belief that performing the behavior will lead

to that consequence and then summing the products for the total set of beliefs” (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980, 67).

Subjective norms, which beliefs are also considered to underlie, must also be measured in order to predict behavior. Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) recommend assessing not only a person’s normative beliefs (a person’s belief that a specific referent thinks he should or should not perform a behavior) but also, the person’s motivation to comply with each of his or her referents or the weight of those referents.

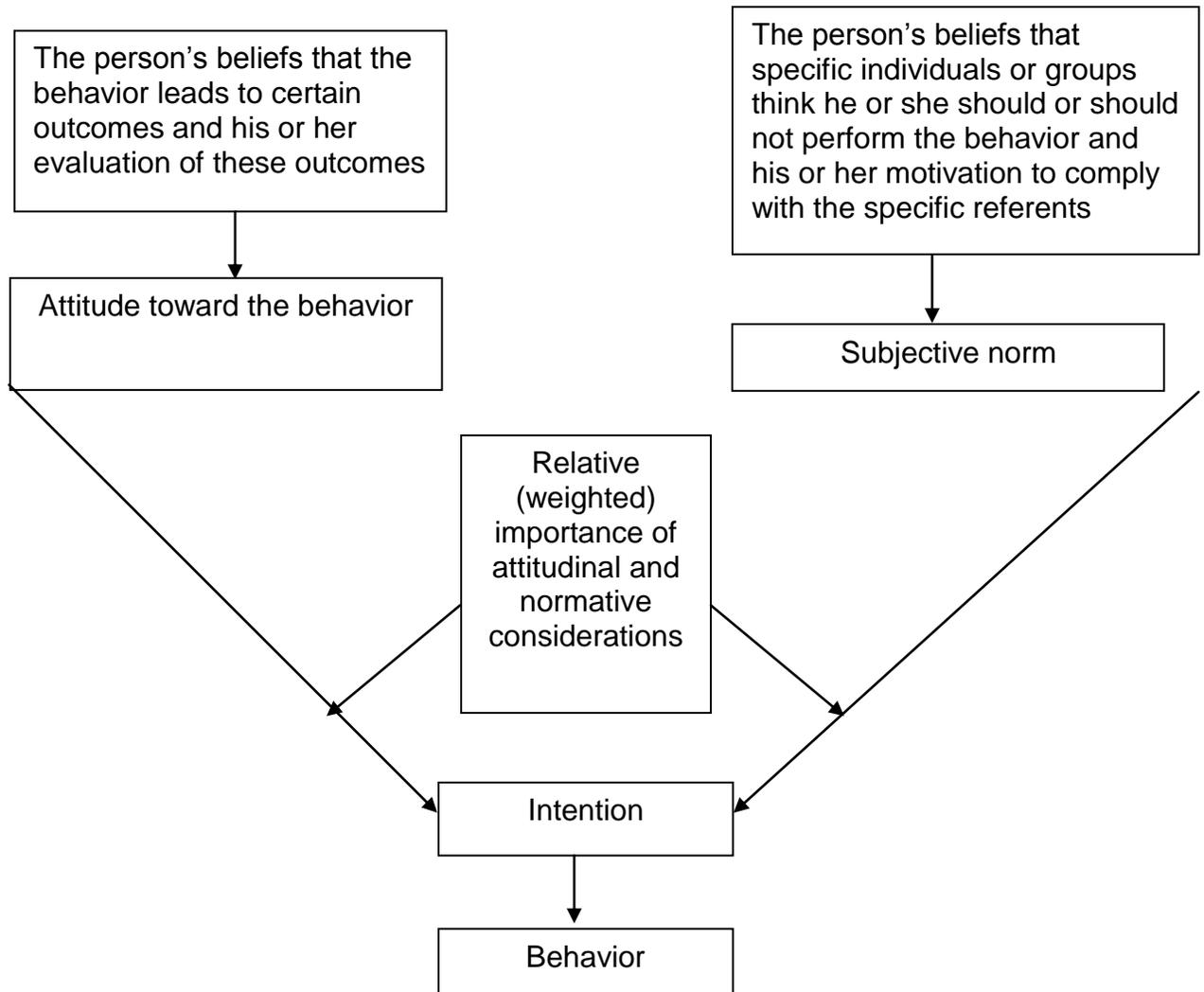
Finally, Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) state, “We have argued that with the aid of appropriate elicitation and measurement procedures, it is possible to predict a person’s attitude toward a behavior from a weighted sum of his or her beliefs about performing the behavior and to predict his or her subjective norm from a weighted sum of his normative beliefs. Since attitude toward a behavior and subjective norm are the determinants of intention, it should theoretically be possible to predict intention directly from the two sets of beliefs” (76). However, in order to predict behavior, Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) argue that certain conditions must be met: the set of behavioral beliefs must predict the attitude toward the behavior, the set of normative beliefs are predictive of the subjective norm and the attitude toward the behavior and subjective norm must be shown to predict the intention. (76)

Additionally, Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) contend that in order for behaviors to be predicted using the theory of reasoned action, each component above must correlate specifically in terms of target, context, time and action. For example,

“an individual’s attitude toward exercising (action), to get fit (target) in the gym (context) in the next week (time) should be more closely related to a measure of behavior designed to tap exercising to get fit in the gym in the preceding week, than (say) an index of fitness” (Armitage and Christian 2004, 3).

In order to better understand the theory of reasoned action, the following example is offered by Armitage and Christian (2004): “Consider the following example of Gary’s intention to use a condom. Gary’s mother might want her son to use a condom every time he has sex with a new partner, but Gary is only likely to do so to the extent that he is motivated to comply with his mother (very little in this case). Similarly, Gary’s latest partner also wants Gary to use a condom everytime he has sex with her; in this case, however, Gary is very motivated to comply with his new partner and therefore is more likely to intend to use a condom. Within the theory of reasoned action, both behavioral and normative beliefs are summed to produce global measures of attitude and subjective norm, respectively” (5-6). Additionally, a chart of the theory of reasoned action (adapted from Ajzen and Fishbein 1980, 8) is included below for clarity purposes.

Table 2.2 The Theory of Reasoned Action



Since the theory's conception in 1967, many researchers have found that it has adequate predictive utility. Bagozzi (1981) conducted a field study of blood donors examining hypotheses within leading attitude-behavior theories, including the theory of reasoned action. Bagozzi (1981) concluded that behaviors under an individual's complete volitional control showed that attitude influences behavior only through its impact on intentions, as described by Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) theory of reasoned action. Moreover, Bagozzi (1981) found support for

measuring the attitude-behavior relationship in regards to Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) correlation of target, context, action and time. Bagozzi (1981) states, "The present study also demonstrates the sensitivity of the intentions-behavior and attitude-intentions relationships to specificity considerations. With respect to the former, the relations are strongest when the corresponding variables are measured at comparable levels of specificity with regard to action, target, context and time. With respect to the latter, the relationship is strongest when the respondent is allowed to adjust intention according to the degree of behavioral commitment he or she is willing to make. It appears that attitudes and intentions can correspond in terms of the consequences of the act as well as in terms of the action, target, context and time elements" (625).

Like Bagozzi (1981), Burnkrant and Page (1982) assessed the determinants of the intention to donate blood. Based on Bagozzi's (1981) findings, Burnkrant and Page assumed that intention would fully mediate intention, resulting in behavior. Burnkrant and Page concluded that, "Our results provide strong support for the validity of a two-component (i.e. attitudinal and normative) conceptualization of the determinants of behavioral intention" (560). Moreover, Schlegel et al. (1977) extended the generalizability of the theory of reasoned action through measuring alcohol drinking by adolescents. Schlegel et al. concluded that their research had shown the theory of reasoned action to be sufficiently strong and "compared favorably with results obtained from applications of the [theory] to other behaviors" (428).

Furthermore, Davidson and Jaccard (1975) tested the theory of reasoned action using phone interviews of women on the topic of family planning. The researchers attempted to show the predictivity and generalizability of the theory. Davidson and Jaccard concluded that, to the degree that attitudinal and normative components predict behavioral intention, the theory provides highly active predictions of family planning intentions. (1077) Also, the researchers found that a high correlation was present between individuals' attitude toward performing a given behavior and beliefs about the consequences of performing that behavior. (1079) And finally, Davidson and Jaccard showed support for the theory of reasoned action as correlations are stronger when the traditional attitude toward the object is replaced with attitude toward the act in predicting specific behaviors (as suggested by the theory of reasoned action). (1079) Davidson and Jaccard performed a two-year study of family planning behavior again in 1979. Again, Davison and Jaccard (1979) found predictive validity of the theory and concluded "Even prior to the adjustments made for attitude change and the sequence of events, both intention and the attitudinal and normative components measured at the first interview provided reasonable correlations with behavior during the subsequent 2 years (the lowest validity coefficient was .508)" (1374).

Possibly, the most overwhelming evidence of the theory's predictive utility is Sheppard et al. (1988). Sheppard et al. (1988) conducted two meta-analyses of past studies utilizing the Ajzen and Fishbein model. Sheppard et al. (1988) found that, "Based on the data [...], a frequency-weighted average correlation for

the intention-behavior relationship was .53. This correlation is based on 87 separate studies with a total sample of 11,566 and is significant at the 0.01 level. Based on the data [...], a frequency-weighted average correlation for the attitude-subjective norm-intention relationship was .66. This correlation is based on 87 separate studies with a total sample of 12,624 and is significant at the 0.001 level. These results provide strong support for the overall predictive utility of the Fishbein and Ajzen model” (336).

Perhaps most closely linked to the study at hand, the theory of reasoned action has been proven effective in marketing literature. In applying the theory to predicting and understanding consumer behavior, Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) demonstrated the theory’s ability to predict purchase intentions by asking 37 college students to indicate their intentions to perform two or three different behaviors in reference to five brands in three product types (automobile, toothpaste and beer). While Ajzen and Fishbein stressed correspondence between measures, they concluded that “there is little doubt that buying intentions can be accurately predicted from corresponding measures of attitude toward the behavior and subjective norm. With respect to the products and behaviors considered in this study, the attitude toward the behavior seemed to be the more important determinant of buying intention” (169).

In a review of the relevant marketing literature, Ryan and Bonfield (1975) cited that the theory had several shortcomings and recommended a larger body of marketing research using the theory; however, they also concluded that evidence across studies indicate that the theory has “value in predicting and

explaining variance in intentions and behaviors over a wide range of purchase intentions and purchase behavior” (125). Ryan and Bonfield (1975) found that across the relevant literature, the average correlation between behavioral intention and behavior was .44. (125) Moreover, it is important to note, as Ryan and Bonfield (1975) have, that much of the marketing research based on the theory of reasoned action has not actually measured behavior, rather much of the research, both positive and negative, has measured the relationship between variables in the theory of reasoned action.

Wilson et al. (1975) applied the theory of reasoned action to a study of adult housewives answering questionnaires and then observing their behavior when selecting between six different brands of toothpaste, which they were given at no-charge for their participation in the study, from a display. Wilson et al. concluded that the theory of reasoned action can be applied in a marketing context, and that attitude toward action (as suggested by the theory of reasoned action) predicted behavioral intention better than other models. Additionally, it was argued that attitude toward action has considerably greater predictive power in purchase situations where barriers exist to purchase (e.g. financial, status effects, time etc.). (47) Likewise, a study by Tuck (1973) used the theory of reasoned action to show correlation across different user groups of a specific brand of bedtime drink, Horlicks. Tuck (1973) found that when the total sample was considered, the correlation was .74, and all correlations were significant at over the .005 level. (347) Tuck added, “Predictions of behavior will be improved

(in my experience and that of other users of the model) by the measurement of normative beliefs according to the [theory of reasoned action]” (347).

Furthermore, Ryan and Bonfield (1980) used questionnaires and interviews of prospective loan customers at a credit union to study the theory of reasoned action as it resulted in behavior (loan application). Ryan and Bonfield determined their study supported the validity of the theory of reasoned action. (92). The researchers stated, “The results of this study are consistent with the findings of other researchers who have investigated this [theory]. [...] The mediating effect of behavioral intentions was shown, and the ability of this deterministic [theory] to predict unobtrusively observed real world group behavior adds external validity evidence to previous support” (90). Moreover, Ryan and Bonfield added “behavioral intention not only provides a quantitative criterion that is more convenient to monitor than overt behavior, but it also appears to mediate the effect of attitudes and norms on subsequent behavior” (90).

Harrell and Bennett (1974) studied physician-prescribing behavior in order to test the theory of reasoned action, specifically, in the area of purchase intentions. Harrell and Bennett offer the following example for clarity: “For example, with physicians, the sample used in this study, prescriptions for the same drug might be for two different patients and for somewhat different patient conditions. Or, the purchase of a consumer item such as a brand of potato chip might be for the buyer’s own consumption, consumption of the family, or as a party treat for guests. In each case, the anticipated reward might vary. One way to attempt to control for this variation is to present the respondent with a

situation-specific problem for which the behavior is directed” (270). While Harrell and Bennett did not conclude that a strong relationship existed between actual prescribing behavior and behavioral intention, they did find that a relationship was, in fact, present and listed the variety of reasons the relationship (and, likewise, purchase intention-behavior relationship) might not have been stronger. (275) However, Harrell and Bennett did posit that the results of their study “combined with the difficulties encountered in obtaining measures of behavior itself, make a strong case for the continued use of behavioral intention in attitude measurement in marketing” (276).

Unfortunately, as Harrell and Bennett (1974) may have concluded, not all research has affirmed the theory’s validity, and this research is important to recognize with the understanding that the theory of reasoned action is recognized as being the only theory to cite behavioral intentions as the sole mediator and moderator of the attitude-behavior relationship. Additionally, it is important to note that while a majority of early research cites an extremely low correlation between attitude and behavior, most of this research did not use the theory of reasoned action. Furthermore, disparity in using the theory is evident in much of the more current literature and has incited controversy over the theory’s actual validity (See: Bass (1972); Bass and Talaryzk (1972); Talaryzk (1972)). For the purposes of this study, outlining the back-and-forth devaluation of the theory and its subsequent replies is not applicable, but important to note. Therefore, the literature on this topic that may not have gone uncontested, however, was not a major piece of the controversy described above will be the

primary examples of research that have not affirmed the theory of reasoned action's validity for this study.

Several researchers have concluded that the theory requires revision in order to increase accuracy. Most of this research focuses on alteration of one or more of the theory's components. Ajzen and Fishbein argue, in most of these instances, that the theory is not being properly used, most often in regards to specificity across components indicating target, action, context and time. For example, assessing the attitude of a woman about punishing children is different then assessing the attitude of a woman about punishing her own children. Therefore, specificity is not stable across components predictive of behavior using the theory of reasoned action. Nevertheless, with this type of research guiding the relevant literature indicative of negative correlations between attitude and behavior using the theory of reasoned action, it is, therefore, important to address the major limitations of the theory.

Sheppard et al. (1988) explains that the theory, although it is frequently applied in these situations, is not applicable to situations in which "(1) the target behavior is not completely under the subjects' complete volitional control, (2) the situation involves a choice problem not explicitly addressed by Fishbein and Ajzen and/or (3) subjects' intentions are assessed when it is impossible for them to have all of the necessary information to form a completely confident intention" (325).

Moreover, it is important to note that the theory was later revised to include behaviors that may not be under the individual's complete volitional

control; however, for the purposes of this study, it was assumed that purchase intentions are completely under the consumer's volitional control. Therefore the theory of reasoned action was used in this study, rather than its revised counterpart, the theory of planned behavior (See Ajzen 1988, 1991).

CHAPTER 3

HYPOTHESIS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Because the majority of research indicated a positive association between financial performance and CSR, this perspective will be the basis for determining the relationship between CSR and purchase intention. An organization's profitability is ultimately determined by consumers' intent to purchase that organization's product, service, etc. Therefore, this research assumes the relationship between financial performance and purchase intention to be similar. Furthermore, assuming that intent implied behavior, the theory of reasoned action worked well for predicting associations about attitudes of consumers in regards to CSR and purchase intention for this study. In addition, it was interesting to research consumers' awareness of organizational involvement in socially responsible practices on a basic level.

H1: A positive association exists between an organization's involvement in CSR programs and consumers' purchase intention. Thus, consumers are more likely to purchase an organization's product if that organization is involved in socially responsible practices.

RQ1: Are consumers aware of specific organizational involvement in socially responsible practices?

RQ2: Are consumers aware of a lack of specific organizational involvement in socially responsible practices?

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this study sought to follow the established guidelines of Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) theory of reasoned action in order to answer the hypothesis and research questions. In this chapter, data collection, Institutional Review Board approval and data analyses are discussed.

Data Collection

This study combined interviews and surveys of general consumers, 18 years of age and older, in the Muncie, Indiana area. Participants were general consumers from a variety of backgrounds, ages, ethnicities, education and income levels or representative of U.S. consumers in the Midwest region.

Following the guidelines and suggestions posited by the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980), 13 interviews were conducted at a popular Midwest business.

An additional 287 surveys were collected after the survey was sent to approximately 2,000 (approximate 14 percent response rate) webmail accounts at a large Midwestern university. The webmail accounts included faculty, staff

and students at the university. Results were filtered to include only those who completed the survey; therefore, if a question was skipped, it seems that it was purposefully done.

Participants were interviewed and surveyed with regard to the influence organizational involvement in socially responsible programs has on their intentions to purchase a product. Demographic information including age, gender, level of education, marital status, income level, political affiliation and whether or not they have children was collected in order to cross analyze results and ensure a representative sample is present.

It is important to note that the literature on CSR and financial performance rarely uses interview or survey methodologies. Rather, content methodology is most often employed. However, interview methodology is more often employed in purchase intention research, but the sensitivity of consumers to ethical issues, for example child labor or animal testing, becomes a motivation to answer questions in a socially acceptable manner. Therefore, this study determined the level of general importance CSR plays in purchase intention by using general CSR questions, rather than the more often used specific categorizations of CSR such as human rights, animal testing, environment, etc. (Auger and Devinney, 2005).

Also, it is important to note that brand attitudes, which commonly use survey methodology, are an entire area for research and study that is unrelated to what this study hopes to accomplish. Thus, the lack of specific organization or product acknowledgment differentiated this study from brand attitude research

and studies. This study eliminated these variables in order to eliminate preconceived biases and achieve more consistent results. For example, consumers' pre-existing attitudes toward a brand such as Nike when buying shoes would have inevitably influenced results.

Likewise, previous research and study have shown that respondents answer questions differently when they are associated with time. For example, buying a car in the next three weeks versus buying a car in the next three years revealed extremely different survey responses. (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980) Therefore, this study assessed general purchase intentions for the next six months.

After assessing consumers' salient beliefs and forming a modal set of behavioral beliefs for this study, consumers were initially asked to explain what CSR means to them. As few corporations have even fully grasped the concept of CSR, an explanation of CSR followed this question, including the variety of names CSR goes by and examples of CSR programs. Next, consumers were asked a series of questions based on the predetermined salient beliefs to determine the level of importance that CSR plays in their purchasing decisions. A second part of the interview and survey asked consumers which, if any corporations they consider to be particularly socially responsible or irresponsible.

The initial part of the research followed the guidelines posited by the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980) to determine if consumers are more likely to purchase products from organizations based on involvement in socially responsible activities. The second part of the research, asking

consumers which specific corporations they consider particularly responsible or irresponsible, was compared to *Fortune* magazine's top and bottom ranked socially responsible companies in 2007. For 2007, *Fortune's* most socially responsible companies are listed in order of rank as follows: CHS, United Parcel Service, Whole Foods Market, McDonald's, Alcan, YRC Worldwide, Starbucks, International Paper, Vulcan Materials and Walt Disney. The worst ten socially responsible companies for 2007 are listed in order of rank as follows: Visteon, Dana, CA, Delphi, Federal-Mogul, ArvinMeritor, Huntsman, Navistar International, Lyondell Chemical and Toys "R" Us.

Interestingly, the *Fortune* data was derived from surveying executives, directors and analysts per industry and applying a numerical score from zero (poor) to ten (excellent) for companies. This is also the case in similar social responsibility ranking systems. Therefore, like the association between CSR and purchase intention overall, research lacks the consumer's perspective.

Institutional Review Board Approval

This research has been reviewed and determined to be exempt by Ball State University's Institutional Review Board.

Data Analysis

Data was entered into SPSS and analyzed to determine correlations between consumer purchase intention and CSR.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

Results of this study were encouraging in regards to the indication of a positive relationship between corporate social responsibility and consumer purchase intention. Also, comparisons between *Fortune* data and this study's data had moderately positive results. In this chapter, demographics, hypothesis, research questions, crosstab analysis of variables and implications are discussed.

Demographics

As previously mentioned, results of this study were filtered to only include those participants who completed the survey; therefore, if a question was skipped, it seems that it was purposefully done. Of the 287 resulting responses, the majority (37.6 percent) of respondents indicated that they were between the ages of 18 and 25 (n=108). Fifty-eight respondents (20.2 percent) indicated that they were between the ages of 26 and 35, 33 respondents (11.5 percent) indicated that they were between the ages of 36 and 45, 46 respondents (16 percent) indicated that they were between the ages of 46 and 55 and 41

respondents (14.3 percent) indicated that they were 56 or older. Also, the majority (62.9 percent) of respondents indicated that they were female (n=180), and 106 respondents (37.1 percent) indicated that they were male.

Respondents were also asked to indicate marital status and if they had any children. In regards to marital status, similar amounts of respondents indicated single (n=135) and married (n=137), 47.4 percent and 48.1 percent, respectively. Only 12 respondents (4.2 percent) indicated that they were divorced, and one respondent (0.4 percent) indicated that they were widowed. Also, in regards to children, 59.4 percent of respondents (n=170) indicated that they did not have any children, and 40.5 percent (n=116) indicated that they had between one and five or more children.

The highest level of education completed and annual household income of respondents was also assessed. The majority of respondents (47.4 percent) indicated that they had completed a graduate degree or higher (n=135). Ten respondents (3.5 percent) indicated that high school was the highest level of education they had completed, 59 respondents (20.7 percent) indicated that some college was the highest level of education completed, eight respondents (2.8 percent) indicated that an associate's or professional degree was the highest level of education they had completed, and 73 respondents (25.6 percent) indicated that the highest level of education they had completed was a bachelor's degree. Also, in regards to annual household income, similar amounts of respondents indicated an annual household income of less than \$25,000 (n=92) and an annual household income of more than \$75,000 (n=90), 33.5 percent and

32.7 percent, respectively. Fifty-one respondents (18.5 percent) indicated an annual household income of between \$25,000 and \$50,000, and 42 respondents (15.3 percent) indicated an annual household income of between \$51,000 and \$75,000.

Finally, respondents were asked if they identified with a political party, to indicate which one. The majority of respondents (n=118 or 41.3 percent) indicated that they identified with the Democratic Party. Fifty-two respondents (18.2 percent) indicated that they identified with the Republican Party, 27 respondents (9.4 percent) indicated that they identified with the Independent Party, 14 respondents (4.9 percent) indicated that they identified with an other party, and 36 respondents (12.6 percent) indicated that they identified with no or “none” party. Thirty-nine respondents (13.6 percent) chose “not to answer this question.”

Hypothesis

Study participants were asked to select from a set of advantages and disadvantages. They were asked to select all that apply to the advantages and disadvantages of purchasing products from socially responsible businesses in the next six months. The resulting beliefs and the frequencies of these beliefs can be seen in Table 5.1. Other advantages responses included: helps education, helps the economy, helps me, morally right, encourages other businesses to do the same, helps promote better informed citizens, helps sustain current jobs and creates new jobs. Other disadvantage responses included:

limited product selection, reduced shareholder wealth, job losses, inconvenient and difficulty in identifying socially responsible businesses/products.

Table 5.1 Identification of Modal Salient Beliefs

Identification of Modal Salient Beliefs			
No.	Buying from socially responsible businesses	Percent	Frequency
1.	Helps the community (advantage)	89.2%	256
2.	Helps the environment (advantage)	85.7%	246
3.	Helps with human/workers' rights (advantage)	73.2%	210
4.	Higher prices for consumers (disadvantage)	64.8%	186
5.	Helps decrease poverty (advantage)	53%	152
6.	Helps with health care (advantage)	40.8%	117
7.	Higher costs for businesses (disadvantage)	38.3%	110
8.	Helps prevent crime (advantage)	27.9%	80
9.	Supports causes I don't believe in (disadvantage)	22.3%	64
10.	None (disadvantage)	17.4%	50
11.	Wastes time, money and/or energy (disadvantage)	15.3%	44
12.	Does not help me (disadvantage)	10.8%	31
13.	Other advantage	10.5%	30
14.	Other disadvantage	6.3%	18
15.	None (advantage)	3.5%	10
TOTAL:			1,604

Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) recommend using the least arbitrary decision rule by choosing as many beliefs as necessary to account for a certain percentage, typically 75 percent. (p. 70) Seventy-five percent of 1,604 equals 1,203, which means the first nine beliefs were used based on the sum of the first nine beliefs' frequencies.

The strength of each belief was then measured by the assessment of salient belief strengths gathered through an initial interview process. This can be viewed as a limitation to this study because the initial interviews may or may not be indicative of the surveys being analyzed. However, only four of the belief strengths (helps the environment, helps with human/workers' rights, helps the

community and higher prices for consumers) were predicted from those ascertained through the initial interviews because the majority of survey participants selected “unsure/none” for the remaining outcome evaluations, which results in the product of the belief strength and the outcome evaluation being “neutral” or zero. In other words, the product of the outcome evaluation and belief strength would be zero because the outcome evaluations were zero. The initial interview results showed that each of the four aforementioned belief strengths can be predicted to be “moderate” (2).

Outcome evaluations were assessed by participants responses to the question “how good/bad are socially responsible businesses at the advantages/disadvantages you selected?” Participants selected from the following: extremely good (3), quite good (2), slightly good (1), unsure (0), slightly bad (-1), quite bad (-2), extremely bad (-3).

Therefore, using the nine previously identified modal salient beliefs, Table 5.2 adds the outcome evaluations and belief strengths and takes the product of each outcome evaluation and its belief strength in order to predict attitudes.

Table 5.2 Modal Salient Beliefs about Buying from Socially Responsible Businesses

Modal Salient Beliefs about Buying from Socially Responsible Businesses				
No.	Buying from socially responsible businesses	Outcome Evaluations	Belief Strength	Product
1.	Helps the community (advantage)	+2	2	4
2.	Helps the environment (advantage)	+2	2	4
3.	Helps with human/workers' rights (advantage)	+2	2	4
4.	Higher prices for consumers (disadvantage)	-1	2	-2
5.	Helps decrease poverty (advantage)	0	0	0
6.	Helps with health care (advantage)	0	0	0
7.	Higher costs for businesses (disadvantage)	0	0	0
8.	Helps prevent crime (advantage)	0	0	0
9.	Supports causes I don't believe in (disadvantage)	0	0	0
TOTAL:				10

Therefore, results indicate that participants have a moderately positive attitude (+10) toward purchasing products from socially responsible businesses.

The next step in Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) theory of reasoned action involves determining subjective norm or beliefs that important others (referents) think that participants should or should not perform the behavior in question (in this case, purchasing products from socially responsible businesses in the next 6 months). Table 5.3 (below) displays the results of participants' identification of specific referents who believe they should or should not purchase products from socially responsible businesses.

Table 5.3 Identification of Appropriate Referents

Identification of Appropriate Referents			
No.	Referents	Percent	Frequency
1.	Friends	55.1%	158
2.	Family	50.9%	146
3.	Spouse	32.8%	94
4.	Church	28.9%	83
5.	Community members	28.2%	81
6.	Co-workers	22.3%	64
7.	Employer	22%	63
8.	Union	12.5%	36
9.	Other group/individual	7%	20

In order to determine the subjective norm, participants were then asked to indicate their normative beliefs and motivation to comply with these referents. Other group or individual responses included: teachers, students, universities, advocacy groups, nonprofit organizations, businesses, myself and the U.S. government.

Normative beliefs were assessed by asking participants to indicate how much the referents they had selected think they should or should not purchase products from socially responsible businesses. Participants selected from the following scale: Should (3), (2), (1), (0), (-1), (-2), (-3) Should Not.

Motivation to comply was assessed by asking participants, in general, how much they want to do what the referents they selected think they should do. Participants selected from the following scale: not at all (0), slightly (1), moderately (2), strongly (3).

Therefore, using the referents identified (above, Table 5.3), modal normative beliefs and motivation to comply were assessed, and each referent's

modal normative beliefs were multiplied by the motivations to comply. The results of each referent's product were then added. Table 5.4 shows the results of the subjective norm.

Table 5.4 Normative Beliefs about Buying from Socially Responsible Businesses

Normative Beliefs about Buying from Socially Responsible Businesses			
Referents	Normative Belief	Motivation to Comply	Product
1. Friends	+3	2	6
2. Family	+3	2	6
3. Spouse	+3	3	9
4. Church	+3	0	0
5. Community members	0	2	0
6. Co-workers	0	1	0
7. Employer	0	1	0
8. Union	0	0	0
9. Other group/individual	0	0	0
TOTAL:			21

Therefore, it can be predicted that participants have a highly positive (+21) subjective norm or that most of their important others think they should purchase products from socially responsible businesses.

When combined, the products of the attitude (Table 5.2) and subjective norm (Table 5.4), indicate the overall intention toward the behavior (purchasing products from socially responsible businesses in the next 6 months).

Therefore, the attitude (10) is decidedly moderately positive, and the subjective norm (21) is decidedly highly positive. The average of these two numbers is 15.5, showing a positive intention toward the behavior. In so much, the high products and average of these variables show that a positive relationship exists between corporate social responsibility and consumer

purchase intention. Therefore, the H of this study is correct: Consumers are more likely to purchase products if the company that produces them is perceived to be socially responsible.

Additionally, comparisons were made among the following populations: age, gender, marital status, children, education, annual household income and political affiliation. The results of comparisons among populations and with overall results are presented in the following table (5.5). See Appendix 2 for all tables.

Table 5.5 Comparisons Among Populations

Comparisons Among Populations				
	Product 1 (Attitude)	Product 2 (Subjective Norm)	Average (Products 1 & 2)	Difference (15.5) Overall
Overall	10	21	15.5	0
Male	9	19	14	-1.5
Female	10	32	21	+5.5
Single	10	12	11	-4.5
Married	14	15	14.5	-1
<\$25,000	10	24	17	+1.5
\$25-50,000	8	22.5	15.3	-0.2
\$51-75,000	4	24.5	14.3	-1.2
>\$75,000	12	21	16.5	+1
High School	8	51	29.5	+14
Some College	12	14	13	-2.5
Associate's or Professional Degree	11	39.3	25.2	+9.7
Bachelor's Degree	8	10	9	-6.5
Graduate or higher	8	39	23.5	+8
Age 18-25	8	27	17.5	+2
Age 26-35	10	12.5	11.3	-4.2
Age 36-45	12	24.4	18.2	+2.7
Age 46-55	12	25	18.5	+3
Age 56+	10	34	22	+6.5
Democratic Party	10	27	18.5	+3
Republican Party	12	14	13	-2.5
Independent Party	7	13.6	10.3	-5.2
Other Party	7	52.5	29.8	+14.3
None (Party)	10	21	15.5	0
No Children	10	12	11	-4.5
Children	8	17.7	12.9	-2.6

Gender (Tables 5.6 and 5.7)

A significant difference exists between male and female populations in regards to subjective norms or the person's beliefs that specific individuals or groups think he or she should or should not purchase products from socially responsible businesses and his or her motivation to comply with these referents.

However, a significant difference does not exist between males and females in regards to attitude toward behavior.

In so much, both males and females have a positive attitude toward purchasing products from socially responsible businesses, which is consistent with the overall results; however, it can be determined that females are far more likely to purchase products from socially responsible businesses provided their important others think that they should based on the significant difference in subjective norms. In comparison to the overall results, females are moderately (+5.5) more likely and males are slightly (-1.5) less likely to purchase products from socially responsible businesses.

Marital Status (Tables 5.8 and 5.9)

Based on marital status, the researcher chose to only compare single and married participants (n=272) because the amount of participants in the divorced and widowed categories were not enough to represent the sample. The differences of the products indicate that married individuals are slightly more likely than single individuals to purchase products from socially responsible businesses; however, in comparison to overall results, both single and married individuals are slightly (-4.5 and -1, respectively) less likely to purchase products from socially responsible businesses.

Income (Tables 5.10 and 5.11)

Next, based on annual household income, asked respondents to select the option that best described their annual household income, and options were as follows: (1) less than \$25,000 (n=92); (2) \$25,000-50,000 (n=51); (3) \$51,000-75,000 (n=42); and (4) more than \$75,000 (n=90).

Results based on annual household income, in comparison to overall results, indicate results close to the overall population. Participants indicating annual household incomes less than \$25,000 and more than \$75,000 were both slightly more likely to purchase products from socially responsible businesses (+1.5 and +1, respectively). Participants indicating annual household incomes between \$25,000 and \$50,000 and between \$51,000 and \$75,000 were slightly less likely to purchase products from socially responsible businesses (-0.2 and -1.2, respectively).

Education (Tables 5.12 and 5.13)

In regards to level of education, the original question asked respondents to indicate their highest level of education completed, and the options are listed as follows: (1) High school (n=10); (2) Some college (n=59); (3) Associate's or Professional degree (n=8); (4) Bachelor's degree (n=73); and (5) Graduate degree or higher (n=135). Each group was analyzed, and, in comparison to overall results, participants indicating high school as the highest level of education completed were extremely more likely to purchase products from socially responsible businesses (+14). Participants indicating associate's or

professional degree and graduate degree or higher or were moderately more likely than the overall results to purchase from socially responsible businesses (+9.7 and +8, respectively). Also, participants indicating some college were slightly less likely (-2.5) and bachelor's degree were moderately less likely (-6.5) to purchase from socially responsible businesses. It is important to note that participants indicating high school education indicated the second highest subjective norm of all demographic populations, meaning this group is much more likely to purchase products from socially responsible businesses if they believe their important others think they should.

Age (Tables 5.14 and 5.15)

Age was analyzed based on participants' selection from the following age groups: (1) age 18-25, (2) age 26- 35, (3) 36-45, (4) 46-55 and (5) 56+. Each group was analyzed, and, in comparison to overall results, ages 18-25, 36-45 and 46-55 were slightly more likely (+2, +2.7 and +3, respectively) to purchase products from socially responsible businesses. Interestingly, ages 18-25 were slightly less likely (-4.2), and ages 56+ were moderately more likely (+6.5) to purchase products from socially responsible businesses. Also, it is important to note that ages 56+ indicated a significantly higher subjective norm than other age groups, which indicates that this age group is much more likely to purchase products from socially responsible businesses provided their important others think that they should.

Political Affiliation (Tables 5.16 and 5.17)

Additionally, political affiliation was analyzed and produced interesting results in comparison to the results overall. Individuals indicating a political affiliation with the Democratic Party were slightly more likely (+3), individuals indicating a political affiliation with the Republican Party were slightly less likely (-2.5), and individuals indicating a political affiliation with the Independent Party were moderately less likely (-5.2) to purchase products from socially responsible businesses. The product of individuals indicating “none” for political affiliation exactly matched (15.5) the overall intent to purchase from socially responsible businesses. Most interestingly, individuals indicating a political affiliation with an “other” party were extremely more likely (+14.3) to purchase products from socially responsible businesses. This population shows the highest intent to purchase from socially responsible businesses than any analyzed in this study, but also has the highest subjective norm (52.5) than any population analyzed in this study.

Children (Tables 5.18 and 5.19)

Finally, results were analyzed based on populations with and without children. Participants were asked to select from the following options on the survey: (1) I don't have any children, (2) 1, (3) 2, (4) 3, (5) 4, and (6) 5 or more. The researcher has selected to group these options into individuals indicating no children (n=170) and children (n=112), regardless of how many children indicated.

Participants without children are more likely to not purchase from socially responsible businesses than those with children. In comparison to overall results, both participants with and without children are slightly less likely (-2.6 and -4.5, respectively) to purchase products from socially responsible businesses.

Research Questions

Participants were also asked to identify specific businesses that they considered to be particularly socially responsible and irresponsible. Analysis of these responses revealed the following significant results for businesses identified as socially responsible, in order of frequency or “top ten”: Starbucks (n=30), Patagonia (n=18), Target (n=16), Wal-Mart (n=14), McDonald’s (n=11) and Eli Lilly (n=11), Apple (n=9) and Ben & Jerry’s (n=9) and Walt Disney (n=8) and Whole Foods (n=8). The following businesses were identified as socially irresponsible, in order of frequency: Wal-Mart (n=78), AIG (n=19), Exxon Mobil (n=15), GM (n=15), McDonald’s (n=14), Nike (n=10), Enron (n=8) and Ford (n=6). There were not enough significant results to create a “bottom ten.”

Research question 1 revealed that, in comparison to *Fortune* magazine’s top ranked socially responsible companies for 2007 (CHS, United Parcel Service, Whole Foods Market, McDonald’s, Alcan, YRC Worldwide, Starbucks, International Paper, Vulcan Materials and Walt Disney), which are identified from surveying executives, directors and analysts per industry, participants in this study identified four of the *Fortune* top ten: Starbucks, McDonald’s, Walt Disney and Whole Foods. However, Starbucks was ranked 8th by the *Fortune* study,

whereas participants in this study identified it more often than any of the other businesses cited. This is not necessarily indicative of a ranking of 1st by participants, but it can be assumed that, as the most often identified, it should be ranked as such. Likewise, participants in this study ranked McDonald's 5th, while *Fortune* ranked it as the 4th most socially responsible business. Walt Disney and Whole Foods tied for 9th and 10th rankings by participants in this study; however, Whole Foods was ranked 3rd by *Fortune*, but Walt Disney was ranked 10th as most socially responsible.

Research question 2 revealed that, in comparison to *Fortune's* ten bottom ranked least socially responsible companies for 2007 (Visteon, Dana, CA, Delphi, Federal-Mogul, ArvinMeritor, Huntsman, Navistar International, Lyondell Chemical and Toys "R" Us), participants in this study did not identify any of the same businesses as the *Fortune* study did. However, *Fortune* ranked Delphi as the 4th most socially irresponsible business, and participants in this study identified GM, which is operated in part by Delphi, as the 4th most often cited socially irresponsible business. Also, it is interesting to note that Wal-Mart was identified both 4th as socially responsible and 1st as socially irresponsible.

Overall, it appears that participants in this study had at least a moderate degree of awareness of social responsibility as it applies to specific businesses, identifying four to five of the ten same businesses as experts in the industries. Thus, the research questions can affirmatively be answered that consumers are moderately aware of specific organizational involvement in socially responsible

activities and are slightly aware of specific organizational involvement in socially irresponsible activities.

Qualitative

Additionally, qualitative data was collected that is important to note. Participants were initially asked to define what CSR means to them because CSR has proven to be an ambiguous and controversial topic. While it seemed that participants generally understood CSR, many participants in this research were skeptical about organizational participation and promotion of CSR. For example, one respondent commented, “Social responsibility on a corporate level is a ploy to increase sales. Nothing more.” Another respondent commented, “I believe social responsibility is just a PR and marketing ploy. Starbucks may be paying a living wage to South American coffee growers, but are they offering decent health insurance and retirement plans to their coffee house employees?”

Despite skepticism, this study still shows that consumers are more likely to purchase products from socially responsible businesses, and, therefore, businesses should seek to implement and promote CSR activities, and many participants in this study agreed, indicating that CSR was an important, necessary business activity aimed at genuinely responsible business practices. For example, one respondent commented, “It is very important. For things to change in this world, socially, environmentally, etc., businesses need to take a leading role.” Another respondent commented, “I think social responsibility comes from the corporate top executives and trickles down. When a company is

socially responsible everybody wins, not just the top echelon. I believe these companies will prosper even in difficult times.”

Specifically, in relation to the H of this study (A positive association exists between an organization’s involvement in CSR programs and consumer’s purchase intention.), many participants’ qualitative responses supported the H. For example, one respondent stated, “I am more likely to purchase products from socially responsible companies over socially neutral or irresponsible companies. The bad thing is that socially irresponsible companies do a good job of hiding any questionable activities they may be involved in, so sometimes I don't have this piece of information to inform my shopping. I try to choose responsibly whenever I can.”

However, a significant number of qualitative responses indicated that the higher prices associated with socially responsible businesses prevented them from purchasing products from those companies. For example, one respondent commented, “I believe that there will always be a struggle when it comes to social responsibility, mostly because of the money issue, where companies who are socially responsible generally charge higher prices for their products because it is harder to be socially responsible. It comes down to whether or not people are willing to do what is ethical and what is cheap, and unfortunately, most have to choose cheap over ethical because they do not make enough money to choose what is ethical.”

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

The primary purpose of this research was to recognize the relationship between consumers' purchase intentions and organizations' involvement in socially responsible programs. The study's H predicted that a positive association exists between an organization's involvement in CSR programs and consumers' purchase intentions or that consumers in this study are more likely to purchase an organization's product if that organization is involved in socially responsible practices. Additionally, consumers' awareness of specific organizational involvement in socially responsible and irresponsible activities was identified.

Overall, the results of this study support the H. Specifically, a positive association exists between an organization's involvement in CSR programs and consumer's purchase intentions. The attitude toward the behavior (10) is decidedly moderately positive, and the subjective norm (21) is decidedly highly positive. The average of these two numbers is 15.5, showing a positive intention toward the behavior. The high products and average of these variables show that a positive relationship exists between corporate social responsibility and consumer purchase intention.

Also, the research questions were affirmatively answered in regards to participants' awareness of specific organizational involvement in socially responsible and irresponsible activities. It appears that consumers have at least a moderate amount of awareness in this regard. It is recommended that further research be conducted on this specific area.

Limitations

The major limitation to this study could be that belief strength was not assessed with the survey participants. This could be eliminated by including belief strength questions in the survey; however, interviews are preferred to the survey method because the amount of questions can be overwhelming, resulting in survey fatigue.

Also, this study did not use frequency-averaged weighted sums, as many other studies on this topic have used. This can be seen as a limitation in regards to comparisons of this study with other similar studies using the theory of reasoned action.

Another limitation to this study is that this study is not indicative of consumers, in general, but is only applicable to the population studied. Also, within the population studied, education level and income level were high in relation to regional (Midwest) demographic averages.

Finally, following the guidelines of the theory of reasoned action, purchase intention should result in purchase behavior; however, it can be argued that several other mediating variables exist that result in purchase behavior, as

addressed in the literature review of this study. For example, qualitative data from this study indicated that price was a major variable in purchasing behavior.

Implications

Therefore, having addressed the limitations of this study, it has implications for consumers and businesses, as well as the public relations profession within this population. Possibly most important to the implications of this study, is the comparison of numbers among demographic consumer groups in this study. For example, it is possible to compare the products of attitudes and subjective norms in terms of age, gender, marital status, etc. From this, it can be determined if particular demographic groups in this study are more likely than others to purchase products if the company that produces them is perceived to be socially responsible. Comparisons were made among the following populations: age, gender, marital status, children, education, annual household income and political affiliation. The results of comparisons among populations and with overall results are presented Table 5.5. See Appendix 2 for all tables.

From the results of participants in this study, it seems that female consumers whose highest level of education completed is high school or a graduate degree and whose annual household income is less than \$25,000 and who are associated with an “other” political party are the most likely demographics to purchase products from businesses based on CSR.

Businesses patronized by consumers in this population should, therefore, seek to invest in the implementation and promotion of CSR activities among

applicable demographics. Promotion of CSR activities per demographics is needed in order to make the public aware of these activities, thus, making consumers in this study more likely to purchase the business's products.

In so much, a future implication of the positive relationship between consumer purchase intention and CSR, as determined by this study, may be an increase in businesses patronized by consumers in this study seeking to implement and promote CSR programs. The public relations profession would be the best prepared to handle this demand. Specifically, the profession would see an increase in demand for practitioners with a strong background in CSR. For example, a respondent to this research stated, "I believe that being 'socially responsible' will become a greater issue in the years to come. Differing viewpoints on it will also unearth. It's somewhat similar to ethics. Those companies that stick with topics that are more common ground for many consumers will be the most successful. For example, a fight against cancer campaign, a cause for human freedoms, giving to foster children, using clean energy, recycling and helping people who want to have a better future are all great ways for companies to show good will and make a powerful difference in our world." Practitioners with the abilities to understand the many facets of and viewpoints on CSR will be most likely to succeed. Moreover, practitioners able to replicate this study or similar studies for a specific business's demographics would be in greater demand.

Moreover, practitioners often have difficulties proving the financial worth of public relations because results of public relations' activities are difficult to

measure in terms of monetary units. However, the combination of public relations' activities aimed at the implementation and promotion of CSR programs and the replication of this study could be used to show an increase in profits for the business based on aiming CSR activities at specific demographics. For example, profits per demographics could be assessed at varying times prior to implementation of a CSR program, throughout the implementation and promotion processes and following the campaign or, in the case that the activities are of a more permanent nature, once the program has been established. Thus, public relations could demonstrate its financial worth to a business.

Based on results of this study and implications for businesses, it can be concluded that CSR is a multi-faceted challenge, but worth the associated risks. It is in the best interest of consumers, businesses, public relations practitioners and society, in general, that businesses patronized by consumers in this study undertake the challenge of implementing socially responsible programs and activities as a strategic management function aimed at increasing profits; however, future research and studies are still necessary.

Future Research

Because it is the first of its kind in regards to social responsibility, it is recommended that this study be replicated in order to determine likewise results of products in tables 5.2 and 5.4 in other populations.

Moreover, it is recommended that researchers simply ask the question: "Are you more likely to purchase products if the company that produces them is

socially responsible?” The researcher could then use these variables in comparison to others, much like with tables 5.6 through 5.19.

This study could also be taken a step further using the weighting of attitudes and subjective norms, as many studies using the theory of reasoned action have done (see literature review). Also, it could easily be further analyzed from differences within the final results: It is interesting to note the significant differences that occur within the final products of these variables. For example, within the single v. married comparison (tables 5.8 and 5.9), the majority of married individuals were strongly motivated to comply with family, while the majority of single individuals were only moderately motivated. More significantly, the normative beliefs about church for the majority of single individuals was that church was neutral (0) on wanting them to purchase products from socially responsible businesses; however, married individuals believed strongly (3) that church wanted them to purchase products from socially responsible businesses. Likewise significant differences could be identified throughout this data. Analyzing the differences within final products could contribute to the understanding of the underlying reasons consumers make purchases in relation to CSR and to the understanding of CSR as a strategic management function overall.

In conclusion, this study should result in future scholarly research and analyses on this important topic. It could also be replicated in applied settings to determine key publics to target communications about businesses' participation in socially responsible activities, i.e. those publics that will be more likely to

purchase products based on this information, and to enhance the demand of public relations practitioners. From the results of this study and the implications of these results, it seems that organizational participation in CSR programs and activities results in a win-win situation for everyone affected: consumers, corporations, the public relations profession and society, in general.

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APPENDIX 1

RESEARCH DOCUMENTS

Interview Introductory Document

Recruitment

My name is Melissa Dodd and I am a graduate student working on my Master's thesis. Do you have a few minutes to answer some questions?

Introduction

Hello, my name is Melissa, and I am a Master's student at Ball State University working on my thesis project. The title of my thesis is Corporate Social Responsibility and Consumer Purchase Intention. I would like to determine the role that organizational involvement in social programs (such as preserving the environment, human rights protection, education assistance, etc.) plays in your purchasing decisions.

The results of my research will help businesses better understand the effects their involvement in these programs has on you as the consumer.

This interview will last approximately 7 minutes and will be audio recorded. Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you are free to discontinue participation at any time without prejudice from the investigator.

All I am asking you to do is to answer my questions as honestly as possible and with as much information as you can. Your identity will be kept completely anonymous. I won't even ask for your name.

For questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact the Institutional Review Board, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47304, (765) 285-5070, irb@bsu.edu.

For questions about the research or your participation in this research, please contact Melissa D. Dodd, Graduate Student, Public Relations, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47304, (765) 432-9899, mddodd@bsu.edu.

For questions about research-related injury, please contact Ball State University Counseling and Health Services at (765) 285-1264.

Contact Information			
Melissa D. Dodd	Principal Investigator, Journalism Dept.	mddodd@bsu.edu	(765) 432-9899
Dr. Dustin Supa	Faculty Sponsor	dwsupa@bsu.edu	(765) 285-8215

Interview Questions Document

Introductory Question & Definition of Corporate Social Responsibility

1. What does it mean to you for a corporation to be socially responsible?

Corporate social responsibility goes by many names, including corporate citizenship, corporate philanthropy, corporate giving, corporate community involvement, community relations, community affairs, community development, global citizenship, etc. Generally, corporate social responsibility is defined as organizations incurring responsibilities to society beyond profit maximization. Programs falling under the corporate social responsibility category may include, but are not limited to the following: protecting the environment, human and workers' rights, community giving, healthcare, education, etc.

Please answer the following questions as honestly as you can.

Section One

1. What factors are most important to you when purchasing products?
 - a. Please list them in order of their importance to you.
 - b. In deciding between two of the same products of different brand, but same cost, quality and value, what factors would you consider when choosing which brand to purchase?
2. In order of importance, what factors do you believe affect other peoples' decisions when making purchases?
3. Do you consider CSR in your purchase decisions?
 - a. If so, how or under what circumstances?
 - b. If no, why not?
 - i. Under what circumstances might you consider CSR in your purchase decisions?
4. Do you believe that most people consider CSR in their purchase decisions?
5. Are you willing to pay more for a product if an extremely socially responsible company produces it?
6. Do you expect to pay less for a product that is produced by an extremely socially irresponsible company?

7. What areas of socially responsible involvement are most likely to influence your purchase decisions?

Section Two

1. What specific companies do you consider socially responsible, if any? Why?
2. What specific companies do you consider to be socially irresponsible, if any? Why?

Section Three

For the purposes of further analyzing this data, please answer the following demographic questions:

1. Age
 - a. Younger than 18
 - b. 18-25
 - c. 26-35
 - d. 36-45
 - e. 46-55
 - f. 56 or older
2. Gender?
3. Marital Status?
4. Children? How many?
5. Education?
6. Annual household income
 - a. Less than \$25,000
 - b. \$25,000-50,000
 - c. \$51,000-75,000
 - d. More than \$75,000
7. Politically, on a scale of one to 10, please rate where you are with one being very liberal through very conservative being 10?

Survey Introductory Document

Recruitment (Email Message)

Subject Line: Corporate Social Responsibility Survey

Hello, my name is Melissa, and I am a Master's student at Ball State University working on my thesis project. The title of my thesis is Corporate Social Responsibility and Consumer Purchase Intention. I would like to determine the role that organizational involvement in social programs (such as preserving the environment, human rights protection, education assistance, etc.) plays in your purchasing decisions.

The results of my research will help businesses better understand the effects their involvement in these programs has on you as the consumer.

Please click the following link to take this brief survey: (link to survey).

Survey Introduction

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you are free to discontinue participation at any time without prejudice from the investigator.

All I am asking you to do is to answer my questions as honestly as possible and with as much information as you can. Your identity will be kept completely anonymous. I won't even ask for your name.

For questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact the Institutional Review Board, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47304, (765) 285-5070, irb@bsu.edu.

For questions about the research or your participation in this research, please contact Melissa D. Dodd, Graduate Student, Public Relations, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47304, (765) 432-9899, mddodd@bsu.edu.

For questions about research-related injury, please contact Ball State University Counseling and Health Services at (765) 285-1264.

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Dr. Dustin Supa	Faculty Sponsor	dwsupa@bsu.edu	(765) 285-8215

Please click "Next" to continue.

Survey Questions Document

Introductory Question & Definition of Corporate Social Responsibility

1. What does it mean to you for a corporation to be socially responsible?

Corporate social responsibility goes by many names, such as corporate citizenship, community relations and global citizenship. Generally, it is defined as businesses taking on responsibilities beyond just making a profit. For example, some socially responsible programs may include: protecting the environment, human and workers' rights, community giving and health care.

Section One

1. What specific companies do you consider to be socially responsible, if any?
2. Please explain why you consider these specific companies to be socially responsible.
3. What specific companies do you consider to be socially irresponsible, if any?
4. Please explain why you consider these specific companies to be socially irresponsible.

Section Two

For the following questions, please consider the purchases you will make in the next 6 months.

1. Which of the following do you believe are the advantages of buying products from socially responsible businesses? (Select all that apply).
 - a. Helps the environment
 - b. Helps with health care
 - c. Helps with human/worker's rights
 - d. Helps the community
 - e. Helps prevent crime
 - f. Helps decrease poverty
 - g. Other
 - h. None
2. How good are socially responsible businesses at the advantages that you selected above? (Please select "Unsure" if you are not sure how good

businesses are at the advantages or if you did not select that advantage above.) *For example, if you selected “helps the environment” above, you might believe that socially responsible businesses are “Slightly” good at helping the environment. Participants selected from the following: Slightly, Quite, Extremely and Unsure

- a. Helping the environment
- b. Helping with health care
- c. Helping with human/worker’s rights
- d. Helping the community
- e. Helping prevent crime
- f. Helping decrease poverty
- g. Other

3. Which of the following do you believe are the disadvantages of buying from socially responsible businesses? (Select all that apply).
 - a. Higher costs for businesses
 - b. Higher prices for consumers
 - c. Supports causes I don’t believe in
 - d. Does not help me
 - e. Wastes time, money and/or energy
 - f. Other
 - g. None
4. How bad are socially responsible businesses at the disadvantages you selected above? (Please select “Unsure” if you are not sure how bad businesses are at the disadvantages or if you did not select the disadvantage above.) *For example, if you selected “higher prices for consumers” above, you might believe that socially responsible businesses are “Slightly” bad at having higher prices for consumers. Participants selected from the following: Slightly, Quite, Extremely, and Unsure.
 - a. Having higher costs for the business
 - b. Having higher prices for consumers
 - c. Supporting causes I don’t believe in
 - d. Not helping me
 - e. Wasting time, money and/or energy
 - f. Other
5. Is there anything else you associate with buying products from socially responsible businesses?
6. Is there anyone (individuals or groups of people) who would think that you should or should not purchase products from socially responsible

businesses? (Select all that apply). *For example, you might believe that your friends think you should buy from socially responsible businesses or your employer thinks that you should not buy from socially responsible businesses.

- a. Friends
- b. Family
- c. Spouse
- d. Employer
- e. Co-workers
- f. Church
- g. Union
- h. Community members
- i. Other

7. Please rate how much the persons or groups you answered above think you should or should not want you to purchase products from socially responsible businesses. (Please leave blank if you did not select that person or group above). *For example, if you selected "church" (above), you might check my church thinks "I should (2)" buy from socially responsible businesses. Participants selected from the following:

I should (3) (2) (1) (0) (-1) (-2) (-3) I should not

- a. Friends
- b. Family
- c. Spouse
- d. Employer
- e. Co-workers
- f. Church
- g. Union
- h. Community members
- i. Other

8. In general, how much do you want to do what the persons or groups listed above think you should do? (Please leave blank if you did not select that person or group above.) *For example, if you selected "church" (above) you might check I "Slightly" want to do what my church thinks I should do. Participants selected from the following: Not at all, Slightly, Moderately and Strongly.

- a. Friends
- b. Family
- c. Spouse
- d. Employer

- e. Co-workers
- f. Church
- g. Union
- h. Community members
- i. Other

Section Three

For the purposes of further analyzing this data, please answer the following demographic questions:

1. Please select the age range that best describes you.
 - a. Younger than 18
 - b. 18-25
 - c. 26-35
 - d. 36-45
 - e. 46-55
 - f. 56 or older
2. What is your gender?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
3. What is your current marital status?
 - a. Single
 - b. Married
 - c. Divorced
 - d. Widowed
4. Do you have any children? If so, how many?
 - a. I don't have any children
 - b. 1
 - c. 2
 - d. 3
 - e. 4
 - f. 5 or more
5. What is your highest level of education completed?
 - a. High school
 - b. Some college
 - c. Associate's or Professional Degree
 - d. Bachelor's Degree
 - e. Graduate Degree or higher
6. Please select the range that best describes your annual household income.
 - a. Less than \$25,000

- b. \$25,000-50,000
 - c. \$51,000-75,000
 - d. More than \$75,000
7. If you identify with a political party, please indicate which one.
- a. Democratic
 - b. Republican
 - c. Independent
 - d. Other
 - e. None
 - f. I choose not to answer this question

Please click "Submit" to continue.

Thank you. Your participation is appreciated.

For questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact the Institutional Review Board, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47304, (765) 285-5070, irb@bsu.edu.

For questions about the research or your participation in this research, please contact Melissa D. Dodd, Graduate Student, Public Relations, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47304, (765) 432-9899, mddodd@bsu.edu.

For questions about research-related injury, please contact Ball State University Counseling and Health Services at (765) 285-1264.

(Previous and Done buttons)

"Previous" button goes back to the survey, and "Done" button closes the window.

APPENDIX 2

DATA COMPARISON TABLES

Tables 5.6 Attitudes Based on Gender

Attitudes Based on Gender						
Salient Belief	Outcome Evaluation		Belief Strength		Product	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1. Helps the community	2	2	2	2	4	4
2. Helps the environment	1	2	2	2	2	4
3. Helps with human/workers' rights	2.5*	2	2	2	5	4
4. Higher prices for consumers	-1	-1	2	2	-2	-2
5. Helps decrease poverty	2**	0	0	0	0	0
6. Helps with health care	0	0	0	0	0	0
7. Higher cost for businesses	-1	0	0	0	0	0
8. Helps prevent crime	0	0	0	0	0	0
9. Supports causes I don't believe in	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL:					9	10

*The same amount of male participants indicated quite (2) and extremely (3) outcome evaluations, so the average of these was used.

**The same amount of male participants indicated quite (2) and unsure (0) outcome evaluations, so the average of these was used.

Table 5.7 Subjective Norms Based on Gender

Subjective Norms Based on Gender						
Referent	Normative Belief		Motivation to Comply		Product	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1. Friends	3	3	2	2	6	6
2. Family	2	3	2	3	4	9
3. Spouse	3	3	3	3	9	9
4. Church	0	3	0	2	0	6
5. Community members	0	1*	1	2	0	2
6. Co-workers	0	0	1	2	0	0
7. Employer	0	0	1	1	0	0
8. Union	0	0	0	0	0	0
9. Other group/individual	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL:					19	32

*The same amount of female participants indicated I should (1) and neutral (0) normative beliefs, so the average of these was used.

Tables 5.8 Attitudes Based on Marital Status

Attitudes Based on Marital Status						
Salient Belief	Outcome Evaluation		Belief Strength		Product	
	Single	Married	Single	Married	Single	Married
1. Helps the community	2	3	2	2	4	6
2. Helps the environment	2	2	2	2	4	4
3. Helps with human/workers' rights	2	3	2	2	4	6
4. Higher prices for consumers	-1	-1	2	2	-2	-2
5. Helps decrease poverty	0	1	0	0	0	0
6. Helps with health care	0	0	0	0	0	0
7. Higher cost for businesses	-1*	0	0	0	0	0
8. Helps prevent crime	0	0	0	0	0	0
9. Supports causes I don't believe in	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL:					10	14

*The same amount of single participants indicated slightly (1) and unsure (0) outcome evaluations, so the average of these was used.

Table 5.9 Subjective Norms Based on Marital Status

Subjective Norms Based on Marital Status						
Referent	Normative Belief		Motivation to Comply		Product	
	Single	Married	Single	Married	Single	Married
1. Friends	3	3	2	2	6	6
2. Family	3	3	2	3	6	9
3. Spouse	0	3	3	3	0	9
4. Church	0	3	0	0	0	0
5. Community members	0	0	2	0	0	0
6. Co-workers	0	0	1.5*	0	0	0
7. Employer	0	0	1	0	0	0
8. Union	0	0	0	0	0	0
9. Other group/individual	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL:					12	24
TOTAL (without Spouse variable):					12	15

*The same amount of single participants indicated slightly (1) and moderately (2) motivation to comply, so the average of these was used.

Tables 5.10 Attitudes Based on Annual Household Income

Attitudes Based on Annual Household Income (in thousands)												
Salient Belief	Outcome Evaluation				Belief Strength				Product			
	<\$25	\$25-50	\$51-75	>\$75	<\$25	\$25-50	\$51-75	>\$75	<\$25	\$25-50	\$51-75	>\$75
1. Helps the community	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	6
2. Helps the environment	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	2	4
3. Helps with human/workers' rights	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	2	4
4. Higher prices for consumers	-1	-2	-2	-1	2	2	2	2	-2	-4	-4	-2
5. Helps decrease poverty	0.5	2	0.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Helps with health care	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7. Higher cost for businesses	0	0	0	-0.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8. Helps prevent crime	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9. Supports causes I don't believe in	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total:									10	8	4	12

Table 5.11 Subjective Norms Based on Annual Household Income

Subjective Norms Based on Annual Household Income (in thousands)												
Referent	Normative Belief				Motivation to Comply				Product			
	<\$25	\$25-50	\$51-75	>\$75	<\$25	\$25-50	\$51-75	>\$75	<\$25	\$25-50	\$51-75	>\$75
1.Friends	3	3	3	2.5	2	2	2	2	6	6	6	5
2.Family	3	3	2.5	2.5	3	2	2	2	9	6	5	5
3. Spouse	3	3	3	3	3	3	2.5	3	9	9	7.5	9
4. Church	0	0	3	3	1	0	2	0	0	0	6	0
5. Community members	1.5	1	0	1	0	1.5	1	2	0	1.5	0	2
6. Co-workers	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.5	2	0	0	0	0
7. Employer	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
8. Union	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9. Other group/ individual	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.7	0	0	0	0	0
Total									24	22.5	24.5	21

Tables 5.12 Attitudes Based on Education

Attitudes Based on Education															
Salient Belief	Outcome Evaluation					Belief Strength					Product				
	HS	SC	A/P	B	G	HS	SC	A/P	B	G	HS	SC	A/P	B	G
1. Helps the community	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	6	6	4	4
2. Helps the environment	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	2	2	2
3. Helps with human/workers' rights	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	6	6	4	4
4. Higher prices for consumers	-2	-2	-1.5	-1	-1	2	2	2	2	2	-4	-4	-3	-2	-2
5. Helps decrease poverty	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Helps with health care	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7. Higher cost for businesses	-0.5	0	-1.5	0	-1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8. Helps prevent crime	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9. Supports causes I don't believe in	0	0	-1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL:											8	12	11	8	8

HS: High School, SC: Some college, A/P: Associate's or Professional Degree, B: Bachelor's Degree, G: Graduate Degree or higher

Table 5.13 Subjective Norms Based on Education

Subjective Norms Based on Education															
Referent	Normative Belief					Motivation to Comply					Product				
	HS	SC	A/P	B	G	HS	SC	A/P	B	G	HS	SC	A/P	B	G
1.Friends	3	2	3	3	3	3	2	2.5	2	2	9	4	7.5	6	6
2.Family	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	9	6	9	4	9
3. Spouse	3	0	3	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	9	0	9	0	9
4. Church	3	0	2	0	3	2	0	2	2	3	6	2	4	0	9
5. Commun- ity members	3	1	2	0	0	1	2	2	2	0	3	2	4	0	0
6. Co- workers	3	0	1	0	3	1	0	1.3	0.5	2	3	0	1.3	0	6
7.Employer	3	0	3	0	0	1	0.5	1	1	1	3	0	3	0	0
8.Union	3	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	6	0	0	0	0
9. Other group/ individual	3	0	1	0	0	1	0	1.5	0	0	3	0	1.5	0	0
TOTAL:											51	14	39.3	10	39

HS: High School, SC: Some college, A/P: Associate's or Professional Degree, B: Bachelor's Degree, G: Graduate Degree or higher

Table 5.14 Attitudes Based on Age

Attitudes Based on Age															
Salient Belief	Outcome Evaluation					Belief Strength					Product				
	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56+	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56+	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56+
1. Helps the community	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	6	4	6
2. Helps the environment	2	2	1.5	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	3	4	2
3. Helps with human/ workers' rights	2	2	2	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	6	2
4. Higher prices for consumers	-2	-1	-0.5	-1	0	2	2	2	2	2	-4	-2	-1	-2	0
5. Helps decrease poverty	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Helps with health care	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7. Higher cost for businesses	-0.5	0	0	-1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8. Helps prevent crime	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9. Supports causes I don't believe in	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL:											8	10	12	12	10

Tables 5.16 and 5.17 Attitudes and Subjective Norms Based on Political Affiliation

Attitudes Based on Political Affiliation															
Salient Belief	Outcome Evaluation					Belief Strength					Product				
	D	R	I	O	N	D	R	I	O	N	D	R	I	O	N
1. Helps the community	2	3	1	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	4	6	2	4	6
2. Helps the environment	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	2	2	4
3. Helps with human/ workers' rights	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	4	4
4. Higher prices for consumers	-1	-1	-0.5	-1.5	-2	2	2	2	2	2	-2	-2	-1	-3	-4
5. Helps decrease poverty	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Helps with health care	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7. Higher cost for businesses	0	-1	0	0	-1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8. Helps prevent crime	0	0	0	0.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9. Supports causes I don't believe in	0	0	0	0	-1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL:											10	12	7	7	10

D: Democratic Party, R: Republican Party, I: Independent Party, O: Other Party, N: None (Party)

Subjective Norms Based on Political Affiliation															
Referent	Normative Belief					Motivation to Comply					Product				
	D	R	I	O	N	D	R	I	O	N	D	R	I	O	N
1. Friends	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	1.5	1.5	2	6	4	3	4.5	4
2. Family	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	1.5	2	2	6	4	3	6	6
3. Spouse	3	2	1.5	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	9	6	3	9	9
4. Church	3	0	1.7	3	0	0	2	1.5	3	1	0	0	2.6	9	0
5. Community members	0	0	0	3	1	2	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	6	2
6. Co-workers	3	0	1	3	0	2	0.5	1	0	1.7	6	0	1	0	0
7. Employer	0	0	1	3	0	1	0.5	1	1.5	0	0	0	1	4.5	0
8. Union	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0.5	1.5	1	0	0	0	4.5	0
9. Other group/ individual	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	9	0
TOTAL:											27	14	13.6	52.5	21

Tables 5.18 and 5.19 Attitudes and Subjective Norms Based on Children

Attitudes Based on Children						
Salient Belief	Outcome Evaluation		Belief Strength		Product	
	No Children	Children	No Children	Children	No Children	Children
1. Helps the community	2	1.8	2	2	4	3.6
2. Helps the environment	2	1.5	2	2	4	3
3. Helps with human/workers' rights	2	1.7	2	2	4	3.4
4. Higher prices for consumers	-1	-1	2	2	-2	-2
5. Helps decrease poverty	0	1	0	0	0	0
6. Helps with health care	0	0.5	0	0	0	0
7. Higher cost for businesses	-1	-0.4	0	0	0	0
8. Helps prevent crime	0	0.3	0	0	0	0
9. Supports causes I don't believe in	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL:					10	8

Subjective Norms Based on Children						
Referent	Normative Belief		Motivation to Comply		Product	
	No Children	Children	No Children	Children	No Children	Children
1. Friends	3	1.6	2	1.8	6	2.9
2. Family	3	1.8	2	1.6	6	2.9
3. Spouse	0	2	3	2.5	0	5
4. Church	0	2	1	1.5	0	3
5. Community members	0	1.3	2	1.3	0	2.6
6. Co-workers	0	1	1	0.9	0	0.9
7. Employer	0	1	1	0.4	0	0.4
8. Union	0	0.8	0	0	0	0
9. Other group/individual	0	1	0	0	0	0
TOTAL:					12	17.7