

SUGARCOATING THE PROBLEM:
THE EFFECT OF CSR ON CONSUMER HEALTH JUDGMENTS

By
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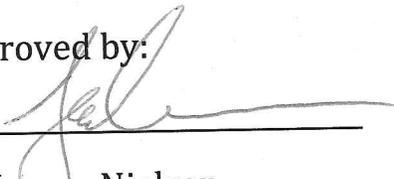
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Abstract

This thesis aims to make a contribution to the study of the American epidemic of obesity by examining the behavior of both corporations and consumers, while taking into account the current regulatory state of the food and drink industry. It includes information about Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) that leads to a study to determine if the perception a consumer has about a food and/or drink corporation based on its CSR initiatives has an effect on the perception the consumer has about its respective products in terms of health content. Academics can use this research in further determining the impact of CSR on consumer behavior. Those involved in law and policy can use this research in determining if there are any regulatory actions that can be enforced in food and drink production to better inform and educate consumers about the health content of the products they may like, purchase, and consume. Current research and review suggests that more information and discussion between food and drink corporations and society concerning both CSR efforts and products may affect current consumer attitudes and in turn, alter unhealthy purchase patterns. Ultimately, this might be a step towards alleviating obesity in the United States.

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Section I

Obesity Introduction

A heightening interest in both public health and law led me to view a documentary co-produced by Katie Couric called *Fed Up* that featured notable United States leaders and public health experts. Prior to the film, it was my belief that obesity, which now accrues about 200 billion dollars annually in U.S. medical costs (“Obesity Facts & Resources”) and affects nearly 93 million American citizens (“The Issue”), derives from individuals’ failure to practice responsibility and control in their personal health and wellbeing. As I heard discouraging story after story from obese adolescents in the documentary detailing how they personally inherited or developed this “disease” so early on, I understood that they had formed dangerous habits in their daily eating cycle, due to some factors and decisions that may not be entirely in their control. Every tale suggested a renewed need to carefully evaluate the health content of the food and drink products that institutions spend \$36 billion a year to produce, distribute, and market across America (Simon 2006) and why Americans continue to choose these products over alternatives. As public health lawyer Michele Simon puts it, “the food industry is at the heart of this problem” (Fed Up 2014). It is my belief that we cannot sugarcoat our food and the problem of obesity any longer.

Why We Must Get to the Bottom of Obesity Now

In December 2001, America was provided with the alarming statistic that about 2/3 of the country is overweight or obese, provoking a call to action on obesity (Simon 2006). Not much progress has been made since then, as “this year [2014] for the first time in the history of the

world, more people will die from the effects of obesity than starvation” (Fed Up 2014). The United States is the biggest contributor to this statistic because it is currently the most obese country in the world (Khan 2014). A poor diet does not just lead to obesity, but also increases risk of cardiovascular disease (the number one cause of death), diabetes, hypertension, stroke, and cancer (Simon 2006). Furthermore, it is estimated that 1/3 of all Americans will develop diabetes by the year 2050 and the cases of Type 2 diabetes among adolescents has increased from 0 in 1980 to 57,638 in 2010 (Fed Up 2014). The idea that adolescents need to run around and play to stay in shape is not the issue. The energy balance of “calories in equals calories out” is a myth. Scientists have found that human bodies don’t digest sugar used in processed foods the same as with sugars in whole grains (Moss 2013), and it doesn’t help that the human brain lights up for sugar like it does for cocaine (Fed Up 2014). With the help of high fructose corn syrup, Americans doubled their daily intake of sugar between 1977 and 2000 (Fed Up 2014). How have we managed to consume this much sugar? It’s because there is no recommended daily amount for sugar on nutrition labels. The U.S. extorted the World Health Organization in its attempts to regulate sugar levels (Fed Up 2014). Food and drink corporations continue to supply us with products ranging from flavored sodas to flavored potato chips that contain just the right amount of sugar to satisfy our bliss points, keep us coming back for more, and perhaps keep America obese (Moss 2013).

Section II

CSR Introduction

Collective institutions are just as strong of catalysts in the ongoing American obesity epidemic as individual consumers. As a student in the Eller College of Management, I have been exposed to the prevalence of the practice of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the modern business landscape. It is rather rare to discover a company today that does not exhibit any kind of socially responsible practice (Newman 2014). In addition, more than 80% of Fortune 500 firms display their corporate social responsibility efforts on their websites (Bhattacharya and Sen 2004). The Coca-Cola Company, PepsiCo, Kraft Foods Group, Inc., General Mills, Inc., and Kellogg Company are among the multitude of well-known food and drink companies in the Fortune 500 that publicize their CSR practices online. I would like to further explore why the companies in this industry engage in CSR efforts and if engaging in these efforts makes them responsible corporate citizens. Furthermore, can a food/drink corporation remain classified as a responsible corporate citizen if it produces products that are harmful to public health?

History of CSR

CSR, or corporate social responsibility, is a complex construct that has numerous implications for business and society as it continues to evolve. Although there may have been previous references to the concept of CSR, written definitions emerged in the 1950s. A 1953 novel titled the *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman* recognized that businesses possess decision-making capabilities that can affect citizens (Carroll 1999). The author, Howard R. Bowen, questioned what responsibilities businessmen subsequently have to society, seemingly

making him the “father of Corporate Social Responsibility” (Carroll 1999). In what would become one of the most widely recognized articles in the New York Times, an economist by the name of Milton Friedman, expressed a different viewpoint of social responsibility. He believed the only social responsibility of business is “to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits...” (Friedman 1970). Coupled with Adam Smith’s belief that the invisible hand allows business and society to be synergistic (Cummins 2013) in the free market and to produce the greatest social good (Mohr, Webb, and Harris 2001), Friedman’s profit-fueled perspective led academics to question whether a corporation exists solely to economically sustain itself. As Carroll later pointed out, we frequently forget that “economic viability is something business does for society” (1999). The business firm started out essentially as an economic unit (Carroll 1991). The economic stimulation business provides is fundamental, but the incorporation of CSR into ordinary business practices proved that firms had the potential to provide other types of value as we now observe.

The emergence of more specific CSR themes including stakeholder theory, business ethics theory, and corporate citizenship allowed the relationship between business and society to deeper intertwine and social movements to surface (Carroll 1999). As a result, academics came to consensus that while corporations were established for the purpose of profit, these institutions now realized additional purposes, goals, and duties to fulfill. From this evolved commitment to society, business has produced socially responsible companies that have “concerns beyond short-term profitability” (Mohr, Webb, and Harris 2001) and that work to add social value in their communities. Some of the ways this value is created is through the CSR efforts of charitable contributions, volunteerism, diversity and inclusion measures, and sustainability efforts.

Modern CSR literature recognizes that businesses can in fact accomplish both economic and social gains without one being at the expense of the other, and without passing on negative externalities to the environment in which they operate. Social and economic goals become integrated and cease to conflict (Porter and Kramer 2002). Of the more recent definitions that include pecuniary and societal aspects of CSR, Archie B. Carroll's hierarchal model is widely taught in modern business education and emphasizes the integration of distinct components. It details that, "CSR is comprised of four parts: economic, legal, ethical and voluntary or philanthropic" (Carroll 1999). To elaborate on these points, Carroll states that "the CSR firm should strive to make a profit, obey the law, be ethical, and be a good corporate citizen" (1999). In addition, Mohr, Webb, and Harris define CSR as "a company's commitment to minimizing or eliminating any harmful effects and maximizing its long-run beneficial impact on society" (2001). Both of these theories include the idea of corporations trying to be good to society, that is, responsible citizens in the corporate landscape. However, both also fail to answer whether corporations are responsible for not only doing good, but also avoiding harm to society even if doing so may impede their profits. In fact, the majority of definitions in the CSR literature do not address this unique concern that opens a discussion about food and drink corporations that practice CSR.

Why Practice CSR?

If not out of regulatory compliance obligation (Klein and Dawar 2004), there is a myriad of reasons that can be explored as to why firms choose to act socially responsible. Campbell recognizes that a decent amount of CSR literature review explores the effect that a firm's socially responsible behavior produces on its financial performance (2007). Undertaking CSR

practices may be a way in which firms can satisfy stakeholders. For instance, implementing CSR may help companies improve their performance in the stock market and meet rising shareholder demands (Klein and Dawar 2004). However, CSR may simply be a method of self-interest (Klein and Dawar 2004) by which firms attempt to drive consumers' purchase decisions and increase their market share and profits. As companies search for product differentiation techniques in increasingly competitive markets, CSR initiatives are an innovative means of forming, maintaining, and strengthening relationships with customers (Bhattacharya and Sen 2004).

Building awareness is the first step a company takes to inform and engage consumers (Mohr, Webb, and Harris 2001). It is undeniable that as CSR initiatives continue to become publicized, recognized, and understood by everyday American citizens, they begin to play a role in how consumers view companies. A link between CSR and company reputation depends on the consumers' awareness of the company's specific social responsibility actions and the attributions he or she forms about the authenticity of these actions (Hildebrand, Sen, and Bhattacharya 2011). The CSR realm of cause-related marketing is a tool to build awareness. A company is likely to use cause-related marketing to also try to project a brand image to the public that is positive and sincere (Porter and Kramer 2002). The efforts might additionally raise employee morale and increase company visibility (Porter and Kramer 2002). For example, Yoplait's Save Lids to Save Lives campaign running from September 2013-June 2014 was one of the most publicized breast cancer awareness campaigns, shedding light on a disease that affects 124.3 women out of 100,000 ("Breast Cancer Stats"). Yoplait vowed to donate ten cents each time a consumer bought a "pinked" yogurt. This was contingent upon the customer entering the lid's code online or sending the lid to General Mills (Yoplait's parent company) by mail. Yoplait needed to stay

within the legal construct of CSR by disclosing the restrictions that may apply in their charitable giving to consumers (Jacobs 2010). Cheryl Welch, Integrated Marketing Communications Director of General Mills, noticed the initiative's impact on customer engagement and stated: "We've heard from our consumers that this is a cause that's very important to them" (Tierney 2013).

Internal and external stakeholders are likely to show the most favorable reactions to CSR efforts that enable them to identify with the company (Hildebrand, Sen, and Bhattacharya 2011). Companies seek to specifically capture these external stakeholders by getting involved in causes for which they show passion. It has been revealed through surveys that individuals have a more positive image of a firm that supports causes they care about (Mohr, Webb, and Harris 2001). However, with so many commendable causes in the world, Porter and Kramer believe that a firm should not implement a CSR initiative solely on the basis of whether a cause is worthy, but rather because it has the ability to create mutual benefit for both the business and society (2006). Creating value through this meaningful relationship is what JMT Balmer argues is the end goal of corporate marketing (Hildebrand, Sen, and Bhattacharya 2011). A strong fit between the company's mission and the social initiative, known as centrality, also better reinforces the company's market position in the consumer's mind (Becker-Olsen, Cudmore, and Hill 2006). Centrality can also improve employee morale, productivity, and retention by supporting motivation (Burke and Logsdon 1996). The strategy of shared value can be treated as a long-term investment to a firm's future competitiveness, and at the same time, the investment has the ability to create social impact (Porter and Kramer 2006).

There are companies that have been successful in centering their value proposition on social impact initially rather than deriving social value from CSR initiatives that may be

complementary to their business. One example of this strategy is Whole Foods Market, as the company sells natural and organic food products to consumers who care about health and the environment (Porter and Kramer 2006). The company goes above and beyond to avoid harm by rejecting ingredients that have damaged the environment, composting waste, and raising farm animals more humanely through the creation of the Animal Compassion Foundation (Porter and Kramer 2006). Another noteworthy example is Nestlé, as they work to source their basic commodities of milk and cocoa from farmers in developing countries, lending knowledge, technology, and investment in infrastructure to the countries (Porter and Kramer 2006). As Porter and Kramer put it, “Nestlé’s distinctive strategy is inseparable from its social impact” (2006). Not all companies can seamlessly integrate CSR into their business models, (especially if they have already been established for a long period of time) but firms have the ability to seize opportunity in creating shared value in their business operations by practicing strategic CSR . Value creation is usually seen as the most crucial objective for the firm and its strategy, after all (Burke and Logsdon 1996).

While a growing amount of firms are catching onto these methods by which they can make their CSR strategic, many are still distracted by the public relations opportunities that accompany CSR. These companies practice forms of CSR, like charitable giving, to generate goodwill in the community (Porter and Kramer 2002). They believe that the amount of money they donate should be released to the public, so as to magnify their image as a responsible corporate citizen to consumers (Porter and Kramer 2002). It is true that positive CSR may result in forms of positive visibility such as press mentions, announcements of strong earnings, and successful and hyped up product launches (Burke and Logsdon 1996). Firms also may

internalize benefits of CSR from the non-profits they help through cause-related marketing (Burke and Logsdon 1996).

It is likely that a combination of reasons contribute to corporations' decisions to practice CSR initiatives today. While some companies may utilize CSR primarily to reach financial fruition and improve reputation, CSR efforts (especially those that are strategic) do allow firms to give back to society, creating mutual benefit and a "social return." When all is said and done, "successful corporations need a healthy society," as a symbiotic relationship between business and community has developed over time (Porter and Kramer 2006). Society sustains business and business sustains society.

Section III

Effect of Positive CSR on Consumers

It is rather obvious by now that a modern relationship exists between CSR and consumer behavior. Holding price and quality fairly constant, the 2002 Corporate Citizenship poll administered by Cone Communications found that 84% of Americans would switch brands should one be associated with a cause (Bhattacharya and Sen 2004). However, new research shows that consumers' reported willingness to support CSR initiatives does not necessarily translate to their buyer behavior (Bhattacharya and Sen 2004). Andreasen's model of stages in behavior change (1995) suggests that consumers move toward high involvement behaviors in stages (Mohr, Webb, and Harris 2001). Using CSR as a factor in purchase decisions requires consumers to fully understand the issues the CSR seeks to address and form opinions based on the CSR (Mohr, Webb, and Harris 2001). Thus, it is important that companies consider consumer awareness, attitudes, and attributions involving their brand to better assess the social influence they create (Bhattacharya and Sen 2004). It is interesting to note that external stakeholders might first become attached to the company and the people behind the products due to CSR rather than the products themselves (Hildebrand, Sen, Bhattacharya 2011). Purchasing is a high involvement behavior (Mohr, Webb, Harris 2001) with many decision factors, whether the consumer considers CSR as a factor or not. Consumers' attitudes about a company participating in CSR can lead to purchase decisions and brand loyalty, but it is likely that purchase patterns develop over time.

Collecting psychographics through participation in surveys and focus groups is an easier and more valid tool to measure consumer response to brands based on CSR engagement rather

than measuring actual purchase patterns. However, it has been seen that consumers may suffer from a social desirability response bias when surveyed (Mohr, Webb, and Harris 2001), as they believe their responses and behaviors reveal their personal ethics and morality to their interviewer. This explains why consumers may claim that they wish to support companies that engage in CSR to appear altruistic, but then they do not actually support the companies through the act of purchasing products. This is not to say that they do not hold core beliefs and values about companies that act as responsible corporate citizens; it is possible that they display favorable views and support for these companies in other manners than their purchase decisions and patterns. On the other hand, there are consumers that we understand do purchase right away or in lesser time from companies engaging in CSR for the purpose of receiving the “warm glow of giving” (Chernev and Blair 2015).

Effect of Negative CSR on Consumers

By studying corporations that practice responsible behavior, it seems that the firms that effectively employ CSR initiatives have the ability to positively affect consumers’ opinions. Conversely, what happens if companies exhibit irresponsible behavior by not engaging in CSR or poorly engaging in CSR? Research shows that consumers exhibit greater reaction to corporate behavior that is irresponsible rather than responsible (Bhattacharya and Sen 2004). Also, a negative experience with a company will affect consumer behavior, including both attitudes and purchase behavior, more than a positive experience. Consumers are more likely to share their negative associations and experiences with a company and/or its products through word-of-mouth and various social mediums than they are of positive attitudes and opinions.

In a study by Creyer and Ross, subjects were presented with scenarios labeled ethical or unethical of different breakfast cereal manufacturers (Mohr, Webb, and Harris 2001). They found that consumers did not wish to pay more for products made by the ethical company, but they demanded lower prices for those made by the unethical company (Mohr, Webb, and Harris 2001). This shows that consumers do not react to ethical companies. However, they react more intensely when provided with information that a company is behaving unethically. This is likely because it is the norm in American society to be ethical. Many modern companies, especially corporations, set a code of ethics for their employees and business practices. Therefore, it is one of consumers' basic expectations that the companies they purchase products from behave ethically.

Rather than being defensive about an irresponsible CSR approach or lack thereof, companies can transition to “an integrated, affirmative approach” (Porter and Kramer 2006). Consumers will likely react more favorably to a company that is proactive in using CSR due to the realization that there is an opportunity to create shared value among their business and society (Porter and Kramer 2006), rather than reactive due to the realization that it will allow them to remain competitive in the market (Bhattacharya and Sen 2004). Proactivity is especially important with changing and emerging trends in the marketplace, and the company that will recognize opportunities and/or counter threats will gain an advantage in serving consumers more efficiently (Burke and Logsdon 1996). The past decade has seen a surge in companies' proactive social responsibility involvement, but the causes may be completely unrelated to their missions (Chernev and Blair 2015). To accomplish centrality and proactivity at the same time is ideal for consumers to better absorb CSR efforts. As previously mentioned, Yoplait was proactive by implementing the “Save Lids to Save Lives” campaign in 2013. However, it was later discovered

that the company produced their yogurt with milk from cows that are given a hormone linked to the incidence of breast cancer (Wade 2013). Yoplait garnered negative publicity from this CSR behavior, but even negative occurrences can turn into positive visibility, that is, recognition from internal and external stakeholders upon business activity (Burke and Logsdon 1996). The brand was able to reformulate their yogurt and continue to give back through a new but similar initiative, Friends in the Fight.

Lastly, it is important to consider whether it is irresponsible of companies to engage in forms of CSR like charitable giving that are likely to result in false or misconstrued consumer evaluations and attributions, commonly known as the halo effect (Chernev and Blair 2015). No matter whether the CSR efforts are seen as positive or negative, the consumer might ascribe this perception to the company's products. Chernev and Blair note that food and drink packaging that contain health-related claims may have a spillover effect on other unmentioned health attributes (2015). This may lend rationalization as to why food and drink corporations that are engaging in CSR efforts but producing products that may have questionable health content are justified in the minds of consumers as responsible corporate citizens.

Section IV

Study

Overview

Before conducting this study and mid-research, I believed that a consumer would support a food/drink company that he or she knows participates in CSR efforts by purchasing its products. However, with more research, I learned that it is important to first consider consumer attitudes about brands and their products, rather than just consumer purchase decisions. Once again, attitudes are lasting impressions of a company that may result in word-of-mouth and brand loyalty, whereas a purchase decision may be a one-time action. This being said, the focus was narrowed to the effect of CSR on consumers' brand attitudes and opinions. The experiment tests the following research question:

If consumers perceive that a food/drink company is a responsible corporate citizen, does that affect their judgments of how healthy its products may or may not be?

My hypothesis is that an individual who perceives a food/drink company to be a responsible corporate citizen will also attribute a positive attitude to the company's products in terms of health content. The experiment used a CSR initiative evaluation as the independent variable and brand health evaluations as the dependent variables. We tested Kellogg's as the primary company because Kellogg's produces Frosted Flakes, a product that is perceived ambiguously in health content because it is a breakfast food (Connell, Brucks, and Nielsen 2014). The other products tested as benchmarks were yogurt produced by Dannon (company was disclosed) and

Gatorade produced by PepsiCo (company was not disclosed). We decided to use these two products as controls to Frosted Flakes in a calculated manner; participants knew which food/drink company produced the yogurt and participants may or may not know which food/drink company produced Gatorade. Subjects' health evaluations of both of these products should not have been affected by the Kellogg's press release and/or corresponding perception of Kellogg's as a corporate citizen. Gatorade and yogurt were also chosen because the health perceptions held by modern society of the two are ambiguous.

Procedure

This study was performed online through Amazon Mechanical Turk, a crowd-sourcing platform in which qualified individuals can perform human intelligence tasks. Subjects received a monetary reimbursement if they participated, but their participation was completely voluntary and they were welcome to withdraw from the study at any time. The individuals read and agreed to a consent form before beginning. I, Alexi Silverman, was the private investigator of the study, with help from my advisor, Dr. Jesper Nielsen. The study was slated to last 10-15 minutes. Participants were able to take the study wherever they desired. No known physical, psychological, social, legal, and/or economic risks were expected.

Survey

In our first task, participants were shown either a positive or a negative fabricated press release about a CSR initiative (a sustainable sourcing of palm oil) that Kellogg's did or did not partake in. We made sure to mention several brands that Kellogg's produces in the press release, especially Frosted Flakes. Subjects were asked a check question to make sure they read carefully

and they were then asked whether they believed the company to be a responsible corporate citizen. After some unrelated and timed filler tasks, they were then asked to reconsider or reconfirm their assessment of Kellogg's on a seven-point responsibility scale based on the press release they had read.

In another task, subjects relayed the degree to which they agreed or disagreed (on a seven-point scale) with eleven statements about Frosted Flakes, Dannon Yogurt, and Gatorade. We expected the results to show that all participants consciously related Frosted Flakes, the Kellogg's product, back to the CSR press release they read about Kellogg's, as it had been disclosed that Kellogg's produces Frosted Flakes. It was estimated that they would exhibit positive opinions about three health statements (that the product is healthy, nutritious, and/or is made of quality ingredients) should they have previously perceived the company as a responsible corporate citizen. On the contrary, it was anticipated that they would hold negative opinions about these three health statements should they have earlier perceived the company as a corporate citizen that is not responsible.

Another question was included that asked subjects their level of agreement with three statements about their eating habits/diet. It was important to include a question verifying whether the subjects knew the company that produces Frosted Flakes after this evaluation and the brand health evaluations. Gatorade was included, as well, in the company test since it was one of the brands previously evaluated. The Dannon Yogurt was once again already labeled by its brand/company. Participants also were asked to recall what food/drink products they consumed

as a child. Gender and age were used for demographic evaluation, although they were not of utmost importance in this experiment.

Participants

We had 155 participants in this study. Of those, 98 were male and 57 were female. All of the subjects were Amazon Mechanical Turk workers and were located in the United States. Their ages ranged from 18 to 72, with the average age being 33. Once the participants whose data was not valid (the participants that did not know Kellogg's produces Frosted Flakes after our disclosure in the press release) were eliminated, our analysis included 127 subjects. 63 of those subjects received the positive press release to read and 64 received the negative press release to read.

Results

The results of the study addressed the research question precisely. As seen in the attached bar graph, the positive CSR press release produced a mean rating of 3.46 on the scale of whether Kellogg's was a responsible corporate citizen or not (range was extremely irresponsible (1) to extremely responsible (7)) with a standard deviation of 1.41. The negative CSR press release produced a mean rating of 2.98 on the scale with a standard deviation of 1.22. In a univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) with the Kellogg's health evaluations as the dependent variable, there was a significant difference of .013 found between diet and the Kellogg's health evaluations and there was a significant difference of .049 found between the press release evaluations and the Kellogg's health evaluations. Thus, we have reason to believe these effects did not happen by chance. The fact that the subjects' personal diet assessment had an effect on

the perception they had on the health content of Frosted Flakes is no surprise. The finding that the perception the subjects exhibited of Kellogg's as a responsible corporate citizen or not upon reading the press releases had an effect on their health evaluations confirms the hypothesis to be true. We can also see in the attached regression that when the rating of Kellogg's as a responsible corporate citizen increases by one point, the health perception correspondingly increases by .199. This shows an even stronger effect.

There were 28 subjects that did not recognize that Kellogg's produces Frosted Flakes; they could not be included in our data analysis, as we had included this information in the press release. Of the now 127 eligible subjects, four subjects believed that Kellogg's also produces Gatorade. Nonetheless, this did not have an effect on the results. There was no significant difference found between the press release evaluations and the Gatorade health evaluations, and the press release evaluations and the Dannon yogurt health evaluations. It took subjects less than 10 minutes to complete the survey, and about five minutes of that time was spent on the unrelated filler tasks. Interestingly, very few participants said that they ate Frosted Flakes as a kid.

Discussion

We hoped that subjects would remember that Kellogg's produces Frosted Flakes based on reading it in the press release, as that was the effect we desired to measure. The participants that did not remember this fact and thus make a connection between the tasks were not included in the statistical analysis; measuring the effect of their evaluation of Kellogg's as a responsible corporate citizen on their health evaluations of Frosted Flakes would not be valid when they did not remember Kellogg's produces Frosted Flakes. This decreased the pool of data, but 127

subjects was still a working sample size. One additional checkpoint that would have also been more effective was to verify towards the end of the survey that subjects remembered that the press release they read was concerning Kellogg's rather than another food/drink company or the industry as a whole. I expected the mean of the positive CSR responsibility evaluation to be a bit higher, but as Dr. Nielsen explained, the subjects "have real knowledge." It is likely that the participants know about the widespread practice of CSR in today's society and that they expect companies to engage in CSR initiatives. Thus, the positive press release detailed an initiative that could be very plausible for Kellogg's to partake in and not overly impress participants. We intended the subjects' rating of Kellogg's on their responsibility as a corporate citizen to be based off the press release they read, but there is possibility that subjects' prior experiences, attitudes, and opinions concerning the Kellogg's brand subconsciously affected their rating. Nonetheless, this experiment proved that people make judgments about the health content of a food/drink product based on their positive or negative perception of a company as a responsible corporate citizen. The domain of the CSR initiative (a sustainable sourcing of palm oil) in this case is completely unrelated to health.

Conclusion

This research suggests that the use of Corporate Social Responsibility in the modern business landscape may affect consumer behavior. Even though a firm may be seen as responsible in one domain, it may not be responsible in another domain. The study employed in this thesis tested whether a positive perception of a company based on CSR engagement translated to a positive judgment of its products. The results showed consumers who thought of Kellogg's as a responsible corporate citizen in the food/drink industry based on their exposure to a fictitious social initiative, attributed this positive attitude to the health content of one of its products, Frosted Flakes. This is not to say that all corporate behavior that is socially responsible will produce a positive effect on consumer behavior (and the opposite effect) but rather the study provides evidence that it *can* affect consumers in their attitudes, beliefs, and opinions. It is my sincere hope that this research will inspire individuals to make conscious, informed choices when purchasing food and drink from companies that may be perceived as responsible corporate citizens due to their CSR efforts, but that may not necessarily produce products that are responsible, i.e., have poor health content. More importantly, I hope it inspires a greater number of academics, nutritionists, social activists, public figures, and everyday citizens to work for visible change in regulating the food and drink industry in the United States in the hopes of slowly but surely alleviating the epidemic of obesity.

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Appendix

Survey

Q3 Disclosure Form for Research Participation

This is a disclosure form for research participation. It contains important information about this study and what to expect if you decide to participate. Please consider the information carefully. An Institutional Review Board responsible for human subjects research at The University of Arizona reviewed this research project and found it to be acceptable, according to applicable state and federal regulations and University policies designed to protect the rights and welfare of participants in research. Your participation is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study at any time. If you begin the study, you may leave the study at any time. There are no known risks involved. Pretests indicate that about 10 minutes time will be needed to complete this study. If you agree to participate in this study, you will not give up any personal legal rights you may have as a participant in this study. For questions, concerns, or complaints about the study you may contact Dr. Jesper Nielsen at jesper@email.arizona.edu. I understand this Disclosure Form and agree to participate: “BY MOVING FORWARD WITH THIS STUDY I VERIFY THAT I AM OVER 18 YEARS OF AGE, THAT I UNDERSTAND THIS DISCLOSURE FORM, AND THAT I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE.”

Q19 Thank you for reading the disclaimer form and welcome to the study. The purpose of this study is to ask for your opinions on several issues that affect consumers. First, we will ask you to read a recent press release. Please read the press release carefully as we will ask you questions about it later.

Q11 Kellogg's joins fight to preserve rainforests & global climate Sept. 24, 2014, 11:55 a.m. Environmentalists will be delighted to hear that Kellogg's, a producer of popular food brands including PopTarts, Pringles, NutriGrain, Special K, and Frosted Flakes, has promised to stop purchasing palm oil from suppliers partaking in practices harmful to rainforest ecosystems and biodiversity. By 2015, the food company hopes to obtain 100% of its palm oil from sources that are responsible and sustainable. Kellogg's recognizes that although it is a “relatively minor user of palm oil,” sourcing of even small amounts of ingredients can be done in more socially and environmentally responsible manners. Kellogg's is now a member of the Round Table for Sustainable Palm Oil, which sets rules for members for sourcing palm oils that meet sustainable standards. Palm oil, an edible vegetable oil, is used in the production of various consumer items, including food and candy. It is experiencing a greater global demand, and 85% of the world's palm oil is produced and exported from Malaysia and Indonesia. Practices are usually not sustainable in these countries, as they result in deforestation, climate change, and degradation of habitats of animals and plants, some of which are endangered species. Rainforest Action Network is an environmental organization that urged the change and believes Kelloggs' willingness in helping to resolve the issue displays the trend toward practicing “real corporate social responsibility.” The definition of CSR is expanding in the food industry to include responsibility for practices within companies' supply chains that may affect the environment.

Consumers may also note that very few companies (and no major food and drink companies) have addressed climate change and advocated for government policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in their supply chains like Kellogg's now has. About USA Today: Founded in 1982, USA Today disseminates news and information across several forms of media. It aims to unify the United States by enacting conversation for both the present and the future. USA Today attracts seven million readers every day through print and the digital site (USAToday.com) combined, while it boasts over 21 million mobile app downloads. For more information, contact: Amber Smith at ambersmith@usatoday.com.

Q47 Do you think that the aforementioned corporation is a responsible citizen?

- Yes (1)
- Maybe (2)
- No (3)

Q12 Kellogg's destroying rainforests & global climate Sept. 24, 2014, 11:55 a.m.

Environmentalists are discouraged that Kellogg's, a producer of popular food brands including PopTarts, Pringles, NutriGrain, Special K, and Frosted Flakes, continues to purchase palm oil from suppliers partaking in practices harmful to rainforest ecosystems and biodiversity. By 2015, the food company hopes to obtain 100% of its palm oil from sources that are more responsible and sustainable, but the damage is done and that may be too late. Kellogg's recognizes that although it is a "relatively minor user of palm oil," sourcing of even small amounts of ingredients can be done in more socially and environmentally responsible manners. Kellogg's is now a member of the Round Table for Sustainable Palm Oil, which sets rules for members for sourcing palm oils that meet sustainable standards. Palm oil, an edible vegetable oil, is used in the production of various consumer items, including food and candy. It is experiencing a greater global demand, and 85% of the world's palm oil is produced and exported from Malaysia and Indonesia. Practices are usually not sustainable in these countries, as they result in deforestation, climate change, and degradation of habitats of animals and plants, some of which are endangered species. Rainforest Action Network is an environmental organization that urges the change and believes Kelloggs' hesitancy in helping to resolve the issue displays unwillingness to practice "real corporate social responsibility." The definition of CSR is expanding in the food industry to include responsibility for practices within companies' supply chains that may affect the environment. Consumers may also note that although no major food and drink companies have addressed climate change and advocated for government policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in their supply chains, several other companies have done so. About USA Today: Founded in 1982, USA Today disseminates news and information across several forms of media. It aims to unify the United States by enacting conversation for both the present and the future. USA Today attracts seven million readers every day through print and the digital site (USAToday.com) combined, while it boasts over 21 million mobile app downloads. For more information, contact: Amber Smith at ambersmith@usatoday.com.

Q43 Next we would like to ask you to choose among hypothetical gambles. Imagine that you found \$5 and are now offered the opportunity bet that money on a few different options. Which options would you choose.

Q44 Please indicate for each set of gambles which one of the two gambles you would prefer

	1 (1)	2 (2)
Option A (100% likelihood of winning \$10):Option B (10% likelihood of winning \$100) (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Option A (5% likelihood of winning \$2000):Option B (10% likelihood of winning \$1000) (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Option A (80 % likelihood of winning \$45):Option B (100% likelihood of winning \$36) (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Option A (25% likelihood of winning \$100):Option B (20% likelihood of winning \$125) (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q17 Next, we would like to ask your opinions about a few products and ideas. There are no right or wrong answers; we are interested in your opinions and perceptions. Q8 Please express the degree to which you disagree or agree with the following statements:

Yogurt is made of quality ingredients. (10) Dannon Yogurt can be consumed at any time of day. (11)	<input type="radio"/>						
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Q18 Please express the degree to which you disagree or agree with the following statements:

bring back fond memories. (9)							
Frosted Flakes are made of quality ingredients. (10)	<input type="radio"/>						
Frosted Flakes can be consumed at any time of day. (11)	<input type="radio"/>						

Q42 Next, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I tend to rely on myself to get things done. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am confident that I can get most important things done in life without help from others. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Doing things alone is comfortable for me. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that everything I need to attain my goals is basically in my own control. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q20 What do you think was the purpose of the first study? VERY BRIEFLY, what was it trying to study?

Q22 Did anything you did on one task affect what you did on any other task? If yes, VERY BRIEFLY, how do you think it affected you?

Q26 What breakfast and/or snack foods and drinks did you consume as a child?

Q27 Do you consume any of the brands you mentioned you consumed as a child now?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q34 Please indicate your level of agreement with each of these questions:

	Definitely Disagree (1)	Somewhat Disagree (2)	Unsure (3)	Somewhat Agree (4)	Definitely Agree (5)
In general, I am a healthy eater. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I pay a lot of attention to nutritional information on the food I eat. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I often skip foods I would like because they are not healthy. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q45 Do you know who produces each of these brands?

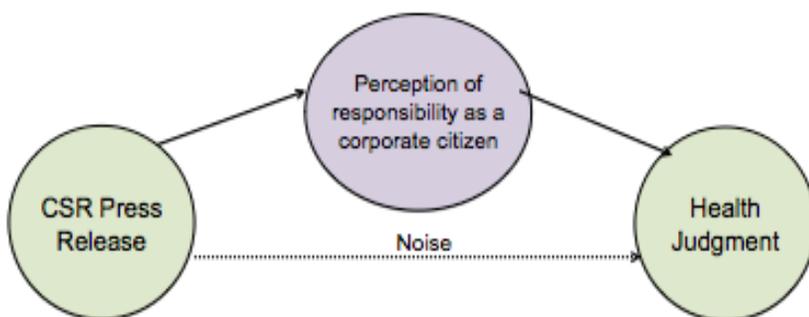
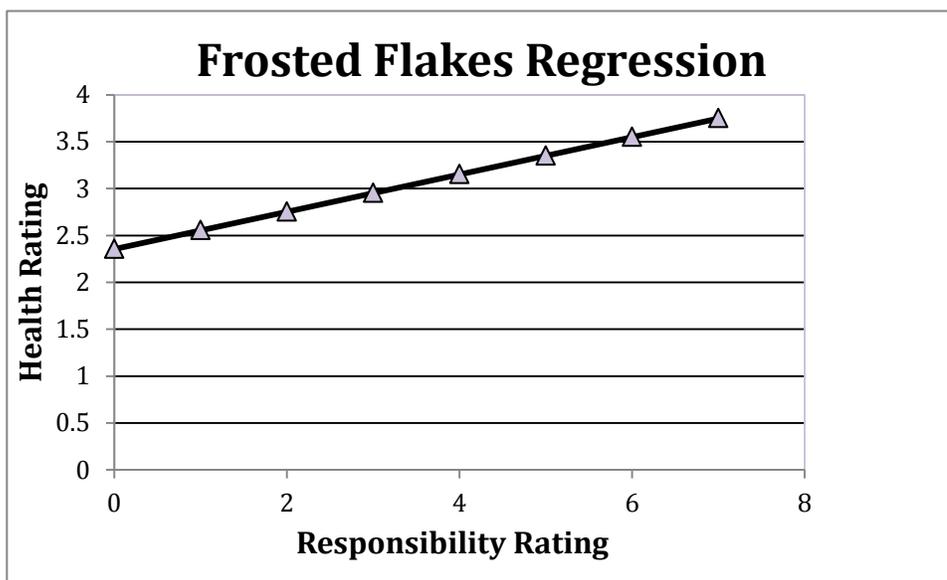
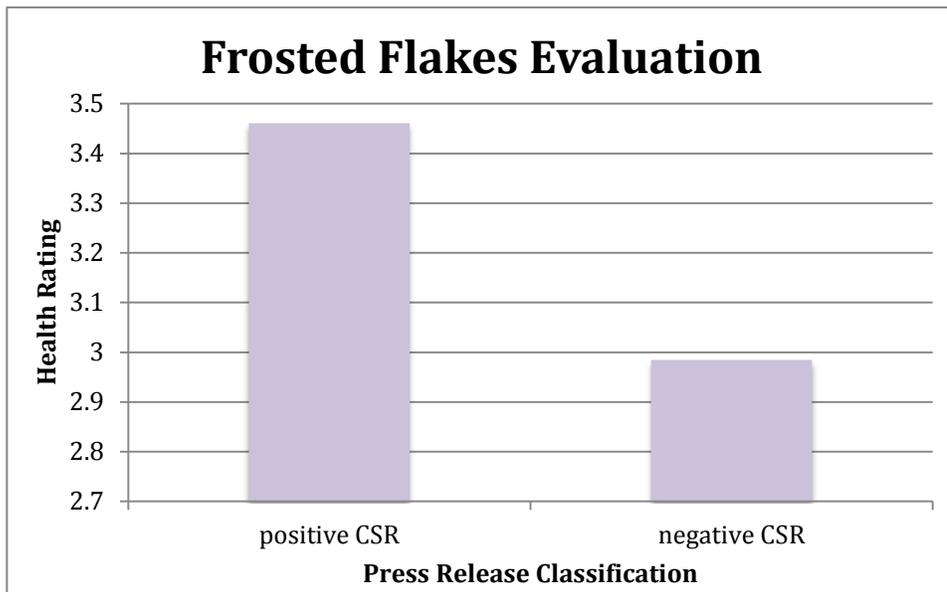
	Pepsi (1)	Coke (2)	Kellogg's (3)	General Mills (4)	Nestle (5)	Nabisco (6)	Unsure (7)
Hot Pockets (1)	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Gatorade (2)	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Frosted Flakes (3)	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Cheerios (4)	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Smart Water (5)	<input type="checkbox"/>						

Q1 What is your gender?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)

Q5 What is your age?

Graphs



Data Output

Frequencies

Statistics		
What is your gender?		
N	Valid	155
	Missing	0

What is your gender?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	98	63.2	63.2	63.2
Female	57	36.8	36.8	100.0
Total	155	100.0	100.0	

What is your age?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 18	1	.6	.6	.6
19	2	1.3	1.3	1.9
20	2	1.3	1.3	3.2
21	4	2.6	2.6	5.8
22	6	3.9	3.9	9.7
23	5	3.2	3.2	12.9
24	7	4.5	4.5	17.4
25	11	7.1	7.1	24.5
26	10	6.5	6.5	31.0
27	12	7.7	7.7	38.7
28	7	4.5	4.5	43.2
29	7	4.5	4.5	47.7
30	6	3.9	3.9	51.6
31	7	4.5	4.5	56.1
32	7	4.5	4.5	60.6
33	9	5.8	5.8	66.5

34	4	2.6	2.6	69.0
35	4	2.6	2.6	71.6
36	1	.6	.6	72.3
37	3	1.9	1.9	74.2
38	7	4.5	4.5	78.7
39	2	1.3	1.3	80.0
40	2	1.3	1.3	81.3
41	2	1.3	1.3	82.6
42	4	2.6	2.6	85.2
43	2	1.3	1.3	86.5
44	1	.6	.6	87.1
45	1	.6	.6	87.7
46	1	.6	.6	88.4
47	2	1.3	1.3	89.7
49	1	.6	.6	90.3
51	1	.6	.6	91.0
53	1	.6	.6	91.6
54	2	1.3	1.3	92.9
55	2	1.3	1.3	94.2
57	2	1.3	1.3	95.5
59	1	.6	.6	96.1
60	2	1.3	1.3	97.4
61	1	.6	.6	98.1
65	1	.6	.6	98.7
67	1	.6	.6	99.4
72	1	.6	.6	100.0
Total	155	100.0	100.0	

Univariate Analysis of Variance

Between-Subjects Factors

	Value Label	N
PSA .00	PosCSR	63
1.00	NegPSR	64

Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variable: FFHealth

PSA	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
PosCSR	3.4603	1.41095	63
NegPSR	2.9844	1.22212	64
Total	3.2205	1.33546	127

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: FFHealth

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	17.713 ^a	2	8.857	5.305	.006
Intercept	180.414	1	180.414	108.073	.000
Diet	10.522	1	10.522	6.303	.013
PSA	6.594	1	6.594	3.950	.049
Error	207.002	124	1.669		
Total	1541.889	127			
Corrected Total	224.716	126			

a. R Squared = .079 (Adjusted R Squared = .064)

Estimated Marginal Means

PSA

Dependent Variable: FFHealth

PSA	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
PosCSR	3.450 ^a	.163	3.128	3.773
NegPSR	2.994 ^a	.162	2.674	3.314

a. Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: Diet = 3.6194.

Regression

Variables Entered/Removed^a

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Think back to the press release you read earlier. What is your assessment of the company mention...-Extremely Irresponsible:Extremely Responsible ^b	.	Enter

a. Dependent Variable: FFHealth

b. All requested variables entered.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.274 ^a	.075	.068	1.28934

a. Predictors: (Constant), Think back to the press release you read earlier. What is your assessment of the company mention...-Extremely Irresponsible:Extremely Responsible

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	16.916	1	16.916	10.176	.002 ^b
	Residual	207.799	125	1.662		
	Total	224.716	126			

a. Dependent Variable: FFHealth

b. Predictors: (Constant), Think back to the press release you read earlier. What is your assessment of the company mention...-Extremely Irresponsible:Extremely Responsible

company mention...-Extremely Irresponsible:Extremely Responsible

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	16.916	1	16.916	10.176	.002 ^b
	Residual	207.799	125	1.662		
	Total	224.716	126			

a. Dependent Variable: FFHealth

b. Predictors: (Constant), Think back to the press release you read earlier. What is your assessment of the company mention...-Extremely Irresponsible:Extremely Responsible

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.355	.294		7.999	.000
	Think back to the press release you read earlier. What is your assessment of the company mention...-Extremely Irresponsible:Extremely Responsible	.199	.062	.274	3.190	.002

a. Dependent Variable: FFHealth