ETHICAL BUSINESS PRACTICES AND CONSUMERS’ PURCHASE INTENTIONS FOR A FAST MOVING CONSUMER GOOD IN HONG KONG

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to contribute to the debate by examining the relationship between consumers’ perceptions of EBPs on buying intentions for low-involvement, fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) in Hong Kong supplied by a well-known brand, Nestlé. The ultimate goal is to discern whether consumers’ perceptions of EBPs affect their actual purchasing behaviour, hence justifying businesses’ efforts to enhance their image in the minds of consumers. Consistent with previous studies, this study suggests that EBPs can have a large effect on purchase intentions because consumers see ethical behaviour as a baseline expectation.

INTRODUCTION

The matter of ethical business practices (EBPs) have become, together with concerns about corporate social responsibility (CSR), a matter of increasing attention for large companies in the Western world since the 1990s. This attention reflects in scholarly research efforts as well as in the explicit and unprecedented consideration of ethics related issues by business. For example, over 80 per cent of Fortune 500 companies address ethical and/or CSR issues on their websites (Smith, 2003), allegedly backed by the allocation of significant financial resources and the implementation of marketing strategies that account for corporate ethical behaviours (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2004; Christensen et al., 2007). This heightened interest is ultimately related to promoting consumer preference or to avert the loss of that preference. However, there is no universal agreement in the literature either on the relevance for business of the influence of consumers’ perceptions about EBPs on purchase intentions or, on the generalization of that influence to all consumers.

Drawing on behavioural measures from empirical research, Ulrich and Sarasin (1995) concludes that consumers are not really concerned with ethical consumption, that is, with whether they chose for their consumption goods and services made available by businesses they perceive as behaving ethically. In contrast, there is strong support in the literature for the view that consumers are increasingly concerned about issues related to EBPs, such as the fair and humane treatment of employees (Creyer and Ross, 1997; Mohr et al., 2001; Ramasamy and Yeung, 2009). For example, a large-scale European survey found that 46 percent of respondents reported a willingness to pay extra for ethical products – those offered by businesses with EBPs (MORI, 2000). In terms of the aspect of concerns about issues related to EBPs that may not be shared by all consumers in all markets, these are often grounded on little evidence, mostly anecdotal, that people from different countries have different levels of concern about ethics (and CSR), as in the case of East versus West differences (Ramasamy and Yeung, 2009).

The debate remains unresolved. Scholarly research efforts have variably focused on deepening our understanding of consumers’ perception of EBPs, on methodological issues such as the designing of questionnaires for effective measurement (Tian et al., 2011) and on measuring consumers’ baseline expectations about ethical practices (Creyer and Ross, 1997). The ultimate goal is to discern whether consumers’ perceptions of EBPs affect their actual purchasing behaviour, hence justifying businesses’ efforts to enhance their image in the minds of consumers. Businesses can do this by managing consumers’ perceptions of the business, in order to ultimately influence their purchase intentions (Bhattacharya, Korschun, and Sen, 2009).

This study seeks to contribute to the debate by examining the relationship between consumers’ perceptions of EBPs on buying intentions for low-involvement, fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) in Hong Kong. High-involvement products (e.g., banking) have been the focus of prior research (Ramasamy and Yeung, 2009).

Hong Kong provides a particularly relevant context for this research because it has a strong market-based economy, characterized by a mix of Confucian and Western cultures, with a significant retail sector. Its consumption patterns are a leading indicator for the patterns in the Greater China region. Understanding consumers’ baseline expectations about EBP in Hong Kong is important because there is limited empirical evidence that they are related
to consumers' purchase intentions (Creyer and Ross, 1997). Thus, this study makes a contribution by examining this relationship in an important, but relatively understudied cultural context.

Intertwined conceptualizations of EBPs and CSR in the literature justify an attempt in this paper to distinguish the two concepts, leading to the discussion of the increasing importance of EBPs for consumers purchase intentions and of consumers' expectations about BEPs. This discussion assists in the development of the research question and hypotheses examined in this study. Following an explanation of the research method and analysis, the results are discussed. The paper completes with conclusions, limitations, and insights to guide further research.

DISTINGUISHING ETHICS FROM CSR

Ethical behaviour is usually considered an element of CSR (Carroll, 1979, 1991), and some research even distinguish ethics as the most important element of CSR (Eells and Walton, 1961; Petkas and Woodruff, 1992). Other elements of CSR include economic, legal and discretionary (or philanthropic) behaviours (Carroll, 1979), such as donating to charity. Because the activities embodied in these elements are optional and altruistic, businesses that do not generate positive perceptions from these activities will not necessarily be punished by consumers. Hence, if Burger King does not imitate McDonald's donation to charity of one dollar for each Big Mac sold in Australia on Big Mac Saturday, Burger King is unlikely to be penalized by consumers on that account.

While our focus is solely on ethical issues, reflection on the discussion of EBPs in this paper acknowledges the complexity and conceptual ambiguity associated with the examination of ethics and CSR. It may be argued that some of this complexity and ambiguity results from the different nature of the behaviours involved, particularly their impact on consumers' consumption decisions. Hence, it is justified to distinguish ethics from the other elements of CSR, and from CSR itself.

Economic behaviours related to CSR are usually somewhat distant from the personal interests of the average consumer, often requiring a relatively high level of technical knowledge (for example in economics), as well as an understanding of corporate ability aspects. Consumers might need to be competent on these aspects before they can assess businesses' economic behaviours. Legal behaviours are subject to official guidelines and are likely to be perceived by consumers as checked by the watchful eye of official agencies. Discretionary behaviours may be rewarded by consumers for contributions that are perceived to be above those expected from a business. The point to note is that, since these behaviours are not expected, their omission from actual business activities may not attract consumers' attention and retaliation, although awareness of the good deeds by consumers may justify consumer recognition and eventual preference in consumption.

Contrasting with CSR, ethics is a more basic requirement for businesses. If we think of EBPs as the baseline legal and moral expectations that consumers have about businesses' behaviour, failing to deliver on these expected ethical standards may result in consumers forming a negative view of the business. EBPs, particularly those involving ethical breaches, may be more meaningful for consumers, making consumer retaliation more likely, with possible implications for purchase intentions. This premise is consistent with evidence that consumers have a baseline expectation that businesses behave ethically (Creyer and Ross, 1997). Hence, it is justified to suspect that EBPs and CSR will have different effects on consumers' purchase intentions.

Separating EBPs from CSR may also be justified on the grounds that they may not necessarily reinforce each other. A business that generates a good CSR image does not necessarily have good EBPs. There are many examples of businesses with inconsistent CSR and EBPs. For example, Enron was run with unethical accounting practices but was an active philanthropic contributor to the community. Parmalat contributed $2 million to restore the Parma Cathedral, but the major shareholder drew even more money from the business for the family-owned soccer team Parma AC and Parmatour (Gumbel, 2004). There are also situations where defensible economic behaviours may justify behaviour that could be deemed unethical. The theory of contradiction between morality and interest sustains the possibility that businesses may suffer losses if they stick to morality (Zhou et al., 2007, cited in Song, 2009). Arguably, if one business behaves ethically while other businesses do not, the ethical business may, in some cases, be at a disadvantage. Without the financial capacity to act ethically, it is unlikely that businesses will be ethical (Su, 2008, cited in Song, 2009).

Finally, there are also cases where ethics and CSR reinforce each other. Consumers and governments sometimes punish companies for behaving unethically, as in the case of milk producer Sanlu. Although adding melamine to its milk helped Sanlu to early profits, Sanlu was eventually dissolved and its key managers sentenced to long-term imprisonment. Other major brands that were involved in the scandal suffered significant decline in share prices and market share (Song, 2009).
It is apparent that a lack of formal regulation may give way to informal regulation by consumers, if their perceptions of EBPs have an effect on their behaviour as consumers. Hence, unregulated environmental abuse may or may not have a negative effect on consumer behaviour. Similarly, unregulated good deeds by business may or may not be rewarded with preference and consumption by consumers. Ultimately, the issue at hand is to understand whether consumer perceptions of EBPs—whether positive, negative, or neutral, regulated or unregulated—affect consumer behaviour, particularly in terms of consumers’ purchase intentions, briefly discussed in the next section. This is reflected in the following research question that guides this study:

*Do consumers’ perceptions of EBPs for a brand influence their purchase intentions of that brand in Hong Kong?*

**IMPORTANCE OF EBPs FOR PURCHASE INTENTIONS**

Consumers’ concern about the implications of business activities for society (Thompson, 1995) and consumers’ knowledge about EBPs have increased thanks to developments in information and communications technology (ICT) and social media. The reach of Web 2.0 has made it easier to disseminate positive as well as negative information about EBPs through social media.

While businesses might be under increased pressure to be recognised by consumers for their positive EBPs, it is not clear whether consumers themselves feel more pressure to purchase ethically. Research indicates that consumers have a basic expectation that businesses behave ethically, but there are mixed findings about whether consumers are also expected to be ethical in their purchasing. In contrast with Creyer and Ross’s (1997) suggestion that customers are prepared to reward ethical companies and penalize unethical companies, Carrigan and Attalla (2001) argue that customers are unwilling to penalize companies for unethical behaviour through withdrawal of their consumption, even when they disapprove of that behaviour. For example, Mengniu is still the largest dairy brand in China, despite its involvement in the melamine-contamination scandal. Hence, the effect of EBPs on purchase intentions is unclear.

Purchase intention refers to consumers’ willingness to make a purchase, which is influenced by consumers’ attitudes, satisfaction, and loyalty (Halim and Hamed, 2005). There is evidence in the literature that purchase intentions are related to the probability that an individual customer will actually buy a given product (Whitlark, Geurts, and Swenson, 1999) and the general consensus is that purchase intentions are a good predict of subsequent purchase behaviour (Morwitz et al., 2006).

The literature identifies consumer attitudes, subjective norms (Ajzen, 1988), social pressure (Tian et al., 2011), and perceived behavioural control (Levy and Weitz, 2009) as factors influencing consumers’ perceptions of EBPs and subsequent effect on purchase intentions. Other analysts suggest that consumers pay attention to price only (Crawford and Mathews, 2001; Mohr et al., 2001), while other studies go as far as to say that consumers are willing to purchase from businesses they perceive to behave unethically, if the price is low enough (Asonwu, 2007).

One aspect that may earn wider support in the literature is the proposition that some consumer behaviour is simply a result of non-volitional control variables, such as availability and convenience (Gupta, 2002; Webb and Mohr, 1998). Arguably, purchase intentions may depend on the specific brand and on its market position. For brands facing weak competition, implying consumers have less choice, EBP may have little impact on consumers’ behavior. Stronger impact on consumer behaviour may be for brands facing strong competition (Carrigan and Attalla, 2001), implying greater choice for consumers. This has implications for this study, which focuses on one only brand, Nestlé, with a strong market position, providing the justification for hypothesis 1 examined in this study:

**H1: Consumers’ perceptions of EBPs for a brand will influence their purchase intentions for the brand.**

**EXPECTATIONS ABOUT BUSINESS ETHICAL PRACTICES**

Consumers’ expectations about EBPs are an important reference point for the evaluation of overall business behaviour. Research offers three types of reference points for consumers: aspiration based; market based (compared with what else is in the market); and experience based, that is, based on the consumers’ previous experiences (Klein and Ogletorpe, 1987). The three categories of perceived EBPs vary in terms of information involvement and processing. Processing of aspiration-based reference points tends to be involving and abstract. For market-based and experience-based reference points, involvement is more varied, and processing is more concrete. This is because consumers are more likely to have objective examples to assess EBPs against.
Taking a skeptical perspective about consumers’ baseline expectations about EBPs, if consumers expect that all companies will behave unethically, they are unlikely to change their purchasing behaviour based on news of negative EBPs. However, the literature supports the more positive view that consumers’ expectations about EBPs are directly related to consumers’ willingness to reward ethical behaviour and to punish unethical behaviour (Creyer and Ross, 1997). Hence, the more consumers expect companies to behave ethically, the more strongly they will react to news of unethical behaviour. This provides the grounding for hypothesis 2 examined in this study:

H2: Consumers’ expectations of EBPs for a brand are positively related to consumers’ purchase intentions.

METHODOLOGY

This study is part of a larger, ongoing research project examining the impact on consumers’ of CSR, EBP, and the interaction of those two factors on consumers’ purchase intentions in Hong Kong, with respect to a FMCG supplied by a well-known brand, Nestlé. Beyond summary information about the method used for the overall project, only the information relevant to the relationship between EBPs and purchase intentions is discussed here.

The testing of hypotheses involving causal relationships between variables justifies adopting a positivist approach. The choice of Nestlé for this study enhances external validity. Nestlé is a well-known FMCG company that has many dairy, cereal, and soft drink products in the Hong Kong market. The decision to use Nestlé was supported by its brand presence in Hong Kong and amongst the demographic of the sample participating in this study. Table 1 lists Nestlé products available in Hong Kong. Arguably, Chinese citizens are highly familiar with Nestlé’s products (Decorvet, 2012).

| Table 1: Nestlé Brands Available in Hong Kong |

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Product Category</th>
<th>Brands</th>
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<tr>
<td>Milk</td>
<td>Carnation, Dairy Farm Eagle, Klim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soya Bean Drink</td>
<td>Pak Fook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seasoning</td>
<td>Maggi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice Cream</td>
<td>Dreyer’s Nestlé;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confectionary</td>
<td>Crunch; Fox’s; Kit Kat; Fruittips; Milo; After Eight</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: Nestlé (2013)

An important focus of criticism in the literature rests with the use of abstract questions about EBPs (and CSR), rather than specific examples of ethical behaviour (Creyer and Ross, 1997, p. 429). Consumers may respond differently to questions about “ethical behaviour” in general, compared to questions about specific types of ethical behaviour. Recent studies have addressed this criticism by using specific examples of EBP, such as scenarios or vignettes (e.g., Tian et al., 2011). The present study continues to address this criticism by identifying specific behaviours and a specific business, thus allowing for enhanced validity of the research findings.

In the matter relevant to EBPs, this study collected data by means of a self-administered questionnaire with seven items measuring respondents’ expectations and three items measuring purchase intentions. Demographic information was also collected from respondents.

The seven items measuring expectations about EBPs were based on the measures applied by Creyer and Ross (1997). The three purchase intentions items were based on the measures of Tian et al. (2011) as detailed below:

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1. A between-subjects, 2 x 2 factorial, laboratory experimental design was used in the larger research project (of which the present study is a part) to evaluate the influence of consumers’ perceptions of CSR and EBP on consumers’ purchase intentions. Vignettes (scenarios) were developed to represent the four treatment combinations of CSR and ethical corporate behaviour: (1) positive CSR, positive ethics, (2) positive CSR, negative ethics, (3) negative CSR, positive ethics, and (4) negative CSR, negative ethics. This method extends prior research by experimentally manipulating ethics and CSR independently, as well as allowing the examination of their combined influence.
Table 2: Questionnaire Items

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Constructs</th>
<th>Items</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expectation of EBP (Creyer and Ross, 1997)</td>
<td>1. Firms really should be ethical in all of their dealings in the marketplace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. I expect the firms that I deal with to act ethically at all times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. It is normal for firms to be unethical sometimes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. It is no big deal if firms are sometimes unethical.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Firms have a responsibility not to ever act unethically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Firms will not uphold the highest ethical standards all of the time. Nobody is perfect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Firms have a responsibility to always act with the highest of ethical standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase Intentions (Tian et al., 2011)</td>
<td>8. If I am planning to buy a dairy product, I will choose the product from Nestlé.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. There is a great possibility that I will buy a product from Nestlé.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. I am willing to pay a little more for a product from Nestlé.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The population for this study comprises all Hong Kong residents aged 18 and above who had attained a secondary level of education or above. The selected non-probability convenience sample is made up of students enrolled in a leading tertiary education institution in Hong Kong.

In total, 220 responses were initially collected, and 216 were deemed usable for analysis after the preliminary data screening (n = 216). The final sample was mostly female (68%), and responses to the categorical age question ranged from “under 20” to “over 36” (mode = 26-30 years of age), with an average age of 23.8 years (calculated as: midpoint for each category x number of participants in each category/total number of participants). In terms of occupation, nearly half of all respondents reported being clerical or service workers (48%), followed by students (28%), professional managers (11%), production workers (6%), public servants working in a governmental institution (5%), and unemployed/other (2%).

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics were used to understand the basic characteristics of all variables, as well as assist in the data-screening-and-cleaning process. Second, reliability analysis and correlations were used to establish the reliability and construct validity of the measurement scales. Lastly, after checking the assumptions for each analysis technique, the hypothesized relationships were tested using two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and multiple regression. Because the independent variables were categorical, and the dependent variable was an interval variable, two-way ANOVA was used to evaluate the effect of perceptions of EBPs on participants’ purchase intentions (H1) (Howell, 2013). Multiple regression was used to evaluate the influence of expectations of EBPs on participants’ purchase intentions (H2). Table 3 is a summary of hypotheses outcomes.

Table 3: Summary of Hypotheses Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Analysis Technique</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1: Perceptions of Ethical Behaviour → Purchase Intentions</td>
<td>Two-way ANOVA</td>
<td>Partially Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2: Expectations of Ethical Behaviour → Purchase Intentions (β = .159, p = .006)</td>
<td>Multiple Regression</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, this study found partial support for the hypotheses that ethical behaviour affects purchase intentions. The main effect of positive BEP) is marginally significant (negative ethical behaviour mean = 4.00, positive ethical behaviour mean = 4.22). The suggestion is that BEP has a direct but relatively weak effect on purchase intentions. This finding is consistent with previous studies that argue that when the dominant attributes of a product are quality and convenience (as is the case with FMCGs), only negative associations are expected to have an impact (Costaldo et al., 2009). Indeed, it is noted that unethical events have the potential to trigger consumers’ awareness and
subsequent information processing (Miller, 1956; Tian et al., 2011; Trudel and Cotte, 2009). It may be that this further information processing will lead consumers to pay more attention to other information about businesses’ behaviour, such as CSR information, and devote more cognitive resources to its consideration (Petty and Cacioppo, 1981, 1984). With this extra processing, consumers’ perceptions of EBPs may result into penalties or rewards for the company depending on its CSR activities. Following Beckmann (2007), consumers are usually more critical and prone to have stronger reactions to reports of negative EBPs, such as lower purchase intentions.

As convenience products, FMCGs typically have low consumer involvement, with limited planning and shopping effort (Kotler et al., 2009). In this case, the elaboration likelihood model (ELM) of processing (Petty and Cacioppo, 1981, 1984) may assist in explaining why consumers appear to have little follow through on their intentions to reward businesses with positive EBPs (Pomering and Dolnicar, 2007). This is because, under the ELM, FMCGs would be given low personal relevance and consequences, and would not prompt extensive cognitive activity. The rewards for businesses with positively perceived EBPs could include higher purchase intentions or willingness to pay a premium price (e.g., Gupta, 2002; Felsmacker et al., 2005). For example, consumers in one study said they would only be willing to buy unethically produced coffee if it was 29 per cent cheaper than regular coffee (Trudel and Cotte, 2009).

Regarding H2, the finding that expectations of ethical behaviour are positively related to purchase intentions also is consistent with the findings of previous studies (Brown and Dacin, 1997; Creyer and Ross, 1997; Mohr and Webb, 2005). The results suggest that consumers have an aspiration-based ethics reference point; in other words, consumers have a specific ethical standard in mind, and they expect the organisation to match or surpass it. Consumers will reward, with higher purchase intentions for their products, businesses that can achieve the ethical standard (Klein and Ogletorpe, 1987). The reward may also be realised by a willingness to pay a premium price for ethical products; the penalty may be realised by forcing companies to accept a discount for unethical products (Trudel and Cotte, 2009).

Finally, the findings also provide an important cross-cultural replication and extension of previous findings. There is some evidence that people from different countries have different levels of concern about EBPs (Singh, Sanchez, and Bosque, 2008). The study provides an important point of comparison for establishing baselines for expectations about EBPs. By using the expectations of ethical behaviour scale from a prior US study (Creyer and Ross, 1997), a direct comparison (East vs West) of the mean levels of ethical expectations across the two cultures can be made. This present study found that the expectations for ethical behaviour of Hong Kong participants (mean = 4.64 out of 7) are lower than those of the American consumers (mean = 4.97 out of 7) in Creyer and Ross’s (1997) study, one-sample t-test, t(215) = -6.41, p < .0005. Hence this study suggest that concerns about EBPs are as true for Hong Kong consumers as they are for US consumers, though there are differences that may need to be investigated further (possibly by association with perspectives about CSR). In sum, although ethics is related to purchase intentions across cultures (Creyer and Ross, 1997; Tian et al., 2011), the results of this study suggest that there are differences in the mean level of expectations of corporate ethical behaviour across cultures that justify further research.

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This study suggests that EBPs can have a large effect on purchase intentions because consumers see ethical behaviour as a baseline expectation. Violating a basic expectation may have a stronger effect than adding, for example, a non-necessary benefit. The results indicate that businesses should avoid negative perceptions of their EBPs. However, it should also be noted that this study used a single manipulation of ethical behaviour. Future research can improve on this weakness by using more and different examples of ethical behaviour.

Purchase intentions are an important indicator of consumers’ attitude towards EBPs. Boycotts have caused great losses over extended periods of time for leading multinational corporations, in the relatively recent past (Carrigan and Attalla, 2001; Klein and Ogletorpe, 1987; Nelson-Horchler, 1984). Businesses appear to be more and more concerned about ethics issues, and to react more actively to their occurrence. In highly competitive environments, caring for purchase intentions is unavoidable.

Relative to cultural influences, previous research in the US found that consumers held a baseline expectation that corporations behave ethically, significantly above the midpoint of the scale. Using the same scale, the current study found that Hong Kong participants’ responses were also significantly above the midpoint. This is taken as evidence that Hong Kong consumers have a baseline expectation that companies behave ethically, but lower than the expectations of US consumers (mean US = 4.97; Hong Kong = 4.64). This implies that Hong Kong consumers see
unethical behaviour as a negative deviation from a standard, which means that unethical practices may strongly affect consumers, including their purchase intentions. Notwithstanding, it should be noted that the sample in the present study was made up of business students, while the US participants were parents of elementary school children. It is possible (1) that Hong Kongers have lower expectations than Americans or simply that (2) business students have lower expectations than the general population. Future studies with comparable populations are needed to tease apart these two explanations.

Finally, it is suggested that businesses may benefit from proactively disclosing their ethical policies and practices periodically because consumers expect corporations to behave ethically. Positive EBPs may not bring immediate benefits, but they should allow for a positive build-up of corporate image and appeal to consumers in the long term.

This study is not without limitations. These include possible limitations to generalisation of the results due to the convenience sample that was used. It is also necessary to note that the questionnaire related to one company only, Nestlé. It is possible that participants could have some bias for or against Nestlé. If participants already had a strong negative view of Nestlé, giving them positive information about Nestlé’s EBPs would not likely affect their perceptions. There are also limitations relative to industry-specific expectations, Tian et al. (2011) found evidence that consumers pay more attention to EBPs (and CSR) when they make complex purchase decisions, such as with electrical appliances or banking. In contrast, consumers report paying less attention when they purchase FMCGs (Carrigan and Attalla, 2001). This implies that the same message may have different effects for different types of products. The results from the present study may not apply to products in other industries.

Beyond the suggestions for future research already stated, both the discussion of the extant literature and of the results suggest that there may be some link (not discussed in this paper) between consumers’ perceptions of EBPs and perceptions of CSR that points to a possible combined effect. That is, a brand may be able to offset being “bad” in one area (e.g., negative perceptions about EBPs) by being “good” in another (e.g., perceptions of CSR). However, further research is needed to confirm this finding.

REFERENCES


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