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Generation Z and Corporate Social Responsibility

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Abstract

      This thesis explores the attitudes and perceptions held by Generation Z regarding a brand or brand's corporate social responsibility (CSR) communication efforts. This thesis uses the stakeholder theory, relationship management theory, ethical consumerism and corporate reputation theory to frame the importance of brand's understanding how to effectively communicates CSR to its stakeholders. This study evaluates variables including progressive values, diversity, pro-social behaviors, attitude toward a brand, perceived credibility, ulterior motives, commitment, perceived trust, word of mouth intentions, purchase intentions. This study will also examine how the influence of CSR communication efforts varies within Gen Z depending on gender, race and political ideologies. This thesis then frames current characteristics of Gen Z with their involvement levels of CSR.

GENERATION Z AND CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

by

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Acknowledgements

One shocking summer day at Newhouse, I discovered I was not a millennial, but a member of Gen Z. Being naturally curious, I was inspired to learn all I could about my generation. I decided to take my passion for CSR and the new knowledge I acquired about Gen Z and turn it into a thesis.

First and foremost, I would like to thank God because with out Him, none of this would have been possible.

I would also like to thank my thesis advisor Dr. Joon Soo Lim, for meeting with me weekly and providing me with all the tools that I needed in order to complete my thesis. Also, a huge thanks to Dr. Hua Jiang, Mr. Michael Meath, and Dr. Regina Luttrell for serving on my thesis committee and for all of their valuable feedback. I would also like to thank Dr. Christal Johnson for leading the thesis preparation class and ensuring that I was off to a great start in writing my thesis.

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CHAPTER ONE. INTRODUCTION

In the past year, large corporations have made communication errors that can potentially damage their corporate reputation and cause consumers to question their dedication to being a global citizen. In 2017, Pepsi was called into question due to a politically insensitive advertisement with Kendall Jenner (Schultz & Diaz, 2017). In this commercial, Kendall Jenner joined a protest and ended the conflict that was causing the protest by handing a police officer a can of Pepsi. The beverage brand displayed this image in means to replicate a viral image from 2016 of a young women standing face-to-face with a line of police officers during a Black Lives Matter protest in Baton Rouge, Louisiana (Smith, 2017). Although this commercial was supposed to show that Pepsi stands in unity with movements such as Black Lives Matters, the way it was communicated was not well received by its consumers. Many consumers believed that Pepsi was exploiting a social cause; this led to consumer outrage on social media platforms. Pepsi most likely thought it was using the commercial to be a global and socially responsible citizen.

Recently in 2018, H&M faced similar backlash as Pepsi for a racially deaf image posted on its website. The clothing company posted a photo of a black child wearing a sweatshirt that read "Coolest Monkey in the Jungle" (West, 2018). Consumers were more outraged that the child's white counterpart was pictured wearing a hoodie that read, "Survival Expert- Official Jungle Tour Guide." (Bever, 2018). This incident caused consumers to question if H&M had a genuine care for its consumers of color. These miscommunications of corporate social responsibility (CSR) can have negative implications on consumers' attitudes and perceptions of the brands.

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Although Pepsi and H&M have shown poor lapses in judgment, many organizations stepped up when it came to proving that they could be global citizens. For example, Nike launched a campaign titled "EQUALITY" in 2017 that promotes equality on a global scale. Nike is using this campaign to promote the value of sports in underrepresented communities through donations and mentor groups (Nike, 2018). Nike also furthers this campaign by producing apparel that pushes its movement of promoting racial, gender and religious equality.

Corporations and brands have a growing obligation to be socially responsible in their communication efforts based on a demand for companies to make ethical decisions and be a global citizen. Because of this, brands have integrated corporate social responsibility into their business models and communication efforts. According to Holmes and Watts (2000), corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a business or organization working ethically in order to satisfy their stakeholders, ranging from consumers, communities, and employees. Practicing CSR is important because this can have an impact on consumer behavior and on purchase decisions. Corporations have a clear understanding that consumers are more responsive to CSR-themed messages similar to the example set by Nike. It is now communicators' job to accurately relay this message to the consumer. In order to accomplish this task, it is important that corporations have an understanding of what their audience is looking for in the corporation's CSR message. Clarity in the message will help communicators create effective and beneficial campaigns for their desired audience.

Past studies regarding Generation Y, commonly known as the "millennial" generation shows that the millennial generation deeply values companies practicing corporate social responsibility. The millennial generation includes consumers who were born between the years of 1981 and 1994 (Ariker & Toksoy, 2017). Studies about this generation show that more than

half of its members feel they are responsible for making a difference in the world (Cone Communications, 2015). Communicators used this information about millennials in order to shape their communication efforts in the most effective way toward the millennial generation.

However, academic research is limited when discussing if members of Generation Z, also commonly referred to as "Gen Z," "iGen," or "Neo-millennials," share the same consumer behaviors as their preceding generation when it comes to their commitment to CSR in companies' communication efforts. Gen Z includes consumers that were born in the years of 1995 to 2010 (Ariker & Toksoy, 2017). A 2016 study titled "Gen Z Goes To College" shows that this generation describes their selves as having qualities such as loyalty, open-mindedness, thoughtful and responsible (Baer, 2016). Other characteristics prescribed to this generation include being digitally connected, influenced by their parents and peers, social-change minded, and socially liberated. Based on these characteristics, it is important to identify the influence of CSR communication on Gen Z because this demographic is not only the second largest generation alive but they are also projected to have the highest buying power in the next coming years (Fromm, 2018). The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of CSR communication on Gen Z's consumer habits and relationship with brands through the use of the stakeholder theory, relationship management theory and corporate reputation theory. The variables from these theories that this thesis will measure include progressive values, diversity, pro-social behaviors, attitude toward a brand, perceived credibility, ulterior motives, commitment, perceived trust, word of mouth intentions, and switch and purchase intentions. This study will also examine how the influence of CSR communication efforts varies within Gen Z depending on gender, race and political ideologies.

First, this thesis will present a literature review that discusses corporate social responsibility, the stakeholder theory, relationship management theory, ethical consumerism and corporate reputation theory. The literature review will then continue by discussing Gen Z and identifying their key characteristics. Lastly, the literature review will discuss a past study done regarding Gen Z, CSR and purchase intentions. The next chapter of this thesis will discuss the methodology used to assess Gen Z's attitudes and perceptions of CSR communication done by brands and corporations. The "Results" chapter will analyze then discuss data that was yielded from the study. Lastly, the conclusion will tie all the findings together, discuss the implications of the study and discuss proposed future studies.

CHAPTER TWO. LITERATURE REVIEW

Corporate Social Responsibility

The concept of corporate social responsibility has been around for over 50 years. According to Crane and Matten (2007), in 1952 Bowen earliest defined the term corporate social responsibility in writing that it "refers to the obligations of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society" (Crane & Matten, 2007, p. 3). The definition of CSR continues to evolve as societal issues change and stakeholder expectations develop. Most consumers have a low awareness of what CSR is, so it is necessary that brands effectively communicate it's CSR efforts and goals in order to better reach their consumers (Oberseder, Schlegelmilch, & Gruber, 2011).

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) was traditionally not seen as the work of a public relations practitioner based on early studies because both CSR and public relations were both seen as separate entities that corporations use as tools within their organizations (Tjiptonon & Yudarwarti, 2017). However, according to Yudarwarti and Tjiptonon (2017) trends have shifted that have placed public relations in the center of helping an organization communicate its social justice efforts through campaigns. This may be due to the definition of public relations given by the Public Relations Society of America's (PRSA) website that states, "public relations is about influencing, engaging and building a relationship with key stakeholders across a myriad of platforms in order to shape and frame the public perception of an organization." PRSA also describes public relations as a management function that aids with tasks such as managing the reputation of a company, interpreting public opinion and creating content that engages consumers (Public Relations Society of America, 2018). Based on this definition, in order for public relations to successfully fulfill its role as a management function, it is important that

public relations practitioners have a hands-on role in communicating CSR goals to consumers.

Due to the increased use of CSR as a public relations tool, it has been defined in a variety of

ways in scholarly literature discussing CSR in public relations. These definitions are identified in

Table 1.

Table 1. Definitions of CSR within Public Relations

Author (Year)	Definition
Carroll (1991)	"An inclusive and global concept to embrace corporate social responsibility, responsiveness, and the entire spectrum of socially beneficial activities of businesses." p. 40
Ben, Todd, & Pendleton (2010)	"Actions on the part of the firm that signal their awareness to advance the goals of identifiable stakeholder groups, such as employees, suppliers, the local community, non-governmental organizations or broader social objectives (e.g. enhancing diversity or environmental performance)" p. 1
David, Kline, & Dai (2005)	"A citizenship function with moral, ethical, and social obligations that provide the scaffolding for mutually beneficial exchanges between an organization and its publics" p. 293
Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen (2010) Adapted from Kotler & Lee (2005)	"a commitment to improve [societal] well-being through discretionary business practices and contributions of corporate resources" p. 1
Akask, Ferguson, & Duman (2012)	"CSR implies that companies have a moral obligation to the society in which they operate to behave ethically, beyond the limits of legal requirements and beyond their obligation to traditional stakeholders, such as employees, consumers, vendors and the local community." p. 79

The definitions for CSR in public relations' articles all have commonalities by describing that its

function is to strengthen the relationship between a consumer and an organization, corporation or

brand through the communication of an organization's commitment to a social cause.

According to Carroll (1991), CSR can be categorized in a pyramid that includes economic, philanthropic, legal and ethical responsibilities. These components provide an outline on what should be included in an organizations CSR layout. The ethical and philanthropic component based relates to how CSR is used within a public relation practitioners role. Based on the ethical component it is important that organizations are global citizens and to keep up with societal trends regarding morality and ethics. The philanthropic component focuses on promoting a good quality of life within an organization's surrounding community and providing opportunities for members of the organization to get involved with the community (Carroll, 1991). More details regarding each component in the pyramid for CSR can be seen in Figure 1. Ultimately, CSR is important in the practice of public relations because as it has an influence on consumers' perception and reputation of a brand and their purchase decisions.
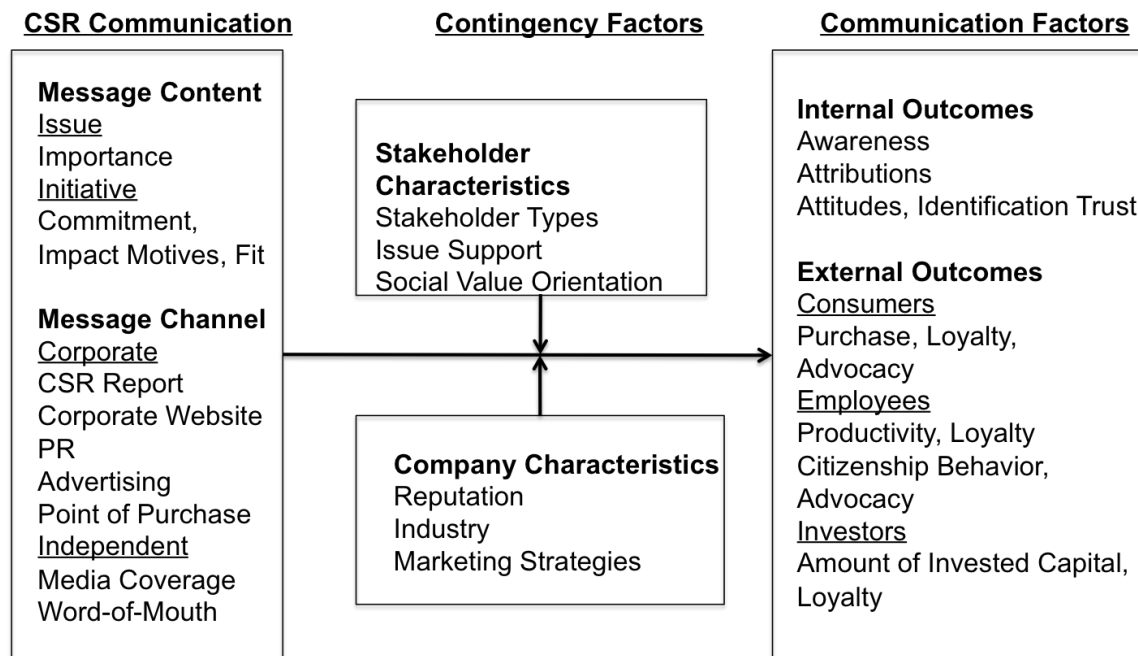
Figure 1. Carroll's CSR Pyramid
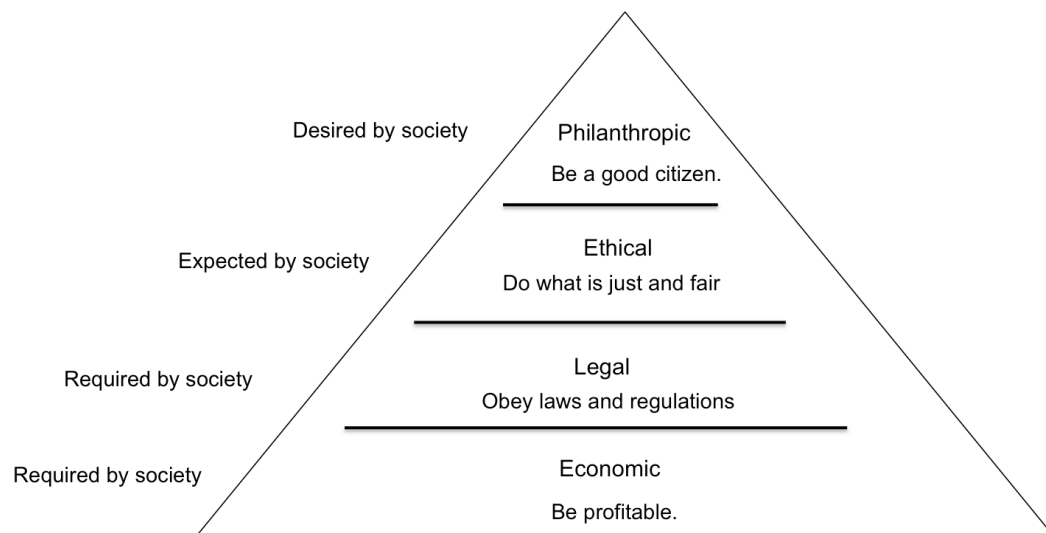
Source: Carroll, A. B. (1991). The pyramid of corporate social responsibility: Toward the moral management of organizational stakeholders. *Business Horizons, 34*, 39-48.

How an organization communicates its CSR involvement is crucial for organization to maximize its effectiveness. According to Du, Bhattacharya, and Sen (2010), CSR communication can be split in to three parts: the communication, contingency factors and communications, as shown in Figure 2. The communication aspect can be split into two parts: message content, message channel. Message content can include if the messaging fits and is a issue of importance. Message channels can include word-of-mouth and media coverage. Contingency factors include the stakeholders and company characteristics. The stakeholder's values should be aligned with the messaging. Consumers can lose credibility in the brand if the CSR communication is a bad fit for the brand (Becker-Olsen, Cudmore, & Hill, 2006). The higher the level of credibility is dictates how well received the message will be to the consumers (Herbig, & Milewicz, 1995). Lastly, the communication factors result in internal outcomes such as trust and internal attitudes like purchase behaviors (Du, & et al, 2010; Sen, & Bhattacharya, 2001).

Figure 2. Framework of CSR Communication

| CSR Communication	Contingency Factors	Communication Factors
Message Content Issue Importance Initiative Commitment, Impact Motives, Fit **Message Channel** Corporate CSR Report Corporate Website PR Advertising Point of Purchase Independent Media Coverage Word-of-Mouth	**Stakeholder Characteristics** Stakeholder Types Issue Support Social Value Orientation **Company Characteristics** Reputation Industry Marketing Strategies	**Internal Outcomes** Awareness Attributions Attitudes, Identification Trust **External Outcomes** Consumers Purchase, Loyalty, Advocacy Employees Productivity, Loyalty Citizenship Behavior, Advocacy Investors Amount of Invested Capital, Loyalty

Source: Du, S., Bhattacharya, C. B., & Sen, S. (2010). Maximizing business returns to corporate social responsibility (CSR): The role of CSR communication. *International Journal of Management Reviews, 12*, 8-19.

Stakeholder Theory

The public relations use of CSR is grounded in the stakeholder theory. This theory is a management-based principle that describes that the better care and attention that an organization gives its stakeholders, the more the organization strives and retains the stakeholder. R. Edward Freeman is credited with creating the basics of this theory in his book, "Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach" that was published in 1984 (Kessler, 2013). A stakeholder is a person who has an interest or ties to an organization. Figure 3 shows the various stakeholders that an organization serves. According to Lim and Greenwood (2017), CSR communication has developed from being one-way communication to two-way communications. This development

gives organizations and brands an opportunity to increase stakeholder engagement by addressing

consumer concerns and current issues.

Figure 3. Organizational Stakeholders
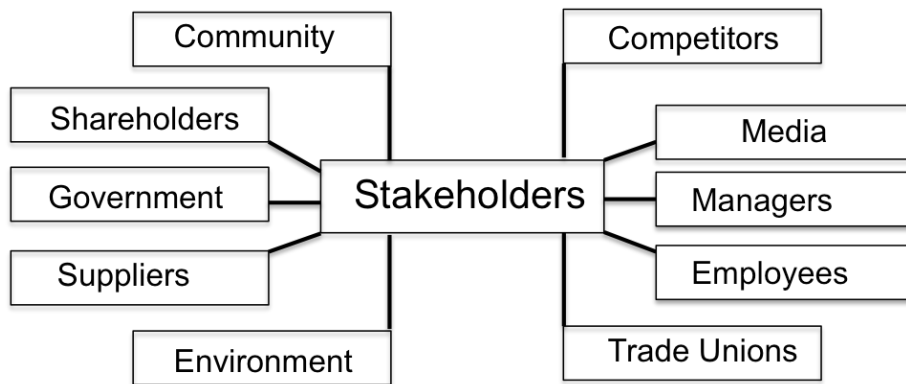
According to Kessler (2013), organizations have both primary and secondary

stakeholders. Primary stakeholders have a direct influence on the organization based on the use

of their products or services. It is integral that this group is taken care of as they help an

organization reach and maintain success. Primary stakeholders can include consumers,

employees, suppliers, financiers, and communities. Secondary stakeholders are different from

primary stakeholders because although they do not directly interact with the organization in most

cases, they still can be integral to an organization's rise or fall. Secondary stakeholders include

competitors, trade associations, trade unions, activist groups and the government.

The stakeholder theory has had a strong effect on the public relations industry (Maier,

2015). Public relations and the stakeholder theory unite based on the principle that the goal of the

stakeholder theory is to help organizational leaders better manage the relationships of an

organization. In order to best manage these relationships, it is important to have a clear

understanding of who the stakeholders are and what is the best way to reach that particular.

Failure to understand how to effectively communicate to stakeholders can lead to having a poor relationship between the organization and stakeholder.

According to Du, Bhattacharya and Sen (2010), CSR communication has the ability to strengthen stakeholder-brand relationships, especially when the brand is not being held in a positive view. CSR communication currently struggles with awareness from stakeholders and authenticity (Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen, 2010). CSR can either be seen as intrinsic or extrinsic. If stakeholders believe that brand is working intrinsically then that means they feel that brand has a genuine care about the issue it is addressing. Whereas if the stakeholders view it to be extrinsically motivated, then it is less likely the consumer will have positive attitudes toward the brand. When stakeholders have positive attitudes toward the brand their word-of-mouth intentions increase and there willingness to pay premium price. The power of word-of-mouth intentions have greatly benefitted from the popularity of social media (Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen, 2010).

Relationship Management Theory

The relationship management theory was developed through academic discussions regarding organization-public relationships or OPR (Bortree & Waters, 2012). According to Ledingham (2009), the relationship management theory refers to the belief that managing the relationship between the public and organization based on commonalities such as interests and goals will help continue and maintain a mutually beneficial relationship. This theory is central to public relation's communication, as it is the job of the practitioner to help establish, build and maintain relationships with the public.

An organization-public relationship can have a range of relationship dynamics that can either benefit an organization and a consumer or harm either the organization or the consumer.

According to Hung (2005), there are six types of organization-public relationships, as exemplified in Table 2.

Table 2. Types of Organization-Public Relationships

Relationship	Description
Covenantal relationships	Both the organization and the public have a mutually beneficial relationship where there are open exchange and reciprocity.
Communal relationships	Benefits and services are given to either the organization or the public without an expectation of receiving anything in return.
Exchange relationships	The organization and public benefit from one another with an expectation of benefits either in the past or for the future.
Contractual relationships	The organization and the public agree on the terms of the relationship. At times, this relationship may not be mutually beneficial.
Manipulative relationships	This relationship can sometimes benefit both the organization and public. This is when the organization communicates messages that the public wants to hear in order to serve its own best interest.
Exploitive relationships	This occurs when either the organization or the public take advantage of the other by not fulfilling their obligations.

According to Hung (2005), these relationships are used within large companies and brands. It is important for public relation practitioners to understand what type of relationship they want to maintain with their various publics in order to effectively plan their communication efforts. The "win-win zone" for the types of the relationships are conventional, communal and exchange relationships (Hung, 2005). It is necessary for brands to understand what the consumer wants in CSR communication goals in order to maintain one of the win-win relationship types. Maintaining and fostering a positive organizational-public relationship will result in higher public satisfaction and loyalty (Ledingham, 2003). Further research is needed to describe the effects of other relationships, such as the manipulative relationship on OPR.

There are four key elements that result from good OPRs (Hon & Gruing, 1999). These elements include control mutuality, trust, satisfaction, and commitment. The elements are defined in Figure 5. Control mutuality is the degree to which parties agree who has the power to influence each other and set relationship goals and behavioral tone. (Hon & Gruing, 1999; Strattford & Canary, 1991). This allows a brand to show consumers that they value their opinions and share similar goals (Sisson, 2017).

Trust is the degree of confidence and willingness to open up to either the consumer or brand (Hon & Gruing, 1999). According to Hon and Gruing (1999), trust has three dimensions: integrity, dependability and competence. Integrity is if the consumer believes that the brand is just and fair. Dependability relates to a brand doing what they say they will do. Lastly, competence is that a brand has the ability to keep its promises.

Satisfaction is the positive feelings felt toward a brand based on continuous Positive behaviors from a brand have the ability increase the satisfaction the consumer has for the organization (Strattford & Canary, 1991).

Commitment is the level of time and energy that either the brand or consumer feels is worth spending on one another. It has a strong correlation to the satisfaction of the relationship (Strattford & Canary, 1991). According to Hon and Gruing (1999), there are two dimensions of commitment: continuance and affective. Continuance refers to the commitment actions where as affective refers to the emotional commitment.

Commitment and trust affect customer identification. Consumer identification describes how consumers identify with the brand. According to Bhattacharya and Sen (2003), a key benefit of company-consumer identification is that it allows consumers to actively engage with the company's CSR involvement- and in some cases retain consumers even during negative times.

This is critical to a consumer forming a meaningful and committed relationship to a brand.

According to Keh and Xie (2009), trust leads to customer identification and that in turn leads to

commitment. This ultimately builds corporate reputation (Keh & Xie, 2009).

Corporate Reputation Theory

Corporate reputation refers to how stakeholders perceive the organization based on its

past and future actions (Caruana, 1997). Harris Interactive and Reputation Institute created six

dimensions of corporate reputation as shown in Figure 4 (Morsing, Schultz, & Nielsen, 2008).

**Figure 4. Six Dimensions of Corporate Reputation**

Source: Morsing, M., Schultz, M., & Nielsen, K. U. (2008). The 'Catch 22'of communicating CSR:

Findings from a Danish study. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, *14*(2), 97-111.

These dimensions include vision and leadership, financial performance, workplace

environment, emotional appeal, products and services and social responsibility. Social

responsibility refers to brand's level of support for causes and being socially and

environmentally responsible within their respective communities. According to Morsing,

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Schultz, and Nielsen (2008), social responsibility plays the largest role in influencing emotional appeal, which ultimately affects an organization's corporate reputation. According to Barnett, Jermier, and Lafferty (2006), corporate reputation is built based off of a corporate identity and corporate image. The result of corporate reputation is corporate reputation capital. Figure 5 shows the road to corporate reputation.

Figure 5. Corporate Reputation Flowchart
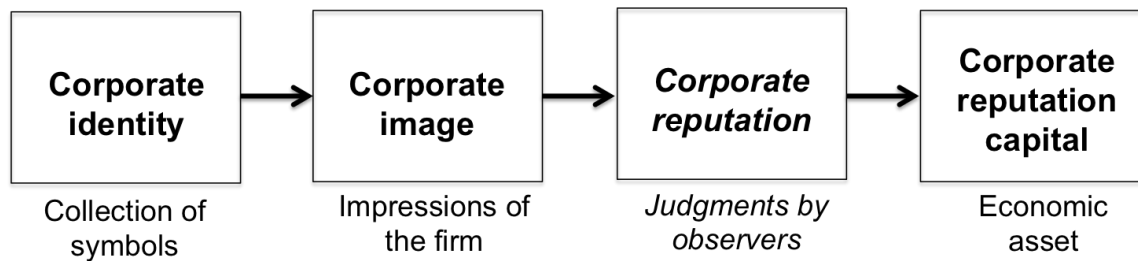
Source: Barnett, M. L., Jermier, J. M., & Lafferty, B. A. (2006). Corporate reputation: The definitional landscape. *Corporate reputation review*, *9*(1), 26-38.

According to Puncheva (2007), corporate reputation is a huge determinate of the consumer's decision-making process. This can be seen in Figure 5. A brand or organization's corporate reputation can be built based on their social legitimacy (Puncheva, 2007). Social legitimacy refers to how much of an attempt is made for the organization to be a global citizen and make ethical decisions. This strengthens relationships with stakeholders and increases loyalty, trust, and respect. Hence, an organization practicing corporate social responsibility overall increases its corporate reputation. Figure 6 shows the corporate reputation chain. An organization's reputation is built on its ability to meet a stakeholder's expectation; failure to meet the expectation can lead to corporate failure (Coombs, 2007; Chun et al, 2005).

Corporations with negative reputations usually gravitate toward CSR involvement in order to rebuild a positive reputation. This can successfully be seen in the two oil companies BP and Shell (Yoon, Gürhan-Canli, & Schwarz, 2006). According to Yoon, Gürhan-Canli, & Schwarz (2006), CSR can benefit an organization if the consumer perceives their actions as sincere but it will backfire if the consumer has reasonable doubt that actions are for the brand's own self interest.

Figure 6: Corporate Reputation Chain
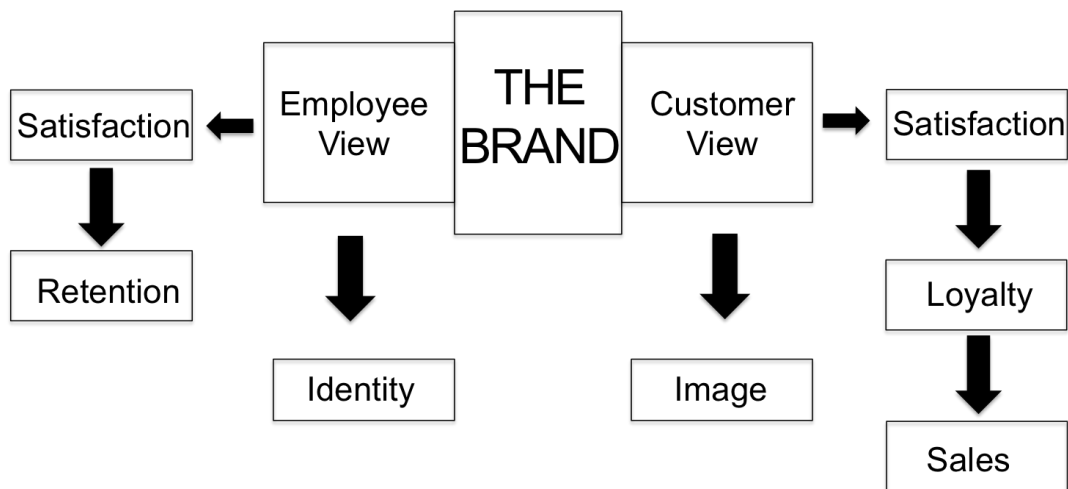
Source: Chun, R., Da Silva, R., Davies, G., & Roper, S. (2005). *Corporate reputation and competitiveness*. Routledge.

According to Lim and Greenwood (2017), CSR communication is a valuable asset to organizations because it helps improve their reputations. When organizations have a positive reputation among their stakeholders it promotes an organizations business goals. The Reputation Institute releases the Global RepTrak, an annual report of 100 companies that have top reputations by consumers. Organizations that appeared on the 2017 list include The Hershey

Company, Ferrero, Barilla Group, the Walt Disney Company, and Canon. The American Family

Assurance Company (Aflac) provides a case study that examines the effect of corporate

reputation based on CSR communications. In 2017, Aflac won a Silver Anvil for its dedication

to CSR in order to improve its reputation on the Global RepTrak. Aflac created a CSR campaign

that promoted ethical leadership, diversity, philanthropy and environmental sustainability. The

insurance company carried out this campaign by making promotional material for social media,

creating a CSR survey and other promotional events. Due to this campaign, Aflac's corporate

reputation had 3.4-point improvement on the RepTrak. Aflac showed a clear correlation between

an organization's corporate reputation and the communication of CSR activities and initiatives.
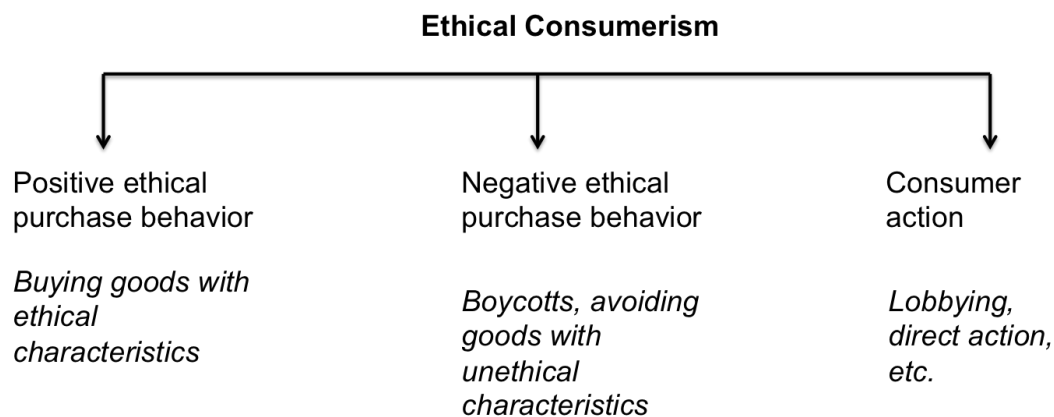
Ethical Consumerism
CSR has foundations in being ethical based on the second tier of Carroll's CSR pyramid.

The pyramid displays the consumer's expectation that a brand is obligated to be both just and

fair. This emphasis on ethics in a corporation has been seen to have a correlation to a consumer's

purchase and switching intentions (Oberseder, Schlegelmilch, & Gruber, 2011). According to

Lang and Hines (1993), there have been three waves of consumerism. The first wave focuses on

the monetary value, consumer choice, and labeling of the product. The second wave of

consumerism focused on product safety and corporate liability. The third wave of consumerism

introduces ethical consumers.

Ethical consumerism can be described as " the conscious and deliberate choice to make

certain consumption choices due to personal and moral beliefs" (Crane & Matten, 2004; Auger &

Devinney, 2007, pg. 362). The main focuses of ethical consumerism include animal welfare, the

environment, and human rights/ fair trade. There are three types of ethical consumerism

including positive ethical, negative ethical and consumer action. This is shown in Figure 7

(Tallontire, Rentsendorj & Blowfield, 2001). Positive ethical behavior refers to purchasing

products from corporations that are socially responsible. Negative ethical purchase behavior

refers to consumers who engage in activities such as boycotting products that are not produced

ethically. The last type of ethical consumerism is consumer action. These consumers engage in

activities such as lobbying in order to get brands to reform unethical production of goods and

services.

Figure 7. Types of Ethical Consumerism

Ethical Consumerism

Positive ethical purchase behavior	Negative ethical purchase behavior	Consumer action
Buying goods with ethical characteristics	*Boycotts, avoiding goods with unethical characteristics*	*Lobbying, direct action, etc.*

Source: Tallontire, A., Rentsendorj, E., & Blowfield, M. (2001). Ethical consumers and ethical trade: a

review of current literature (NRI Policy Series 12).

Studies reveal that many consumers have a keen interest in the ethics of a corporation.

This is based on heightened news coverage of the unethical practices of corporations, the

production of high-quality and ethical products by competing brands and the rise advocacy

groups such as the Human Rights Campaign, the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals,

and the Stop the War Coalition (Harrison, 2003; Spar and La Mure, 2003; Strong, 1996). Ethical

consumerism is centered on sustainability philosophies including value the environment, extend

time horizons, and equity as shown in Table 3 (Strong, 1996; Pearce, Markandya & Barbier, 2013).

Table 3. Sustainability Philosophies

Value the environment	"to increase the value attached to the natural, cultural and built environment, now and for the future." p. 2
Extend time horizons	"to extend concern, not only to short- and medium-term horizons, but to the long-term future, to be inherited by future generations." p. 2
Equity	"to place emphasis on proving for the needs of the least advantaged in society and also fair treatment of future generations." p. 2

Source: Pearce, D., Markandya, A., & Barbier, E. (2013). *Blueprint 1: for a green economy*. Routledge.

Ethical consumerism has evolved since the 1990s. Consumers no longer only care about the price and quality but they care about the environment, and issues of society (Strong, 1996). This could be seen in recent history with the high school shooting that took place in Parkland, Florida in February 2018. Members of Gen Z took a political stand and let it be known that they will not support a business that does not share their same social concerns. Because of this stance, many large corporations such as Wal-Mart and airline companies began revisiting their stances on gun control and their support of the National Rifle Association (Rosenberg, 2018). Wal-Mart and Dick's Sporting Goods raised the minimum age necessary to buy an assault rifle. Organizations like Delta canceled discounts that it previously offered to NRA members.

Generation Z
Generation Z (Gen Z) is known as the generation of the digital age. Gen Z has received many different nicknames to date such as "i-generation," 'GenZers" and digital natives (Howe & Strauss, 1991; Tulgan, 2013). There has been conflicting information as to what year this

generation begins and ends. According to Turner (2015), Gen Z begins in 1993 and ends in 2005. Another study identifies Gen Z as starting from 1995 to 2010 (Ariker & Toksoy, 2017). This generation has even been defined as starting at 1990 and ending in 2000 (Addor, 2000). There is a general consensus that the generation begins in the mid-1990s and ending in the 2000's. They are currently the largest generation in America making up about 25 percent of the country (Howe & Strauss, 1991). Gen Z currently has between $29 - $143 billion in spending power and control 93% of their families' purchase decisions (Fromm, 2018).

Generations are defined by shared proximities to cultural events and developments such as the terrorist attacks of 9/11 or the development of the Internet (Hunter, 2016). Gen Z is the only generation that has grown up with the Internet their entire lives. Gen Z is known to be the most diverse generation in America by ethnicity and sexuality; because of this, they are the most open-minded generation (Grace & Seemiller, 2016). According to Turner (2015), this generation is also globally aware of political and social issues in the nation due to growing up during the time period of two wars, the Iraq War and the War in Afghanistan. This may have an impact on how Gen Z views social responsibility. However, a study has identified that Gen Z is less civically engaged than other generations (Addor, 2011). Gen Z has shown trends of innovation due to the technological advancements that have been made throughout their adolescence such as the creation of the smartphone and tablets. Additionally, the generation shows a preference for convenience in purchase decisions due to growing up during a time of a failing economy (Wood, 2013). Growing up during this time period also has been credited as to why this generation shows characteristics of being entrepreneurial and independent (Howe & Strauss, 1991).

Gen Z and Millennials

The generation that precedes Gen Z is Generation Y, or "Millenials." The millennial generation includes consumers who were born between the years of 1981 and 1994 (Ariker & Toksoy, 2017). Millennials and Gen Z share many similar characteristics but they do differentiate in many ways. Past research showed that only 4 percent of Millennials are "genuinely civically and politically engaged." (Twenge, Campbell, & Freeman, 2012, p. 1058). This is why they are commonly referred to as the "Me Generation." (Howe & Strauss, 1991). Millennials are seen to be more cynical, critical and have a need for instant gratification (Bergh, Behrer, & Maeseneire, 2016).

Characteristics assigned to Millennials include being special, sheltered, confident, team-oriented, pressured and achieving (DeBard, 2004). The millennial generation is viewed as special based on the emphasis from their parents and teachers that they are worthy. According to DeBard (2004), this is seen with things such as receiving a trophy for participation. This also contributes to the reason that the generation shows high levels of confidence but also high levels of pressure to succeed. Millennials also grew up in a time after the Columbine High School shooting in 1999. This caused their parents to be more over-protective and encouraging for their children to follow rules (DeBar, 2014).

According to Twenge (2017), the largest difference between Millennials and Gen Z is that Millennials have more of a focus on their selves instead of adhering to social rules. With the creation of the Internet in 1995, Gen Z members have never experienced a time where the internet did not exist (Twenge, 2017). This makes Gen Z true digital natives in comparison to

Millennials who adapted to the development of the Internet. This can be why studies show that

Gen Z spends significantly more time online than Millennials (Twenge, 2017).

Previous Research

Cone Communications created an industry report in 2016 in order to compare Gen Z's

influence of CSR compared to millennials and Gen X. Their research yielded that 92% of Gen Z

care about social and environmental issues but they are unsatisfied with where things are

currently are. The report showed that Gen Z believes that brands have the power to drive social

change and should address current social and environmental issues. Gen Z wants to purchase

products and services that are socially responsible however it is up to companies to communicate

their CSR activities in a unique and creative way.

Currently, there is limited academic research done regarding Generation Z within

communication fields. However, few studies have been done about Generation Z in the fields of

education, technology, and agriculture. Ariker and Toksoy (2017) conducted a survey to discover

the effect of CSR projects on Gen Z's purchase intentions from college students in Turkey. This

study used the generational theory as a comparative way to explain how Gen Z interacts with

CSR based off of past generational trends. This study focused on the intention to purchase a

product based on CSR projects within a corporation. Their results found that Gen Z students in

college prefer quality and price of a product more than an organization's CSR efforts (Ariker &

Toksoy, 2017). The study failed to evaluate CSR activities from a communications perspective.

It also did not examine Gen Z's sentiment toward the brand due to CSR messages or identify

what social causes resonate with Gen Z in CSR communication. The study also did not measure

the effect of CSR on brand reputation and relationship. Therefore the purpose of this study is to

discover how Gen Z perceives CSR communication done by brands and evaluate their attitudes toward this messaging.

Summary of Literature Review

A substantial amount of research has been done regarding CSR and its importance to organizations as it affects the reputation of their company and purchase decisions from consumers. Using the stakeholder theory it is important that brands and organization effectively serve their stakeholders in order to keep them satisfied and with the organization or brand. The relationship management theory helps layout how brands and organizations can maintain a mutually beneficial relationship by serving both the consumer and brands interest. The corporate reputation theory helps describe the importance of having a positive image of an organization or brand in order to build brand loyalty. These theories work together to prove that stakeholders care about the ethics of an organization and that ultimately affects the brand's reputation and relationship with the consumer. Studies have been done regarding generational preferences when it comes to how a company practices CSR. However, these generations are limited to the baby boomers, Generation X, and millennials. Very few studies have focused on the public relations communication of CSR activities and their relationship to Generation Z. Therefore; this study will examine Gen Z and CSR communication from a public relations standpoint by examining the following questions and hypotheses:

Research Questions

RQ1: Will there be any differences for social values such as diversity and progressive values by gender or race?

RQ2: Will there be any differences for pro-social behaviors by gender or race?

RQ3: Will Gen Z's attitudes toward the brand that is involved in CSR change by gender or race?

R4: Will there be any perceptual differences for credibility and ulterior motives of the brand that is involved in CSR by gender or race?

RQ5: Will relational outcomes in terms of trust and commitment for a brand that is involved in CSR differ by gender or race?

RQ6: Will consumer behaviors in terms of purchase intentions and words of mouth differ by gender or race?

Hypotheses
H1. Progressive values will have a positive effect on purchase intentions among participants of Generation Z, controlling for the demographic variables.

H2. Diversity values will have a positive effect on purchase intentions among participants of Generation Z, controlling for the demographic variables.

H3. Pro-social behaviors will have a positive effect on purchase intentions among participants of Generation Z, controlling for the demographic variables.

H4. Trust will have a positive effect on purchase intentions among participants of Generation Z, controlling for the demographic variables.

H5. Commitment will have a positive effect on purchase intentions among participants of Generation Z, controlling for the demographic variables.

H6. Attitudes toward a brand will have a positive effect on purchase intentions among participants of Generation Z, controlling for the demographic variables.

H7. Perceived credibility will have a positive effect on purchase intentions among participants of Generation Z, controlling for the demographic variables.

H8. Ulterior motives will have a negative effect on purchase intentions among participants of Generation Z, controlling for the demographic variables.

H9. Progressive values will have a positive effect on WOM intentions among participants of Generation Z, controlling for the demographic variables.

 H10. Diversity values will have a positive effect on WOM intentions among participants of Generation Z, controlling for the demographic variables.

H11. Pro-social behaviors will have a positive effect on WOM intentions among participants of Generation Z, controlling for the demographic variables.

H12. Trust will have a positive effect on WOM intentions among participants of Generation Z, controlling for the demographic variables.

H13. Commitment will have a positive effect on WOM intentions among participants of Generation Z, controlling for the demographic variables.

H14. Attitudes toward a brand will have a positive effect on WOM intentions among participants of Generation Z, controlling for the demographic variables.

H15. Perceived credibility will have a positive effect on WOM intentions among participants of Generation Z, controlling for the demographic variables.

H16. Ulterior motives will have a negative effect on purchase intentions among participants of Generation Z, controlling for the demographic variables.

These research questions and hypotheses will help identify key information that can help discover some of Gen Z's sentiments and perceptions regarding a brand's involvement in CSR communications. The questions can also provide insight on ways brands can communicate their CSR efforts to Gen Z in order to increase their engagement and loyalty as consumers.

CHAPTER THREE. METHODOLOGY

Research Method

      This study will take a quantitative approach to collecting data by creating and distributing a survey for Gen Z students enrolled that are enrolled at either a university or two-year college in Upstate New York and Los Angeles, California. This will be the most effective way to collect data regarding attitudes and perceptions regarding CSR communications. This is most effective because I will be able to solicit a large number of respondents. Through this data, I will have the ability to discover trends regarding the survey participants perceptions and attitudes regarding CSR communications.

Recruitment Method

      In order to recruit for my survey, I reached out to professors at Syracuse University and community colleges. The criteria for the professors that I chose were based on if they are teaching a class or multiple classes that had Gen Z students. Half of the professors chose to give students extra credit for taking the 15-minute survey. Other professors decided to inform students about the survey either via email or during class in an announcement. I also made announcements in person in three classrooms at Syracuse University.

Data Collection Site

      The online survey for this study will be created and accessible on the Qualtrics platform offered by Syracuse University. Participants can access the online survey on a mobile device, desktop or laptop.

Sample

      The sample of respondents will come from undergraduate students. A majority of the students taking the survey are in communications-related majors. I used both a convenience and purposive sample. Students at Syracuse University's S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications were chosen predominantly because they are easily accessible. However, of

this sample, I purposely selected students who would fall under the Generation Z age demographic. This demographic mostly consists of undergraduate college students as they are between the ages of 18 and 21.

Instrument

A 22-question survey will be used to measure the survey participants' attitudes and perceptions regarding a brand's use of CSR communications.

The survey's questions are formed based on the principles that can be found in the stakeholder theory, relationship management theory and corporate reputation theory.

Measures

The 22-question survey was designed to measure progressive values, diversity, pro-social behaviors, attitude toward a brand, perceived credibility, ulterior motives, commitment, control mutuality, perceived trust, word of mouth intentions, and switch and purchase intentions in order to effectively answer the research questions. The theories and topics discussed in the previous chapter were used to frame the survey questions.

Progressive values and Diversity

In order to measure progressive values, a 5-point semantic scale ('1' = 'Not important at all' and '5' = 'Very important) was used to ask how important current social issues are to them. The social issues listed included racial equality, women's rights, climate change, gun control, LGBTQIA+ rights, animal welfare, abortion, domestic violence, religious tolerance, and immigration.

Diversity values in Gen Z were also measured using a 5-point semantic scale ('1' = 'Very untrue of me' and '5' = 'Very true of me') that was derived from the Wang and Davidson diversity scale (Wang, Davidson, Yakushko, Savoy, Tan, & Bleier, 2003).

Pro-social behavior

Pro-social behaviors were measured with a 5-point Likert scale ('1' = 'Strongly disagree' and '5' = 'Strongly agree.') Survey participants were asked how they interact with social causes through six statements that examined actions such as donating, buying products, signing a petition, and protesting.

Attitudes toward the brand

Attitudes toward brands communicating their CSR activities were measured by four semantic-differential scales ('1' = 'Unfavorable/ Negative/ Not Likeable/ Bad' and '7' = 'Favorable/ Positive/ Likeable/Good') asking survey participants to describe how CSR involvement affected their feelings toward a brand.

Perceived credibility

In order to measure credibility, four semantic-differential scales ('1' = 'Untrustworthy/ Unbelievable/ Unreliable/ Insincere and '7' = 'Trustworthy/ Believable/ Reliable/ Sincere). Participants were asked about how a brand's involvement in CSR affected their perception of the brand.

Ulterior motives

To measure ulterior motives, a 5-point Likert scale ('1' = 'Strongly disagree' and '5' = 'Strongly agree") was used to ask 5 statements that asked survey participants to assess the motives of the brand. The statements asked if the brand has hidden motives, is acting in its own self-interest, acting to benefit itself, does not have altruistic intentions and that it ultimately cares more about profits.

Commitment

In order to measure commitment, a 5-point Likert scale ('1' = 'Strongly disagree' and '5' = 'Strongly agree') was used to ask survey participants to rank three different statements regarding a brand's commitment to them as consumers.

Perceived trust

In order to measure perceived trust, a 5-point Likert scale ('1' = 'Strongly disagree' and '5' = 'Strongly agree') by asking survey participants to rank two statements about whether the consumer feels the brand keeps its promises and that the brand accomplishes what it says it will.

Word-of-mouth intentions

Word-of-mouth intentions were measured with three semantic-differential scales ('1' = 'Unlikely/ Improbable/ Impossible' and '7' = 'Likely/ Probable/ Impossible") by asking how likely the survey participant would share information about a brand's CSR involvement through their social media.

Purchase intentions

Purchase intentions were measured with three semantic-differential scales ('1' = 'Unlikely/ Improbable/ Impossible' and '7' = 'Likely/ Probable/ Impossible"). In order to specifically address purchase intentions, survey participants were asked how likely they would try a product or service that was offered by a socially responsible brand. Participants were then asked how much more they would be willing to pay for a product or service from a socially responsible brand using a multiple choice scale ranging from "None" to "21% and over.)

The remaining questions are used to set the framework for the survey, provide demographical information and help identify characteristics of Gen Z such as there gender, race and political ideologies.

Validity and Reliability

        This survey was pre-tested with members in the Generation Z demographic before it will

be distributed. This helped ensure the validity of the survey. The members a part of the pre-

testing group gave feedback on questions the few questions they were unsure of. This feedback

was used to create a more concise version of the survey. Some of the members helped identify

redundancy in a few of the questions.

        The reliability of the survey was tested with SPSS. All survey questions that reached the

Cronbach's α of .80 and above were used in order to analyze data (See Table 5).

Data Analysis

        Qualtrics will be the primary way that the data will be analyzed through the charts and

graphs that it forms. This information will then be extracted and further analyzed on SPSS to

discover trends and find statistical data.

CHAPTER FOUR. RESULTS

Answering RQ1-RQ6

To answer RQ1 through RQ6, an analysis of survey responses was used. Tables 1 through 3 show some of the results that were yielded.

RQ1: **Will there be any differences for social values such as diversity and progressive values by gender or race?**

Gen Z appears to be mostly neutral with a positive skew regarding their diversity, progressive and pro-social values. The scores can be seen in Table 4. However, the generation has a notably high positive correlation toward two diversity statements, "I am open to different lifestyles and cultures" and "I am aware of how society differently treats racial or ethnic groups other than my own."

Gen Z holds positive views toward progressive values. The most positive correlations for progressive values were found in women's rights (M=4.47), racial equality (M=4.40) and domestic violence (M=4.36). The lowest ranking appeared to be religious tolerance, with a median of 3.98.

Gen Z members' views on progressive values had little variance between races; however, male and females views had substantial differences. Although both groups shared the same top three values, there were key differences within other values. Female's views toward abortion, gun control and animal welfare and rights were skewed more positively than their male counter parts.

RQ2: **Will there be any differences for pro-social behaviors by gender or race?**

Pro-social behaviors were neutral with a positive skew. The highest positive correlations can be found in the three following options, "Sign petition to help causes I care about,"

"Volunteer for a cause I care about," and "Buy a product with a social or environmental benefit."
This shows that the members of Gen Z have positive ethical consumer behaviors opposed to
showing negative ethical consumer behaviors such as boycotting.

Table 4. Diversity, Progressive And Pro-Social Values

	N	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Diversity- How well does each of the following statements reflect you?					
I express my concern about discrimination to people from other racial or ethnic groups.	258	1	5	3.83	1.03
I express my concern about discrimination to people of different sexual orientation than me	258	1	5	3.82	1.01
When I know my friends are treated unfairly because of their racial, ethnic, backgrounds or sexual orientation, I speak up for them.	258	1	5	4.15	.93
I know a lot of information about important social and political events of racial and ethnic groups or sexual orientations other than my own.	258	1	5	3.85	1.00
I am aware of how society differently treats racial or ethnic groups other than my own.	258	1	5	4.24	.88
I seek opportunities to speak with individuals of other racial or ethnic backgrounds or sexual orientation about their experiences.	258	1	5	3.71	1.05

When I interact with people from other racial or ethnic backgrounds, I show my appreciation of their cultural norms.	258	1	5	4.14	.85
I am touched by movies or media portrayals about discrimination issues faced by racial or ethnic groups other than my own.	258	1	5	4.17	.91
I am very open-minded to different life styles and cultures.	258	1	5	4.45	.81
Progressive Values- How important is each of the following social causes to you based on your current values?					
Racial equality	258	1	5	4.40	.80
Women's rights	258	1	5	4.47	.85
Climate change	258	1	5	4.15	.91
Gun control	258	1	5	4.30	.95
LGBTQIA+ rights	258	1	5	4.05	1.04
Animal welfare and rights	258	1	5	4.02	.96
Abortion	258	1	5	4.00	1.08
Domestic violence	258	1	5	4.36	.85
Religious tolerance	258	1	5	3.98	.95
Immigration	258	1	5	4.03	1.00
Pro-social Behaviors- How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements to describe how you interact with social causes?					

Buy a product with a social or environmental benefit.	258	1	5	3.92	.83
Volunteer for a cause I care about.	258	1	5	3.98	.86
Donate to a cause I care about.	258	1	5	3.83	.90
Sign petition to help causes I care about.	258	1	5	4.08	.92
Share social or environmental information with my social networks.	258	1	5	3.67	1.03
Boycott/refuse to buy from a company that is doing harm.	258	1	5	3.62	1.01
Protest to help causes I care about.	258	1	5	3.51	.96
Valid N (listwise)	258				

RQ3: **Will Gen Z's attitudes toward the brand that is involved in CSR change by gender or race?**

Overall, Gen Z holds positive feelings toward brands that are involved in CSR. This shows that if a brand engages in CSR communication, members of Gen Z will have a more favorable, likeable and positive view of the organization. There was no statistical difference when further analyzing race and gender for attitudes held toward a brand.

R4: **Will there be any perceptual differences for credibility and ulterior motives of the brand that is involved in CSR by gender or race?**

There were no significant variances between gender or race perceived credibility and ulterior motives. Of the members of Gen Z surveyed, the results for perceived credibility were primarily neutral with a positive skew. The lowest ranking item had a mean of 5.19 for the level of sincerity that the consumer believed that the organization had in their CSR involvement.

Based on the survey responses, Gen Z is neutral with a slightly negative skew regarding an organization's motive for engaging in CSR activities. The results of this question can be seen in Table 5. The statement, "Appears to have a hidden motive in their involvement with its CSR" received the lowest mean score of 2.95.

Table 5. Ulterior Motives

	N	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Thinking of the most recent case of a brand's involvement in CSR, how would you evaluate the brand?					
Appears to have a hidden motive in their involvement with its CSR	258	1	5	2.95	.97
Is acting in its own self-interest	258	1	5	3.14	1.03
Is ultimately acting to benefit itself	258	1	5	3.22	1.01
Has something other than altruistic intentions in their CSR initiative.	258	1	5	3.19	.93
Ultimately cares about their profits more than CSR activities.	258	1	5	3.18	1.03
Valid N (listwise)	258				

RQ5: Will relational outcomes in terms of trust and commitment for a brand that is involved in CSR differ by gender or race?

There was no significant difference in terms of race or gender for the relational outcomes of trust and commitment. Responses to both variables proved to be consistent regardless of race and gender.

Gen Z had neutral views toward their levels of perceived trust toward brand's who are involved in CSR There was a slight positive skew for the statement the says, "The brand has a tendency to accomplish what it says it will do" and "I believe that the brand takes the opinions of customers into account when making decisions." These positive skews show that Gen Z consumers have a more trusting relationship with brands that communicate their CSR involvement.

RQ6: **Will consumer behaviors in terms of purchase intentions and words of mouth differ by gender or race?**

Consumer behaviors such as purchase and word of moth intentions did not show a significant difference by gender or race. Both genders and races used share similar behaviors towards organizations that were involved in CSR communication. However, survey results showed that it is unlikely they will be sharing CSR information, however there was a slight positive skew that showed it is possible that they would share this information on their social media.

The survey results showed a positive correlation between a brand's CSR involvement and Gen Z's purchase intentions. About 92% of the survey participants are willing to pay more for a product or service that is made by a socially responsible company. From that 92%, about 60% are willing to pay more than 6% more for a product or service produced by a socially responsible company.

Testing H1-H18

To test the proposed hypotheses, a series of hierarchical regressions were performed. The results of the analysis are displayed in Table 6.

Tests of H1-H8: Purchase Intentions as Dependent Variable (Model 1)

In H1-H3, I predicted that progressive values (H1), diversity values (H2), and pro-social behaviors (H3) will have a positive effect on purchase intentions among participants of Generation Z, controlling for the demographic variables. In terms of pro-social behaviors and progressive and diversity values, only two variables including pro-social behaviors ($\beta = .20$, $p < .01$), and diversity ($\beta = .18$, $p < .01$) showed positive relations to purchase intentions in the third model (M_{1c}). The results support H2 and H3; however, H1 was not supported. It needs to be noted that, in the final model (M_{1d}), none of the variables significantly predicted the dependent variable.

The final model (M_{1d}) of the first regression showed that commitment ($\beta = .12$, $p < .05$), attitudes toward the brand ($\beta = .29$, $p < .001$) and perceived credibility ($\beta = .19$, $p < .05$) were positively associated with purchase intentions. Trust did not significantly predict the variable in the models. These results support H5, H6, and H7; however, H4 was not supported.

In H8, it was predicted that ulterior motives in CSR would have a negative effect on purchase intentions among participants of Generation Z, controlling for the demographic variables. In the third block (M_{1c}), ulterior motives had a negative corelation with purchase intentions ($\beta = -.30$, $p < .001$) and the significant result remained in the final model ($\beta = -.30$, $p < .05$). Therefore, H8 was also supported.

None of demographical variables in block 1 made significant effects on purchase intentions. However, in the final block M_{1d}, the liberal values showed a negative correlations with purchase intentions.

The final model (M_{1d}) accounted for 47% of the total variance ($p < .001$), which significantly contributed to predicting purchase intentions as a dependent variable.

Tests of H9-H16: Word-of-Mouth Intentions as Dependent Variable (Model 2)

In H9-H11, I entered the generational values into the model that predicted the dependent variable of WOM intentions.

In terms of pro-social behaviors and progressive and diversity values, only one variable, pro-social behaviors (β = .34, p< .001), showed positive relations to WOM intentions in the model (M_{2d}) that controlled for demographic variables. Pro-social behaviors also showed positive relations to WOM intentions in the final model M_{2d} (β = .26, p< .01). Progressive and diversity values did not significantly predict the variable in the models. These results support only H11, and H9 and H10 were not supported.

In H12-H15, it was predicted that trust (H12), commitment (H13), attitudes toward a brand (H14), and perceived credibility of a brand (H15) would have a positive effect on WOM intentions among participants of Generation Z, controlling for the demographic variables. The second model (M_{2d}) showed that only perceived credibility (β = .25, p < .05) was positively associated with WOM intentions. The other variables including trust, commitment, and attitudes toward the brand did not significantly predict the dependent variable in the models. These results support only H15: H12 though H14 were not supported.

Ulterior motives had a negative association with WOM intentions in M_{2c} (β = -.16, p< .05), controlling for demographic variables (block 1) and consumer values in block 2. Thus, H16 was supported. It needs to be noted that the variable did not reveal a significant results in the final model.

Three demographical variables, age (β = .13, p< .05), race (β = .16, p< .05), and liberal views (β = -1.5, p< .05) were a significant predictor for WOM intentions. In M_{2a} only race (β

= .13, $p < .05$) was a significant predictor. In M_{2b}, race and liberal views were correlated with WOM intentions.

The final model (M_{2d}) accounted for about 23% of total variance, which significantly contributed to predicting WOM intentions as a dependent variable.

Table 6. **Results of hierarchical regression analysis on purchase intentions and WOM intentions**

	Model 1: Purchase Intentions				Model 2: Word-of-Mouth (WOM) Intentions			
	M_{1a}	M_{1b}	M_{1c}	M_{1d}	M_{2a}	M_{2b}	M_{2c}	M_{2d}
Block 1: Demographics								
Age	.02	.02	.04	.03	.13*	.12	.13*	.13*
Gender [d]	.11	.05	.02	-.01	.08	.04	.03	.02
Race [d]	-.08	-.06	-.03	-.00	.09	.12*	.14*	.16*
Liberal	-.03	-.21**	-.21**	-.13**	-.12	-.20**	-.20**	-.15*
Religious	.08	.06	.08	.08	-.06	-.07	-.06	-.05
Block 2: Consumer Values								
Pro-social Behavior		.21**	.20**	.07		.34***	.33***	.26**
Progressive Values		.15	.15	.12		-.07	-.07	-.09
Diversity		.17*	.18*	.10		.12	.12	.09
Block 3: Ulterior motives of CSR communication								
Ulterior Motives			-.30***	-.10*			-.16*	-.05
Block 4: Relationship outcomes, Attitudes and Credibility								
Trust				.08				.05
Commitment				.12*				.03
Attitudes toward the Brand				.29***				.02
Perceived Credibility				.19*				.25*
R Square Change	.02	.16***	.09***	.23***	.04	.13***	.03*	.07***
Total adjusted R^2				.47***				.23***

Note: Entries are standardized regression coefficients.
*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$
[d] Dummy variable. Gender (male: 0, female: 1). Race (white: 0, people of color: 1)

<u>Discussion</u>

   The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of CSR communication on Gen Z's consumer habits and relationship with brands through the use of the stakeholder theory, relationship management theory, ethical consumerism and corporate reputation theory. From these theories this study evaluated variables including progressive values, diversity, pro-social behaviors, attitude toward a brand, perceived credibility, ulterior motives, commitment, perceived trust, word of mouth intentions, purchase intentions.

Corporate Social Responsibility and Gen Z

Progressive values

   The progressive values of the participants from Gen Z were shown to have no significant on either purchase intentions or WOM intentions from brands that communicate their CSR involvement. However, the top progressive values included women's rights (M=4.47), racial equality (M=4.40) and domestic violence (M=4.36). These top values did not change based on race and gender. This shows that regardless of race and gender, Gen Z is a generation that shares common interest in social values. This is important in discussing the importance of brand's effectively communicating their CSR involvement.

Diversity

   Similar to progressive values, diversity values had not significant impact on purchase intentions or word of mouth intentions. However responses to the statements such as "I am open to different lifestyles and cultures" and "I am aware of how society differently treats racial or ethnic groups other than my own" shows that Gen Z is aware of the inequalities in society, they are open to these differences.

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Stakeholder and Corporate Reputation Theory

WOM Intentions

Although Gen Z members are digitally connected, it is less likely that they will be willing to share a brand's CSR involvement on their personal social media accounts based on survey results. However, based on the regression chart, many factors can increase the likelihood of Gen Z sharing a brand's CSR involvement. Age (β = .13, *p* < .05) showed a significant positive effect on WOM intentions. Although Gen Z is all one generation, the older members of the demographic who participated in the research were least likely to share in contrast to the younger members who currently are 18 and 19. Race (β = .16, *p* < .05) also showed a positive correlation. People of color who took the survey were more likely to share a brand's CSR involvement on their social media. This may be because when stakeholders feel represented or valued by a brand, they are more likely to share this information. Pro-social behavior (β = .26, *p* < .01) also showed positive correlations with WOM intentions. Members of Gen Z are more likely to share CSR involvement if they engage in pro-social behaviors such as protesting or signing petitions. Lastly, perceived credibility (β = .25, *p* < .05) showed a positive correlation. If Gen Z consumers who participated in this study perceive a brand to be more credible it will increase the likelihood of them sharing CSR involvement on their social media platforms. This is supported in previous research that discusses how WOM intentions is a byproduct of CSR communications (Du, & et al, 2010; Sen, & Bhattacharya, 2001).

Purchase Intentions

Members of Gen Z are more likely to purchase a product or service from a brand that is socially responsible across different races and genders. Purchase intentions were shown to increase based on ($\beta = .12$, $p < .05$), attitudes toward the brand ($\beta = .29$, $p < .001$) and perceived credibility ($\beta = .19$, $p < .05$.) Ulterior motives ($\beta = -1.0$, $p < .05$) were shown to have a significant negative correlation with purchase intentions. This follows research that shows the more the stakeholders have positive feelings about a brand the more likely for a consumer to interact with the brand (Sen, & Bhattacharya, 2001).

Perceived credibility

Although Gen Z perceives brand's engaging in CSR as credible, some do not believe that the brands are sincere in their communication. This can be based on a number of factors including past perceptions and attitudes of a brand or how the brand is communicating its CSR involvement. This lapse of credibility can cause Gen Z consumers to have negative feelings of the brand.

Relationship Management Theory

Trust and Commitment

Survey responses for trust were mostly neutral with few positive skews. These positive skews show that Gen Z consumers have a more trusting relationship with brands who communicate their CSR involvement. Trust also had no significant positive correlation to WOM intentions or purchase intentions.

However, commitment ($\beta = .12$, $p < .05$) had a positive correlation to purchase intentions. This supports that commitment is one of the key elements that predicts and promotes a positive

relationship between a consumer and a brand (Hon & Gruing, 1999). This aligns with research that discusses that consumer identification is a key indicator of commitment in a OPR (Keh & Xie, 2009).

Ethical Consumerism

Ulterior motives

Based on survey responses, the members of Gen Z surveyed do not have a positive view regarding a brand's motive for engaging in CSR. This can be due to brands having low ethics outside of the CSR involvements that are communicated. Ulterior motives also showed negative correlations to both purchase and WOM intentions. Gen Z consumers are less likely to purchase a product or service if they feel that brand has an ulterior motive in its CSR communication.

Attitudes toward the brand

There was no statistical difference between gender and race for attitudes toward a brand however there was a positive correlation for purchase intentions. If a Gen Z consumer feels positively about a brand based on its ethical CSR decisions this will increase their likelihood of purchasing from the brand.

Pro-social behaviors

Survey results showed that Gen Z had neutral pro-social behaviors with few positive skews toward actions such as signing petitions, buying socially responsible products and donating. These are considered positive ethical consumer behaviors opposed to showing negative

ethical consumer behaviors such as boycotting (Tallontire, Rentsendorj & Blowfield, 2001). This is revealing regarding some of the characteristics that are held by Gen Z.

Limitations of Research

This study has some limitations of the research. The methodology of the research used a convenience sample as opposed to random sample. Because of this, the survey participants were from the older portion of Gen Z. Younger members of Gen Z that are currently under the age of 18 were unable to participate in the survey. It is also important to note that a majority of the participants were from Syracuse University, on the northeastern region of the United States. This region of the country is primarily liberal.

Additionally, a majority of the students who completed the survey are currently in communication-related courses. This could potentially impact how they perceive CSR done by brands. This study also received low participation from ethnic minorities and people who identify as a male. Survey participants were enrolled in college; this demographic ignores members of Gen Z who are not currently enrolled in school. Lastly, CSR was broadly defined and did not focus on a particular brand or organization.

Suggested Research

This research can be expanded upon in a variety of ways. Further research can emphasize on the relationship between CSR communication and ethnic minorities. Evaluating members of Gen Z that are currently under the age of 18 can also expand research regarding perceptions of CSR communication. Doing this will give a clearer view on more characteristics that frame Gen Z.

Using a generational approach that evaluates millennials, Gen X and Baby Boomers, can also expand this research. Using a generational approach will help further identify perceptions that are unique to Gen Z.

Further examining race with a larger sample will help brands further discover how to most effectively communicate their CSR involvement to multicultural groups. This will help avoid the incidents with Pepsi and H&M that was mentioned in chapter 1.

Future variables to specifically look out in the future include pro-social behaviors, progressive values and diversity values. With a larger sample, it is important to look at these variables and see how they differentiate in regards to race and gender in Gen Z's perception of CSR communication. These variables are important as they are relevant to accurately serving the changing public, considering Gen Z is the most ethnically diverse generation. This suggested research help brands better communicate to diverse audiences.

CHAPTER FIVE. CONCLUSION

This study used the stakeholder theory, corporate reputation theory, relationship

management and ethical consumerism in order to evaluate the perceptions and attitudes the Gen

Z holds regarding the communication of CSR involvement. Gen Z's perceptions and attitudes

align with theoretical framework of research that has been done regarding CSR. However, some

of Gen Z's characteristics can change the ways brands communicate their CSR involvement.

WOM intentions were revealed to be effected by pro-social behaviors and race. Also, the lack of

variance in results between gender and race shows that Gen Z is united in their views, actions

and beliefs. Based on the results of the survey, it is important that brands deliver the right

message to their Gen Z audience in order to have a positive relationship with stakeholders, have

a positive reputation and continue to be ethical brands.

APPENDIX

IRB Approval

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
MEMORANDUM

TO: Joon Soo Lim
DATE: March 19, 2018
SUBJECT: **Determination of Exemption from Regulations**
IRB #:   18-082
TITLE: *Generation Z and CSR*

The above referenced application, submitted for consideration as exempt from federal regulations as defined in 45 C.F.R. 46, has been evaluated by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the following:

1.   determination that it falls within the one or more of the five exempt categories allowed by the organization;
2.   determination that the research meets the organization's ethical standards.

It has been determined by the IRB this protocol qualifies for exemption and has been assigned to category **2**. This authorization will remain active for a period of five years from **March 19, 2018** until **March 18, 2023**.

CHANGES TO PROTOCOL: Proposed changes to this protocol during the period for which IRB authorization has already been given, cannot be initiated without additional IRB review. If there is a change in your research, you should notify the IRB immediately to determine whether your research protocol continues to qualify for exemption or if submission of an expedited or full board IRB protocol is required. Information about the University's human participants protection program can be found at: http://orip.syr.edu/human-research/human-research-irb.html Protocol changes are requested on an amendment application available on the IRB web site; please reference your IRB number and attach any documents that are being amended.

STUDY COMPLETION: Study completion is when all research activities are complete or when a study is closed to enrollment and only data analysis remains on data that have been de-identified. A Study Closure Form should be completed and submitted to the IRB for review (Study Closure Form).

Thank you for your cooperation in our shared efforts to assure that the rights and welfare of people participating in research are protected.

Tracy Cromp, M.S.W.
Director

DEPT: Public Relations, Newhouse – 215 University Place   **STUDENT:** Sharon Uche

Research Integrity and Protections | 214 Lyman Hall | Syracuse, NY 13244-1200 | 315.443.3013 | **orip.syr.edu**

Consent Form
Principal Investigator**:** Sharon C. Uche
Study Title: Generation Z and CSR
Institution: Syracuse University

The following information is provided to inform you about the research project and your participation in it. Please read this form carefully and feel free to ask any questions you may have about this study and the information given below. You will be given an opportunity to ask questions, and your questions will be answered. Please print a copy or screenshot this consent form for your records.

Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You are also free to withdraw from this study at any time.

Your decision to participate in this study is completely voluntary and you have the right to terminate your participation at any time. You must be **18 years old or older** in order to participate in the study.

In the event new information becomes available that may affect the risks or benefits associated with this research study or your willingness to participate in it, you will be notified so that you can make an informed decision whether or not to continue your participation in this study.

For additional information about giving consent or your rights as a participant in this study, please feel free to contact Tara Prairie at the Office of Compliance at (615) 494-8918.

1. **Purpose of the study:**

    You are being asked to participate in a research study that examines Generation Z's attitudes, sentiments and perception toward CSR communication done by brands.

2. **Description of procedures to be followed and approximate duration of the study:**

    You will read a brief definition of CSR then proceed to answer questions based on your experiences. You will then be asked demographic related questions.

3. **Description of the discomforts, inconveniences, and/or risks that can be reasonably expected as a result of participation in this study:**

    Whenever one works with e-mail or the Internet there is always the risk of compromising privacy, confidentiality and/or anonymity. Your confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology being used. It is important for you to understand that no guarantees can be made regarding the interception of data sent via the Internet by third parties.

4. **Anticipated benefits from this study:**

Extra credit will be given for your participation in this study upon your instructor's agreement.

5. **Circumstances under which the Principal Investigator may withdraw you from study participation:**

   Your participation in this project is completely voluntary, and you may exit the survey at any time you want.

6. **Contact Information.**

   If you have any questions or complaints about the research, contact Sharon C. Uche (scuche@syr.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant; or if you have questions, concerns, or complaints that you wish to address to someone other than the researchers; or if you cannot reach the researchers, contact the Syracuse University Institutional Review Board at 315-443-3013.

7. **Confidentiality.**

   All efforts, within reason, will be made to keep the personal information in your research record private. In particular, your name and email address will not be shared with anyone outside of the research team. It will also be removed from the data set. You will never be identified in any presentations or papers that we might submit for publication.

STATEMENT BY PERSON AGREEING TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I have read this informed consent document and the material contained in it has been explained to me verbally. I am 18 years old or older. I understand each part of the document, all my questions have been answered, and I freely and voluntarily choose to participate in this study.

_____   _____

Date   Signature of patient/volunteer

Consent obtained by:

_____   _____

Date   Signature

_____

Printed Name and Title

Generation Z and CSR

CONSENT FORM **Purpose of the study:** You are being asked to participate in a research study that examines Generation Z's attitudes, sentiments, and perception toward CSR communication done by brands.

Description of procedures to be followed and approximate duration of the study: You will read a brief definition of CSR then proceed to answer questions based on your experiences. You will then be asked demographic related questions.

Description of the discomforts, inconveniences, and/or risks that can be reasonably expected as a result of participation in this study: Whenever one works with e-mail or the Internet there is always the risk of compromising privacy, confidentiality and/or anonymity. Your confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology being used. It is important for you to understand that no guarantees can be made regarding the interception of data sent via the Internet by third parties.

Anticipated benefits from this study: Extra credit will be given for your participation in this study upon your instructor's agreement. If applicable, your professor will notify you of the opportunity prior to taking the survey.

Circumstances under which the Principal Investigator may withdraw you from study participation: Your participation in this project is completely voluntary, and you may exit the survey at any time you want.

Contact Information:

If you have any questions or complaints about the research, contact Sharon C. Uche (scuche@syr.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant; or if you have questions, concerns, or complaints that you wish to address to someone other than the researchers; or if you cannot reach the researchers, contact the Syracuse University Institutional Review Board at 315-443-3013.

Confidentiality:

All efforts, within reason, will be made to keep the personal information in your research record private. In particular, your name and email address will not be shared with anyone outside of the research team. It will also be removed from the dataset. You will never be identified in any presentations or papers that we might submit for publication.

By clicking, "Yes, I will participate in this study." you are agreeing that you have read and understood the above consent form. You certify that you are 18 years of age or older and, by clicking the submit button to enter the survey, you indicate that you are voluntarily participating in the study.

○ Yes, I will participate in this study. (1)

Q1 Corporate social responsibility (CSR) refers to operating a business in a manner that is responsible for the social and environmental impact created by the business. Some examples of

CSR include, but are not limited to, the following: (1) Company-organized volunteer activities (2) Socially-responsible business practices, such as environmental conservation, ethical treatments of animals, fair treatment of contractors, etc. (3) Company donations to charity, including cash, goods, and services, such as donation to disaster relief efforts. (4) Ethical labor practices, like treating employees fairly and ethically. (5) Environmental efforts: Any steps they can take to reduce those footprints. (6) Social justice efforts: Any steps that address societal issues including but not limited to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and religion.

If you understand the definition of CSR, please click "yes" to go to the next page. If you do not understand CSR please exit the survey.

○ Yes, I understand the definition of CSR (1)

Q2 Have you recently heard of a brand that communicates its involvement in CSR?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

Q3 Where do you get the most information about a brand's involvement in CSR? (please select the top source)

○ The brand's commercials on television (1)

○ The brand's commercials on streaming services (i.e. Hulu, Amazon Prime, Roku) (2)

○ The brand's advertisement on YouTube (3)

○ The brand's social media platforms (4)

○ The brand's website (5)

○ News articles written abut the brand (6)

○ Other (Please specify) (7) _____

Q4 Thinking of the most recent case of a brand's involvement in CSR, how did it affect your **feelings** toward the brand?

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Unfavorable (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Favorable
Negative (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Positive
Not likeable (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Likable
Bad (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Good

Page Break

Q5 Thinking of the most recent case of a brand's involvement in CSR, how did it affect your **perceptions** about the brand?

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Untrustworthy (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Trustworthy
Unbelievable (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Believable
Unreliable (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Reliable
Insincere (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Sincere

Page Break

Q6 Thinking of the most recent case of a brand's involvement in CSR, how would you evaluate the brand?

The brand _____

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Appears to have a hidden motive in their involvement with its CSR (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Is acting in its own self-interest (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Is ultimately acting to benefit itself (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Has something other than altruistic intentions in their CSR initiative. (4)	○	○	○	○	○

Ultimately cares about their profits more than CSR activities. (5)

    ◯   ◯   ◯   ◯   ◯

Page Break

Q7 Thinking of the most recent case of a brand's involvement in CSR, please indicate how much you agree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I feel that the brand is trying to maintain a long- term commitment to customers like me. (6)	○	○	○	○	○
The brand demonstrates that it wants to maintain a relationship with customers like me. (7)	○	○	○	○	○
Compared to other brands, I value my relationship	○	○	○	○	○

with this brand

more. (8)

Thinking of the most recent case of a brand's involvement in CSR, please indicate how much you agree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Whenever this brand makes an important decision, I know it will be concerned with customers. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
The brand keeps its promises. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I believe that the brand takes the opinions of customers into account when making decisions. (3)	○	○	○	○	○

The brand has a tendency to accomplish what it says it will do. (4)

○   ○   ○   ○   ○

Page Break

Q9 Thinking of the most recent case of a brand's involvement in CSR, please indicate how likely you are to try the product or service of the brand if it is accessible in your area.

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Unlikely (8)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Likely
Improbable (9)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Probable
Impossible (10)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Possible

- -

Page Break

Q10 How likely would you be willing to share information about a brand's CSR through your social media?

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Unlikely (8)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Likely
Improbable (9)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Probable
Impossible (10)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Possible

Page Break

Q11 How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements to describe how you interact with social causes?

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Buy a product with a social or environmental benefit. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Volunteer for a cause I care about. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Donate to a cause I care about. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Sign petition to help causes I care about. (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Share social or environmental information with my social networks. (5)	○	○	○	○	○
Boycott/refuse to buy from a	○	○	○	○	○

company that
is doing harm.
(6)

Protest to help
causes I care
about. (7)

      ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

Page Break

Q12 How important is each of the following social causes to you based on your current values?

	Not at all important (1)	Of little importance (2)	Moderately important (3)	Important (4)	Very important (5)
Racial equality (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Women's rights (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Climate change (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Gun control (4)	○	○	○	○	○
LGBTQIA+ rights (5)	○	○	○	○	○
Animal welfare and rights (6)	○	○	○	○	○
Abortion (7)	○	○	○	○	○
Domestic violence (8)	○	○	○	○	○

Religious tolerance (9)	○	○	○	○	○
Immigration (10)	○	○	○	○	○

Page Break

Q13 If price and quality are similar, how likely are you to switch to a brand from a socially responsible company?

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Unlikely (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Likely
Improbable (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Probable
Impossible (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Possible

Page Break

Q14 How much more are you willing to pay for a product or service from a socially responsible company?

○ None (1)

○ 1-5 % (2)

	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Very often (5)

○ 6-10 % (3)

○ 11-15 % (4)

○ 16-20 % (5)

○ 21% or more (6)

- -

Page Break

Q15 How often, if ever, do you do each of the following activities on a cell phone?

Text message (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Read or send an email (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Make travel reservations (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Take pictures or videos (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Use social media apps (5)	○	○	○	○	○
Listen to muisc (6)	○	○	○	○	○
Watch television (7)	○	○	○	○	○
Watch videos (8)	○	○	○	○	○
Seek health information (9)	○	○	○	○	○
Seek financial information (10)	○	○	○	○	○

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Rate products or services (11)	○	○	○	○	○
Make charitable donations (12)	○	○	○	○	○
Read blogs (13)	○	○	○	○	○
Listen to podcast (14)	○	○	○	○	○
Read/ watch the news (15)	○	○	○	○	○

Page Break

Q16 How well does each of the following statements reflect you?

	Very untrue of me (1)	Somewhat untrue of me (2)	Neutral (3)	Somewhat true of me (4)	Very true of me (5)
I express my concern about discrimination to people from other racial or ethnic groups. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I express my concern about discrimination to people of different sexual orientation than me. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
When I know my friends are treated unfairly because of	○	○	○	○	○

their racial,
ethnic,
backgrounds or
sexual
orientation, I
speak up for
them. (3)

I know a lot of
information
about
important
social and
political events   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○
of racial and
ethnic groups
or sexual
orientations
other than my
own. (4)

I am aware of
how society
differently   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○
treats racial or
ethnic groups

other than my own. (5)					
I seek opportunities to speak with individuals of other racial or ethnic backgrounds or sexual orientation about their experiences. (6)	○	○	○	○	○
When I interact with people from other racial or ethnic backgrounds, I show my appreciation of their cultural norms. (7)	○	○	○	○	○

I am touched by movies or media portrayals about discrimination issues faced by racial or ethnic groups other than my own. (8)	○	○	○	○	○
I am very open-minded to different life styles and cultures. (9)	○	○	○	○	○

Page Break

Q21 On social issues, I identify as:

○ Liberal (1)

○ Moderate (2)

○ Conservative (3)

Q22 I consider myself to be...

○ Very religious (1)

○ Religious (2)

○ Somewhat religious (3)

○ Not religious at all (4)

Q17 What is your gender?

○ Male (1)

○ Female (2)

○ Neither, I identify as: (3) _____

Q18 How old are you?

_____

Q19 What race do you identify as?

◯ White (1)

◯ Black or African American (2)

◯ American Indian or Alaska Native (3)

◯ Asian (4)

◯ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (5)

◯ Hispanic or Latino (6)

◯ None of the above, I identify as: (7) _____

End of Block: Default Question Block

Table 5. Measurement and Reliability Table

Variables	Measures	M	SD	α
Attitudes toward brand (AB)		5.66	1.14	.96
AB1	Unfavorable (1) – Favorable (7)	5.65	1.19	
AB2	Negative (1) – Positive (7)	5.66	1.21	
AB3	Not likeable (1) – Likeable (7)	5.62	1.23	
AB4	Bad (1) – Good (7)	5.73	1.17	
Perceived Credibility (PC)		5.27	1.11	.92
PC1	Untrustworthy (1) – Trustworthy (7)	5.34	1.20	
PC2	Unbelievable (1) – Believable (7)	5.24	1.18	
PC3	Unreliable (1) – Reliable (7)	5.34	1.15	
PC4	Insincere (1) – Sincere (7)	5.16	1.36	
Ulterior Motives (UM)		3.14	.80	.87
UM1	Appears to have a hidden motive in their involvement with its CSR	2.95	.97	
UM2	Is acting in its own self-interest	3.14	1.03	
UM3	Is ultimately acting to benefit itself	3.22	1.01	
UM4	Has something other than altruistic intentions in their CSR initiative	3.19	.93	
UM5	Ultimately cares about their profits more than CSR activities.	3.18	1.03	
Commitment		3.67	.67	
C1	I feel that the brand is trying to maintain a long- term commitment to	3.74	.79	

	customers like me.			
C2	The brand demonstrates that it wants to maintain a relationship with customers like me.	3.78	.72	
C3	Compared to other brands, I value my relationship with this brand more.	3.50	.89	
Trust (TRU)		3.55	.58	.75
TRU1	Whenever this brand makes an important decision, I know it will be concerned with customers.	3.44	.80	
TRU2	The brand keeps its promises.	3.45	.74	
TRU3	I believe that the brand takes the opinions of customers into account when making decisions.	3.66	.80	
TRU4	The brand has a tendency to accomplish what it says it will do.	3.67	.70	
Purchase Intentions (PI)		5.52	1.20	.94
PI1	Unlikely (1) – Likely (7)	5.51	1.29	
PI2	Improbable (1) – Probable (7)	5.47	1.28	
PI3	Impossible (1) – Possible (7)	5.61	1.23	
Word-of-mouth (WOM)		4.20	1.86	.95
WOM1	Unlikely (1) – Likely (7)	4.03	2.04	
WOM2	Improbable (1) – Probable (7)	4.10	1.93	
WOM3	Impossible (1) – Possible (7)	4.49	1.87	
Pro-social behaviors (PSB)		3.83	.65	.80
PSB1	Buy a product with a social or environmental benefit.	3.92	.83	
PSB2	Volunteer for a cause I care about.	3.98	.86	
PSB3	Donate to a cause I care about.	3.83	.90	

PSB4	Sign petition to help causes I care about.	4.08	.92	
PSB5	Share social or environmental information with my social networks.	3.67	1.03	
PSB6	Boycott/refuse to buy from a company that is doing harm.	3.62	1.01	
PSB7	Protest to help causes I care about.	3.51	.96	
Progressive values (PV)		4.18	.68	.90
PV1	Racial equality	4.40	.80	
PV2	Women's rights	4.47	.85	
PV3	Climate change	4.15	.91	
PV4	Gun control	4.30	.95	
PV5	LGBTQIA+ rights	4.05	1.04	
PV6	Animal welfare and rights	4.02	.96	
PV7	Abortion	4.00	1.08	
PV8	Domestic violence	4.36	.85	
PV9	Religious tolerance	3.98	.95	
PV10	Immigration	4.03	1.00	
Diversity (DIV)		4.04	.70	.90
DIV1	I express my concern about discrimination to people from other racial or ethnic groups.	3.83	1.03	
DIV2	I express my concern about discrimination to people of different sexual orientation than me.	3.82	1.01	
DIV3	When I know my friends are treated unfairly because of their racial, ethnic, backgrounds or sexual orientation, I speak up for them.	4.15	.93	
DIV4	I know a lot of information about important social and political events of	3.85	1.00	

	racial and ethnic groups or sexual orientations other than my own.			
DIV5	I am aware of how society differently treats racial or ethnic groups other than my own.	4.24	.88	
DIV6	I seek opportunities to speak with individuals of other racial or ethnic backgrounds or sexual orientation about their experiences.	3.71	1.05	
DIV7	When I interact with people from other racial or ethnic backgrounds, I show my appreciation of their cultural norms.	4.14	.85	
DIV8	I am touched by movies or media portrayals about discrimination issues faced by racial or ethnic groups other than my own.	4.17	.91	
DIV9	I am very open-minded to different life styles and cultures.	4.45	.81	

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