

EFFECTS OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY COMMUNICATION ON
CONSUMERS' ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR AND A MODERATOR EFFECT OF THE
TYPE OF PUBLIC

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine corporate social responsibility (CSR) message strategies on publics' attitude and behavior. To examine the effects of message strategies, this dissertation investigated what type of message strategy is more effective and if different types of strategies differently affect publics' attitude toward a company, purchase intention, and word-of-mouth intention (WOMI). Two issue types (an issue about the company's commitment to production and an issue about the company's commitment to philanthropy) and two types of motive statements (only public-serving motive and a message with public-serving motive and firm-serving motive) were adopted. The dissertation also explored how different types of publics moderate the link between the strategies and publics' responses. The types of publics were segmented based on the situational theory of publics (STP). Data were collected from 276 participants who completed the online experiment. Findings indicated that issue types influenced publics' purchase intention and WOMI significantly. But in terms of attitude toward a company, only one company case showed a significant difference between two types of issue. In terms of motive, no significant effects were found. However, an interaction effect between issue and motive on WOMI was found. The interaction effect implied that when people read a message about an issue that contains a statement of the company's philanthropy, stating only a public-serving motive is more effective than stating both a public-serving motive and firm-serving motive. A moderator effect of the public type was found on WOMI. This finding implicated that active publics tend to have more WOMI when they read a public-serving motive and a firm-

serving motive in case of an issue with a company's commitment for philanthropy. This study provides a theoretical implication of a possibility of a synthesis of the CSR communication model and the STP. For practitioners, this study provides practical implications regarding effective CSR message strategies for target publics. In spite of several limitations, this study contributes to developing a practical and theoretical framework for CSR communication and to better understanding publics' perception about strategic CSR communication.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to God, my Lord, who made me strong all the time, to my husband Minsang, who has encouraged me to accomplish my goal, and to my beloved daughter Abigail, who has supported me with love and patience.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

<i>a</i>	Cronbach's index of internal consistency
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance statistical test
ANCOVA	Analysis of Covariance statistical test
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
<i>df</i>	Degrees of freedom: number of values free to vary after certain restrictions have been placed on the data
η^2	Eta squared: the ratio of variance explained in the dependent variable by a predictor while controlling for other predictors
<i>F</i>	Fisher's F ratio: A ration of two variances
H	Research Hypothesis
<i>M</i>	Mean: the sum of a set of measurements divided by the number of measurements in the set
<i>p</i>	Probability associated with the occurrence under the null hypothesis of a value as extreme as or more extreme than the observed value
PR	Public relations
<i>SD</i>	Standard deviation: value that represents the degree to which measurements in a set vary in relation to the mean.
<i>t</i>	Computed value of <i>t</i> test
WOM	Word of Mouth
WOMI	Word of Mouth Intention

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Since the concept was first introduced in the early twentieth century, corporate social responsibility (CSR) has been the focus of attention in both the academic and business worlds (Carroll, 1979, 1999; David, Kline, & Dai, 2005). While CSR has been discussed broadly and defined variously, the term is generally understood as corporations' engagement in ethical and socially responsible behaviors in response to societal demands and stakeholders' expectations (Carroll, 1999; Freeman, 1984; Trapp, 2014). To better understand the term, Buchholz (1991) suggested five common assumptions found in various definitions. First, corporations have responsibilities that go beyond making profits. Second, these responsibilities are related to helping solve social and environmental problems. Third, corporations have relationships with various stakeholders. Fourth, corporations have impacts on all key spheres such as communities, work sites, and the marketplace. Last, corporations serve not only economic values, but also a wider range of human values.

In spite of various definitions, the purposes of CSR have been clearly presented. Companies expect to generate financial performance, build a positive corporate image, and strengthen relationships with their publics (Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen, 2010; Kim, 2011; Kim & Reber, 2008; Spangler & Pompper, 2011). To that end, companies engage in various CSR practices ranging from pure philanthropic activities to activities directly associated with their strategic objectives (David et al. 2005; Kim, 2011; L'Etang, 2006). For instance, Target's annual CSR report published in 2014 introduced the company's CSR practices such as donating to

children's education, supporting communities, producing high-quality products, protecting the welfare of employees, and many other activities. Accordingly, the question of how CSR affects corporations' financial performance, image, and identity has been the main concern of CSR studies (Page & Fearn, 2005; Kim, 2011; David et al., 2005; Wang & Qian, 2011).

Recently, the role of CSR communication to better serve the purpose of CSR has been emphasized as well (Kim & Ferguson, 2014; Podnar, 2008). CSR communication increases consumers' awareness about corporations' CSR practices, links corporations' CSR practices with publics' perception, and provides the information necessary to judge CSR practices (David et al., 2005; Du et al., 2010; Kim, 2011). However, communicating CSR is a complicated and difficult task because there are many factors that may affect the process. In some cases, CSR communication increases skepticism rather than positive responses (Kim & Ferguson, 2014; Morsing, 2006). According to Coombs and Holladay (2011), people become suspicious when corporations communicate about their CSR practices too frequently. In addition, if people think that CSR activities are not consistent with a company's identity, they also have negative feelings toward the company. Thus, in order to find an effective way of communicating CSR, scholars and practitioners should pay attention to what should be addressed regarding CSR and what message strategies need to be adopted (Du et al., 2010; Kim & Ferguson, 2014). To answer these questions, the current study examines the effects of CSR message strategies on publics' attitudes and behaviors utilizing the CSR communication model suggested by Du et al. (2010) as a theoretical framework.

The CSR communication model mainly explains what to communicate and how to communicate to produce positive outcomes (Du et al., 2010). In this model, message content and message channel are two predictors of the effects of CSR communication. In terms of message

content, such as choice of CSR issues, companies' commitments, motives for CSR, fit between CSR issues and corporate identity, and benefits for stakeholders. Previous studies that explored the effects of CSR communication confirmed that people respond to CSR activities differently depending on the message strategies that corporations use. For instance, Becker-Olsen et al. (2006) found significant differences in the effects of fit between CSR issue and corporate identity and motive for the CSR activity on consumers' behavior. In addition, Kim and Choi (2012) found different effects of issue type and perceived motive. Among various strategies, the current study focuses on issue type and stated motive as two predictors.

In terms of issue, previous studies showed that depending on the issue type, publics could become more favorable or more negative toward the company (Kim & Choi, 2012; Du et al., 2010; Menon & Kahn 2003). While issue type can be categorized in various ways, this study identified two CSR issue types based on Carroll's categories of CSR (1979, 1991). Carroll (1979, 1991) categorized CSR in four different levels: economic responsibilities, legal responsibilities, ethical responsibilities and philanthropic (discretionary) responsibilities. Economic responsibilities are related to companies' profits and provision of products or services of value in society and are the foundation for all the other responsibilities. Legal responsibilities relate to obeying the law, while ethical responsibilities are about doing what is right and fair. Philanthropic responsibilities include activities that contribute to the community. This study chose an issue related to production (i.e., an economic responsibility) and an issue related to philanthropy (i.e., a philanthropic responsibility).

Besides, previous studies found that people tend to be more positive about and more interested in product- or company-related issues than in issues unrelated to the product or company such as charities, donation, and other philanthropic activities. Similarly, if corporations

emphasize only social issues that are not directly related to them or their products, people became skeptical toward the company (Friestad & Wright, 1994). Thus, an issue with a company's commitment to production and an issue with a company's commitment to philanthropy will be appropriate to understand publics' perception about the issue and response toward the issue in both negative and positive ways.

When examining the role of stated motive, previous studies have adopted three types of strategies: public-serving motive, firm-serving motive, and hybrid motives (public-serving and firm-serving). Interestingly, people tended to show more positive attitude and behavior intention when they were exposed to a hybrid message with a public-serving motive and firm-serving motive together (e.g., Becker-Olsen et al., 2006; Kim, 2014). However, researchers pointed out that consumers perceived the motive differently depending on other conditions. For instance, Kim (2014) found that stated motive influenced publics' attitude and behavior differently depending on the company's reputation. For a company with a bad reputation, participants became more skeptical when they were exposed to a message with only a public-serving motive. Hence, to understand publics' response better, this study focuses on two different strategies: a public-serving motive only and a public-serving motive with a firm-serving motive (hybrid motive).

With regard to outcomes of the process, three variables will be examined: attitude toward a company, purchase intention, and word-of-mouth intention (WOMI). Even though Kim and Ferguson (2014) pointed out that these outcomes are related to CSR practices rather than CSR communication, previous studies about CSR communication have adopted these variables as consequences of CSR communication (Kim, 2011; Kim & Choi, 2012; Lee & Shin, 2010). Du et al. (2010) also suggest that these variables are appropriate outcomes in the CSR communication

model. While many CSR studies found positive effects of those variables to a certain degree, it is still questionable if CSR communication strategies produce similar findings. Thus, this study will examine the effects of CSR communication strategies on these three items.

In addition to examining CSR message strategies, this study explored the difference in CSR communication effects among different types of publics. Many previous CSR studies have characterized publics or stakeholders as belonging to a monolithic group with the same needs and interests. However, individuals' responses to CSR initiatives are quite heterogeneous. That is, their attitudes and behaviors regarding a specific issue are different depending on their perception (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). Similarly, Du et al. (2010) also pointed out that stakeholders' characteristics could be a moderator in the process of CSR communication effects. Devinney et al. (2006) asserted that corporations should "communicate to the specific segment in its specific language" (p. 10) because most people have their own knowledge and interests. They may react to one issue, but not to another. Thus, for strategic CSR communication, it is necessary to identify publics based on their perception about the issue. To segment publics, this study adopted the situational theory of publics (STP). STP is a well-tested theory in public relations that can help explain how publics form regarding specific issues or problems (Aldoory & Sha, 2007). The theory provides a way of identifying four types of publics: active, aware, latent, and nonpublic. According to Grunig and Hunt (1984), individuals' problem recognition, level of involvement, and constraint recognition influence whether they will merely process information about the issues or actively seek out more information about them. STP is effective in predicting the effects of communication behavior on attitude, cognitions, and behavior of different types of publics (Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Lee & Rodriguez, 2008; Major, 1993). Thus, by applying STP to

CSR research, this study will examine whether different types of publics will be influenced differently by CSR communication strategies.

Hence, the purpose of this study is twofold. First, it will determine how different CSR message strategies influence publics' attitude toward a company, purchase intention, and word-of-mouth intention (WOMI). In terms of message strategies, the effects of two different types of issue (a company's commitment to production and a company's commitment to philanthropy) and two different strategies of presenting motives (public-serving only and public-serving with firm-serving) will be explored. Du et al. (2010) suggested that corporations use various communication channels to disseminate information such as official websites, TV commercials, magazines, and product packages. However, recent studies have found that corporations use social media more actively than any other media channels (Saxton & Waters, 2014; Sung & Kim, 2014). In accordance with the increasing use social media, this study focuses on communication strategies on social media.

In addition to exploring the impact of message strategies, this study aims to investigate whether the type of public, segmented based on STP, plays a moderator role in the model. In spite of the importance of publics' individual understanding about CSR, few studies have considered the publics' differences. This study will segment public type based on perception about CSR issues and examine the different effects of CSR message strategies for the different types of publics.

Significance of the Dissertation

This study is significant in several ways. First, whereas the majority of CSR studies focus on the effects of CSR practices, this study experimentally tests different message strategies for CSR communication. According to Kim (2011), investigating the relative effectiveness of

different communication strategies will help practitioners to understand publics' attitude and behavior better and plan effective communication strategies. Thus, the findings of this study will contribute to developing a sophisticated CSR communication model.

Second, by applying STP to a study of CSR, this study will identify different publics for specific CSR issues. In spite of the importance of identifying publics in organizations' practices or communication process, CSR studies rarely consider different types of publics. Thus, by showing how different types of publics respond to CSR messages differently, this study will provide an effective method of designing tailored CSR communication strategies for targeted publics.

Third, this study also contributes to the development of a new CSR communication model in the context of public relations (PR). While PR scholars emphasize the importance of understanding publics and communicating with them interactively (Grunig & Hunt, 1984), many CSR studies in the field of PR still tend to conduct studies of one-way linear processes only, focusing on the effects of CSR practices without considering publics' individual characteristics and perceptions. By identifying publics and exploring the moderator effect of the types of publics, this study will be a cornerstone to establish an integrated CSR communication model that contains communication strategies and features of different types of publics.

Overview of the Dissertation

Overall, this dissertation will provide new insight into how CSR communication can be more effective. In addition, the findings offer an extended framework for understanding message strategies that are effective with different types of publics.

In the next chapter, the literature regarding the concept of CSR, CSR communication model, and situational theory of publics will be reviewed. The conceptual model and variables

for this dissertation will be also provided. Next, the method will be explained, including research design, sample for this study, data collection, and measurement. In the fourth chapter, the data analysis for hypotheses testing and research questions will be discussed, with descriptive analysis of the sample, manipulation check, and analysis of a confounding variable and a moderator variable. The last chapter will discuss the results and describe the implications and limitations of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a review of the literature about corporate social responsibility (CSR), CSR communication models, and the situational theory of publics (STP). The first section provides a historical overview of CSR including various definitions and boundaries of CSR, consequences of CSR, and a discussion about CSR and PR. The second section offers an explanation of the CSR communication model proposed by Du et al. (2010) and conceptualizations of the primary factors in the model. In the third section, the situational theory of publics, variables of the theory, and segmentation of publics will be discussed.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Development of the Concept of CSR

The term corporate social responsibility (CSR) has been debated and variously defined (Carroll, 1999; Dahlsrud, 2008; Mohr, Webb, & Harris, 2001; Pastrana & Sriramesh, 2014). Although the concept of CSR was first discussed in the late nineteenth century, a large amount of literature has been produced on the topic since the 1950s (Carroll, 1999). The modern discussion of CSR started with the publication of Howard R. Bowen's book titled *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman* (1953), in which he defined social responsibilities as "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" (p. 6). Recognizing the strong impact of corporations' activities on society, he emphasized obeying regulations and rules and asserted that social responsibility should guide business.

In the 1960s, the relationship between business and society was emphasized more strongly. Davis (1960) defined CSR as “businessmen’s decisions and actions taken for reasons at least partially beyond the firm’s direct economic or technical interest” (p. 7). He believed that if businessmen did not take social responsibility, they would lose their social power. McGuire (1963) expanded the boundary of CSR, asserting that corporations should take responsibilities in politics, community, education, and employee welfare beyond their legal and economic obligations. Based on McGuire’s idea, corporations began to acknowledge their socially responsible role (Waters & Ott, 2014). Walton (1967) elaborated on the concept of CSR by suggesting top managers had a leadership role to play in CSR and by outlining several features of CSR, such as volunteerism, the linkage with other voluntary organizations, and the intangible economic returns.

In the 1970s, some scholars still believed that maximizing corporate profit was the only responsibility of corporations, while others emphasized the role of corporations as one part of society. Johnson (1971) explained the four different views of CSR at this time. First, CSR referred to a social program that only aims to gain profits. The economist Milton Friedman (1970) supported this view, arguing that the social responsibility of businesses is to increase profits, and, therefore, companies should use their resources only for economic purposes. The second view assumed that corporations should pursue utility maximization rather than only profit maximization. In response to this trend, the Committee for Economic Development (CED), which consists of businessmen and educators, also contributed to the development of the concept of CSR by asking corporations to broaden their responsibilities to society. According to the committee, corporations should focus more on the quality of American life than on supplying goods and services. Third, CSR was a set of balanced activities to pursue both economic and

responsibility goals for various stakeholders such as employees, suppliers, local communities, and the nation. The fourth was the “lexicographic view of social responsibility” (p. 73).

According to Johnson, “strongly profit-motivated firms may engage in the socially responsible behavior. Once they attain their profit targets, they act as if social responsibility were an important goal—even though it isn’t” (p. 75).

In 1979, Carroll proposed four dimensions of CSR that encompass various ideas regarding CSR activities: economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic (discretionary). Carroll’s framework encompasses various types of CSR and thus has been adopted in many CSR studies (Carroll, 2004; Ramasamy & Yeung, 2009). Economic responsibility refers to providing goods and services that satisfy consumers’ needs and that make reasonable profits in the process. Legal responsibility is the duty to obey the laws and regulations of society. Ethical responsibility is related to any behavior that satisfies the ethical norms of society. Philanthropic (discretionary) responsibility is to produce positive effects on society such as through philanthropic contributions.

In the 1980s, to complement previous concepts and topics, researchers developed new definitions of CSR or alternative terms such as corporate social performance, corporate citizenship, public policy, and business ethics. At the same time, the positive relationship between CSR and financial profitability was confirmed by many scholars (Cochran & Wood, 1984; Drucker, 1984). For instance, Cochran and Wood found a positive relationship between social responsibility and financial outcomes.

In the meantime, the stakeholder theory suggested by Freeman (1984) elaborated CSR practices and research. Freeman defined stakeholders as a group who can affect or be affected by the organization’s objectives. Freeman believed that stakeholder management could encompass

ethical and moral consideration and values under CSR. The theory has been used as a basis to decide or to analyze a group or groups that corporations should be responsible for (Moir, 2001).

In the early 1990s, Wood (1991) developed a more comprehensive and detailed framework of corporate social performance (CSP) that integrated various organizational theories including stakeholder management theory under CSR. In particular, she elaborated on Carroll's model by identifying and relating each principle of social legitimacy (institutional level), public responsibility (organization level), and managerial discretion (individual level).

Since the 1990s, the concept of CSR has received much attention from many constituents in society including governments, consumers, and non-government organizations (Moura-Leite & Padgett, 2011). Accordingly, CSR practices tend to include complex global, social, and environmental issues (Trapp, 2012). In addition, CSR communication has received attention as well. A CSR report became an essential part in corporations' annual reports. According to Lee (2008) whereas less than half of Fortune 500 companies provided CSR information in their annual reports in the 1970s, nearly 90% currently have CSR information in their annual reports. In the academic field, plenty of studies have been published regarding the impact of CSR on tangible outcomes such as financial profitability and intangible outcomes such as goodwill, reputation, and human capital (Porter & Kramer, 2006; Waddock, 2008).

As various definitions have been suggested, the boundaries of CSR have been also extended. Many scholars and practitioners have suggested lists of CSR domains or specific practices based on Carroll's four dimensions (Blowfield & Murray, 2008; David et al., 2005; Lii & Lee, 2012; Maignan & Ferrell, 2001; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). For instance, *Socrates: The Corporate Social Rating Monitor* presented a list of CSR activities (Kinder, Lydenberg, Domini & Co. Inc. 1999). According to the report, CSR initiatives are categorized in 6 broad domains:

community support, diversity, employee support, environment, non-U.S. operations, and product. Blowfield and Murray (2008) suggested business ethics, legal compliance, philanthropy, community investment, environmental management, sustainability, animal rights, human rights, worker rights and welfare, market relations, corruption, and corporate governance as the domains of CSR. Kotler and Lee (2009) characterized cause-related marketing, corporate cause promotions, social marketing, philanthropy and making charitable donations, and community-volunteering programs as main CSR practices.

In sum, the CSR domain has broadened from a narrow concern for maximizing financial profits or obeying laws to concerns for the well-being of related stakeholders, such as employees and their families and local communities, and even to global issues relevant to all of humankind (Trapp, 2012). Sriramesh et al. (2006) categorize these various definitions into three clusters. The first cluster is based on a business and society approach. This view sees CSR practices as a company's obligation to reward a society that has given sanction to businesses to function. The second cluster is based on an economic approach. This view regards making profits as the fundamental objective of CSR. The third cluster is based on stakeholder theory and emphasizes CSR practices for the benefit of various stakeholder groups (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). Various conceptualizations suggested by scholars are presented in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1. Conceptualizations of CSR

Authors	Conceptualizations
Aguinis (2011, p. 855)	Context-specific organizational actions and policies that take into account stakeholders' expectations and the triple bottom line of economic, social, and environmental performance.
Carroll (1979, p. 500)	The social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time.
Commission of the European Communities (2001)	Companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis.
Kotler & Lee (2005, p. 3)	Operating a business in a manner that meets or exceeds the ethical, legal, commercial, and public expectations that society has of business.
Mohr et al. (1997, p. 68).	CSR associations reflect the company's status and activities with respect to its perceived societal obligations.
Petkus & Woodruff (as cited in Mohr et al., 2001, p. 47)	CSR is a company's commitment to minimizing or eliminating any harmful effects and maximizing its long run beneficial impact on society. Dimensions of CSR include obeying laws and ethical norms, treating employees fairly, protecting environment, and contributing charities.
Vaaland et al. (2008, p. 929)	Management of stakeholder concerns for responsible and irresponsible acts is related to environmental, ethical and social phenomena in a way that creates corporate benefit.
Lichtenstein et al. (2004, p. 18)	CSR is a firm's commitment to contributing parts of its profits to nonprofit organizations and charitable causes.

CSR Consequences

Although CSR is mainly concerned with responsibilities beyond a company's profit, corporations do not practice CSR only to contribute to society (Dodd & Supa, 2011). Corporations engage in CSR activities for their own interests, expecting to increase their profits, establish a positive corporate image, and enhance their relationships with publics (Dodd & Supa, 2011; Kim, 2014). Accordingly, scholars have investigated the effects of CSR with various consequences such as financial performance and stakeholders' positive responses (David et al., 2005; Dodd & Supa, 2011; Kim, 2011).

Scholars who have examined the relationship between CSR initiatives and financial profits have found mixed results (Pava & Krause, 1996; Stanwick & Stanwick, 1998; Wang & Qian, 2011). While Orlitzky et al. (2003) found a positive relationship between CSR practices and financial performance, other studies have found that corporations' philanthropic practices have little influence on corporate financial performance (Berman, Wicks, Kotha, & Jones, 1999; Seifert, Morris, & Bartkus, 2004). Pava and Krause (1996) reviewed 21 CSR studies and found that only half of the studies showed a positive relationship between CSR and financial performance.

Instead of investigating financial profits, some scholars have examined CSR effects on the affective, cognitive, and behavioral responses of consumers (Brown & Dacin, 1997; Creyer & Ross, 1997; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). More specifically, scholars have found effects of CSR practices on perceived quality (Folkes & Kamins, 1999), attitude toward companies (Brown & Dacin, 1997), purchase intention (David et al., 2005; Murray & Vogel, 1997), and consumers' supportive behavior such as donations (Lichtenstein et al., 2004). However, previous research has not reached consensus about the CSR effects on consumer responses. No significant CSR

effect was found in some studies (Page & Fearn, 2005), while others demonstrated positive effects (David et al., 2005; Kim, 2011; Lii & Lee, 2012; Wigley, 2008). In addition, some researchers found direct effects (Wigley, 2008), while others found indirect relationships between CSR and consumers' responses (David et al., 2005). Wigley (2008) found a positive relationship between consumer product purchase intention and knowledge about a company's CSR activities. On the other hand, David et al. (2005) found indirect influences of CSR activities on purchase intention mediated by corporate identity. They found that CSR activities of a company influenced corporate identity or image and in turn affected consumer purchase intention.

Some scholars criticize CSR research, saying that CSR consequences are not generalizable because of inconsistency of findings depending on topical methodological differences (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2006). Aguinis and Glavas (2012) suggested that considering mediators and moderators could make findings in this discipline more clear and consistent. Similarly, Bhattacharya et al. (2008) also pointed out that practitioners and scholars should understand in more detail the process of CSR by considering various factors.

CSR and Public Relations

While CSR was a topic mainly discussed by marketing scholars originally, the concept has gradually taken the attention of public relations (PR) scholars and practitioners. In the mid-1970s, PR practitioners and scholars came to emphasize the response to social responsibility. Grunig and Hunt (1984) maintained that PR should be socially responsible: "Public, or social, responsibility has become a major reason for an organization to have a public relations function" (p. 48). Some PR scholars have sought to identify the links between the practices of CSR and PR, arguing that both disciplines have similar objectives of seeking to enhance the quality of the

relationship of an organization with publics and to build positive corporate image and reputation (Clark, 2000; David et al., 2005; Kim, 2014; Kim & Reber, 2008). They believe that the disciplines are closely interrelated. CSR can be an effective tool for PR in that it presents opportunities for cultivating positive relationships with stakeholders and so delivers a corporation's image to targeted publics (L'Etang, 2006; Stark & Kruckeberg, 2003).

CSR studies in the field of public relations can be categorized based on several features. First, as in other disciplines that have interests in CSR, many PR scholars conduct empirical tests of CSR effects (e.g., Kim, 2010; Lee & Shin, 200). According to David et al. (2005), however, PR scholars tend to focus more on intangible outcomes whereas marketing researchers focus on the possible financial profits gained by CSR practices. Second, some scholars analyze CSR reports or CSR communication through content analysis. For instance, Esrock and Leichty (1998) analyzed CSR messages of *Fortune* 500 companies contained on their websites. Third, based on excellence theory, scholars have explored the practitioners' perception of CSR. For instance, Kim and Reber (2011) conducted a survey with PR practitioners and explored their professionalism related to CSR practices.

In terms of communication, both PR and CSR regard communication-based (i.e., symbolic) relationships as important as behavioral relationships (i.e., grounded in actions and events; Grunig, 1993; Kim, 2011). Kim (2011) asserts that investigating corporate communication strategies may help practitioners better manage publics' perception, corporate-public relationships, and corporate reputation. Similarly, CSR communication, or communicating an organization's CSR practices, is one of the main factors that affect the publics' judgments of corporate CSR practices. In the next section, the CSR communication model will be discussed.

CSR Communication

Scholars have emphasized the importance of CSR communication as well as CSR practices and have suggested some significant features of CSR communication (Epstein & Roy, 2001; Kim & Ferguson, 2014). First, CSR communication aims to increase awareness about CSR activities or issues (Kim & Ferguson, 2014). Second, CSR communication can influence publics' judgment about CSR activities (Maignan & Ferrell, 2001). However, scholars also pointed out that CSR communication can increase consumers' skepticism (2001). According to Coombs and Holladay (2011), frequent CSR communication and inconsistency of CSR communication may increase publics' skepticism. Pomeroy and Johnson (2009) investigated features of CSR communication and suggested that to avoid skepticism and to enhance the corporations' credibility, social topic information and long-term CSR commitment and specific impact should be provided. In sum, corporations need to communicate about their CSR practices mainly for increasing awareness, considering two objectives: increasing favorable response and minimizing skeptical response (Coombs & Holladay, 2011; Kim, 2014; Kim & Ferguson, 2014).

In spite of the importance of CSR communication strategies, their effectiveness has been relatively less examined. To fill this gap, this study examines the effects of CSR communication strategies by adopting the CSR communication model designed by Du et al. (2010). This model is based on previous CSR communication studies and provides various factors and mechanisms of the CSR communication process. As a result, this model provides theoretical and practical application by encompassing various factors of CSR communication.

Overview of the CSR Communication Model

In order to explain and predict the outcomes of CSR activities with any degree of certainty, one must understand the underlying processes that drive those returns. In particular, in

terms of CSR communication, it is important to understand how to communicate as well as what to communicate. Du et al. (2010) proposed a framework of CSR communication that encompasses various factors that affect the CSR process based on previous research. The model consists of five variables: message content, message channel, stakeholder characteristics, company characteristics, and internal and external outcomes (See Figure 2-1 for details).

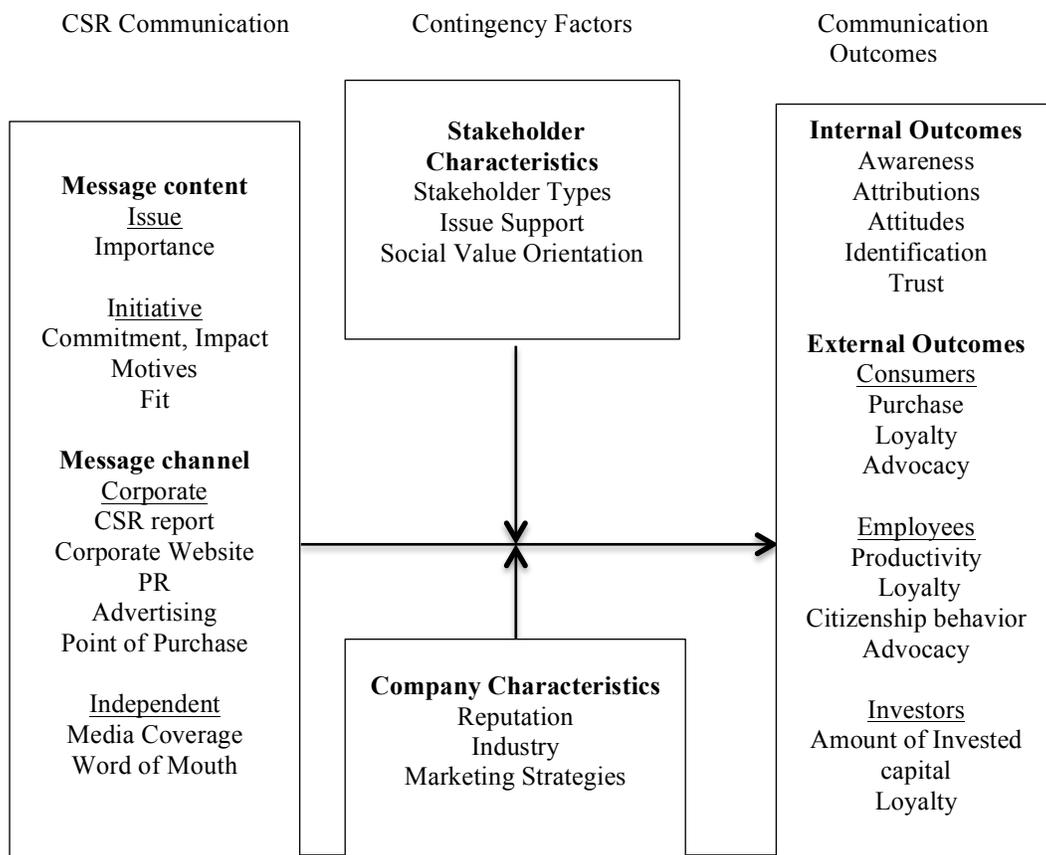


Figure 2-1. A framework of CSR communication (Du et al., 2010, p.11)

This model provides for internal and external outcomes. Internal outcomes are public awareness, attribution or attitudes, identification, and trust. External outcomes consist of purchase behavior, loyalty, and advocacy. Among those outcomes, this dissertation focuses on

consumer attitude toward company (internal outcome) and purchase intention (external outcomes), which have been frequently investigated in previous CSR studies. In addition, this dissertation also examines the effects on positive word-of-mouth intention (WOMI). In recent CSR and PR studies, WOMI is an important outcome to explain respondents' willingness to support and their positive attitudes toward an organization (e.g. Hong & Yang, 2009).

When it comes to message strategies, this model suggests various factors in designing strategic communication. In particular, Du et al. (2010) suggest issue, impact (benefit), motive, and fit as the main factors to be considered. According to the researchers, stakeholders will show different attitudes or behaviors depending on the strategies. In this study, issue type and motive were selected.

In addition, this model suggests message channel as another predictor of CSR effects. Message channel is the tool for delivering messages such as mass media, a CSR report, advertising, or social media. In this age, organizations and publics actively utilize new technologies for communication. They use two-way communication tools such as blogs, social networking sites (SNSs), and mobile applications (Li & Bernoff, 2008). Consumers are able to put strong pressure on companies to obtain what they want and give feedback on how they feel about companies' behaviors. Considering recent trend, this study examines the communication strategies on Facebook, one of the largest SNSs as a message channel. According to Dube (2015), there are five characteristics of SNSs: user-based, interactive, community-driven, relationships, and emotion over content. Due to those features, organizations actively use the SNSs for communication. By focusing on communication on SNSs, this study expects to find new insights into CSR communication effects in the new media environment.

In addition to predictor and outcome variables, the model suggested two types of moderators: company characteristics and stakeholder characteristics. With regard to company-specific factors, Du et al. (2010) asserted that characteristics of the company such as its corporate reputation, CSR positioning, and industry type would probably influence the effectiveness of CSR communication. Stakeholders' characteristics also moderate the effectiveness of CSR communication. Dawkins (2004) classified stakeholders into several groups such as opinion leaders, activists, and general publics. According to Dawkins, depending on the types of stakeholders, the effects of the CSR message may vary.

Since this study aims to provide insight into effective CSR communication strategies, the current study focuses on the linkage between CSR message strategies and outcomes. In addition, this study explores the moderator effect of individual perception of public. Public type will be discussed in the next section.

Outcome Variables

In previous CSR studies, researchers have examined tangible benefits of CSR such as financial performance and intangible benefits such as consumers' attitude toward corporations, reputation, image, and behavior intention (e.g., David et al., 2000; Du et al., 2007; Lii & Lee, 2012; Kim, 2011). In terms of CSR communication, scholars adopted similar outcomes to investigate the effects of the message or information. In this study, the researcher adopted one internal outcome and two external outcomes: attitude toward the company, purchase intention, and positive WOMI.

Attitude toward a company. Attitude toward a company refers to “the degree of positiveness or negativeness of the subject’s judgment of the corporation” (Marin & Ruiz, 2007, p. 249). Similarly, according to Lindenmann (2002), attitude is not only what people say about

something, but also what they feel about it.

In behavioral research, an attitude has been a crucial component. Some scholars assert that attitude is relatively stable, and thus it is useful in predicting an individual's behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Accordingly, scholars proposed a lineal model explaining the relationship among belief, attitude, and behavior. According to the model, belief causes attitude, and then attitude causes behavior. However, by reviewing literature, Festinger (1964) found that the causal relationship between attitudes and behaviors were not secured. Grunig and Hunt (1984) suggested that attitudes are very specific and situational, and thus people form or change their attitudes in accordance with the situation. Some CSR studies suggest a similar perspective. They found that, in some conditions, the CSR message affects attitude and behavior differently (Kim, 2014). Kim (2014) found that CSR messages positively influence behavior intention but not attitude toward the company. Sen and Bhattacharya (2006) asserted that internal outcomes and behavioral intention may be differentially affected by CSR initiative, and, thus, researchers should explore those outcomes distinctively.

Many PR scholars emphasized the importance of attitude to investigate the effectiveness of PR (e. g. Ki & Hon, 2007). Likewise, attitude is useful in measuring the effectiveness of CSR. Attitude toward company has been measured using various terms such as attitude toward company (Becker-Olsen et al., 2006), consumers' evaluation (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001), and trust in company (Lin, Chen, Chiu, & Lee, 2011). Most of those studies have yielded evidence of the positive effects of CSR on attitude toward a company (Lin et al., 2011; Marin & Ruiz, 2007). For instance, Sen and Bhattacharya (2006) found that when people support CSR activities, their evaluation of the corporation also tends to be high. David et al. (2005) examined the effect of

corporate image evaluation as a mediating variable of CSR on purchase intention and found that favorable evaluation is positively related to purchase intention.

When it comes to effects of CSR message strategies, Becker-Olsen et al. (2006) found that when the CSR issue was in high-fit condition with a public-serving motivation, people showed more positive attitudes toward the company. Kim (2011) compared the effects of message about CSR and message about corporate ability and found that the CSR message was more effective on consumers' evaluation of a company. Lii and Lee (2011) examined three types of CSR initiatives with different scenarios and found that the different types of initiatives influenced brand attitude differently.

In sum, previous studies found that CSR information can influence publics' attitude toward the company. In addition, depending on the strategies or conditions, the effects can vary.

Purchase intention. Purchase intention is used to predict buying behavior, which is the consumer's willingness to buy a specific product in the future. While the term is not actual behavior, purchase intention has been adopted by managers and researchers as a substitute for actual buying behavior. Dodd and Supa (2014) explained the relationship between CSR and purchase intention with the theory of planned behavior, which suggests, "a person's intention to perform (or not to perform) a behavior is the most important immediate determinant of that action" (Ajzen, 2005, p. 117). Perloff (2003) defined behavioral intention as "the intention to perform a particular behavior, a plan to put behavior into effect" (p. 92). Thus, purchase intention is good enough to predict consumers' actual behavior.

Recent marketplace polls and academic research also suggest the positive relation between CSR activities and purchase intention (Du et al., 2010; Kim, 2011). For instance, according to Cone Communication (2013), 54% of Americans have purchased a product with

social or environmental benefits, and almost 90% of Americans consider corporate socially and environmentally responsible practices when they purchase products.

Scholarly studies have also shown the positive relationship between CSR activities and purchase intention. For instance, Murray and Vogel (1997) found that CSR activities positively predict consumers' purchase intention. David and his colleagues (2005) examined four companies' CSR practices in three categories (moral, discretionary, and relational practice) and found that CSR activities positively affect corporate identity and purchase intention. Lee and Shin (2010) also found that there is a significant positive relationship between CSR awareness and consumers' purchase intention. Other researchers found that CSR activities are only indirectly related to purchase intention. For example, Lee et al. (2009) found that corporate philanthropy had indirect effects on purchase intention through attitude toward corporations. Some scholars found that CSR only seems to have a positive effect on consumers' purchase intention in certain conditions. For example, in Sen and Bhattacharya's study (2001), consumers showed positive purchase intention only when they supported the CSR activities.

O'Connor et al. (2008) conducted qualitative interviews with active moms and found partial support for the positive relationship between CSR activities and purchase intention. According to the researcher, participants decided to purchase not only based on corporations' CSR activities; they also considered corporations' CSR activities or ethical behavior.

Scholars also found effects of CSR communication strategies on purchase intention. Kim (2014) examined different communication strategies, presenting a public-serving motive or a firm-serving motive, and found that purchase intention can be different depending on the communication strategies. Becker-Olsen et al. (2006) found that, depending on four conditions, with two types of fit and two types of motives, the purchase intention can differ.

In sum, whether it is directly or indirectly effective, purchase intention has been used as an outcome of CSR and proven to be a reliable outcome to predict CSR effects.

Positive WOMI. Word-of-mouth (WOM) communication is defined as “informal, person-to-person communication between a perceived noncommercial communicator and a receiver regarding a brand, a product, an organization, or a service” (Harrison-Walker, 2001, p. 70). Focusing on the business sector, Brown et al. (2005) define WOM as “making others aware that one does business with a company or store, making positive recommendations to others about a company, extolling a company’s quality orientation, and so on” (p. 125). In particular, scholars emphasize the role of consumers in WOM communication. Consumers are powerful enough to influence other consumers, and thus their WOM can be an important communication channel (Godes & Mayzlin, 2004; Gremler, Gwinner, & Brown, 2001; Hong & Yang, 2011).

In marketing communication, positive WOM is regarded as one of the most powerful predictors (Hong & Yang, 2011) of marketing effects. Some scholars examined the effects of WOM on attitude toward the company. For instance, Day (1971) found that, compared to advertising, WOM was more effective in changing people’s attitude. Other scholars examined the effect of corporate behavior or information on positive WOM. For instance, Hong and Rim (2010) found that people who read corporate websites tend to show higher degree of WOM intention.

Lii and Lee (2011) explain consumers’ behavior in two categories: in-role behavior and extra-role behavior based on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) theories. In-role behavior means the formal part of the consumers’ activity like purchasing behavior. In contrast, extra-role behavior refers to more discretionary behaviors, such as making suggestions of products or services to others or engaging in positive WOM.

In terms of CSR, although not much research has been done regarding WOMI as an outcome of CSR, scholars have provided meaningful ideas. Sundaram et al. (1998) suggested that WOMI is related to supportive behavior. They found that people showed their support for CSR by engaging in WOM. Thus, by investigating the effects of CSR communication on WOMI, how much consumers support the CSR practices and how much they agree with the position that corporations hold can be predicted. Some scholars expected that the development of social media has made the power of WOMI even greater (Hong & Yang, 2009; Hong & Rim, 2010). Thus, for both researchers and practitioners, understanding when or under what conditions people are willing to engage in WOMI is required. In line with the previous research, the current study will examine CSR communication strategies effects on WOMI.

CSR Message Strategies

Du et al. (2010) suggested that CSR messages could be more effective depending on choice of issue or other message strategies such as motive, fit, and benefits. Dawkins (2004) also emphasized the importance of CSR communication strategies that fit with the corporate reputation and stakeholders' concerns.

Bhattacharya et al. (2008) suggest two aspects of publics' perception about CSR communication. First, publics evaluate CSR based on the degree to which the initiatives are seen to be effective in helping the beneficiaries and/or society. Second, publics consider the organization's motives in participating in CSR activities. In line with these suggestions, this study will focus on choosing an issue and presenting the motive as two message strategies.

CSR issues. According to Du et al. (2010), companies engage in environmentally and socially conscious activities for several reasons. The first is that regulations require them to do so. Second, CSR practices lower their risk exposure. Third, CSR provides a strategic

opportunity. In most cases, companies consider CSR practices because of the first two reasons and less often consider CSR as a strategic opportunity. However, previous studies emphasized the importance of strategic practices and strategic selection of issues or initiatives of CSR (Becker-Olsen et al., 2006; Park, Lee, & Kim, 2014). Lii and Lee (2012) found that consumers' attitude and behavior could be affected differently by various CSR practices. They examined sponsorship, CSR marketing, and philanthropy as CSR practices and found different effects on attitude and behavior. While they focused more on practice type, the result implies that people can establish different attitudes and behaviors toward a company depending on CSR issues. Similarly, Lee and Shin (2010) found that consequences could be different depending on the issues. They examined three types of CSR activities that are related to social issues such as corporate social contribution, local community contribution, and environmental contribution, and found that CSR activities surrounding environmental issues had little effect on purchase intention compared to other issues.

O'Connor et al. (2008) gave an insight of the importance of CSR issues. The study interviewed with active mothers and found that participants evaluated CSR based on the type of issue and expected corporations to combine CSR practices with an issue that is directly related to their lives. In addition, they expected companies to link the CSR issue with the company's business.

Park et al. (2014) examined four different CSR initiatives such as an ethical responsibility, a philanthropic responsibility, a legal responsibility, and an economic responsibility and found that only economic and legal responsibilities had a significant direct effect on corporate reputation. The effects on corporate reputation of philanthropic and ethical responsibilities were mediated by corporate trust. Regarding the relative effects of each type of CSR on corporate

reputation including direct effects and indirect effects, the study found that an ethical CSR initiative was most effective, followed by philanthropic, economic, and legal CSR initiatives. The findings imply that corporations need to be strategic in selecting a CSR issue or activity.

In terms of CSR communication, it is expected that people may have different attitudes and behavior toward a company depending on the issue of messages. Some studies examined the different effects of CSR messages between CSR-focused strategy and product/company-ability-focused strategy. Friestand and Wright (1994) found that when corporations mostly talk about a social issue rather than about the company or products, consumers are more likely to be suspicious of motives. Kim (2011) examined the effects of three types of corporate communication strategies: corporate ability (CAb), CSR, and hybrid (mixed strategies of CAb and CSR). A CAb-focused communication strategy emphasizes an organization's expertise and ability in terms of its products and services, while a CSR-focused strategy mainly provides information about the organization's social responsibility and a hybrid corporate communication strategy uses both. The findings indicated that when using CSR strategies, people evaluate both CSR and CAb positively. However, CAb strategies do not affect people's perception about CSR. When a hybrid strategy is used, people are likely to evaluate both the corporation's ability and CSR activities positively.

Kim and Choi (2013) examined the effects of different issues such as product-related CSR and product-unrelated CSR when examining tobacco companies' CSR effect. The result showed that tobacco-unrelated CSR is more positively related to purchase intention. This finding implies that consumers respond to CSR information differently in accordance with issue type.

Scholars also emphasized that companies should select issues that are beneficial to the target public. Bhattacharya et al. (2008) indicated that stakeholders evaluate CSR initiatives

based on the degree to which the initiatives are successful in providing intended beneficiaries. In other words, they perceive CSR initiatives in relation to the stated objectives of the initiatives. Thus, whether the issues are related to actual benefits of the stakeholders or to society in general is a necessary consideration for strategic communication.

The current study chose two issues based on Carroll's model and previous studies. Among four levels of CSR such as economic responsibilities, legal responsibilities, ethical responsibilities and philanthropic (discretionary) responsibilities, this study chose an issue related to production, an issue under an economic responsibility and an issue related to philanthropy, an issue under a philanthropic responsibility. More specifically, the study examines the effects of two different CSR messages with two issues (a message about an issue with a commitment to production and a message about an issue with a commitment to philanthropy) on publics' attitude toward a company, purchase intention, and word-of-mouth intention (WOMI). The following hypotheses are examined:

H1. A CSR message about a commitment to production has a more positive influence on attitude toward a company than a CSR message about a commitment to philanthropy.

H2. A CSR message about a commitment to production has a more positive influence on purchase intention than a CSR message about a commitment to philanthropy.

H3. A CSR message about a commitment to production has a more positive influence on intention of word-of-mouth than a CSR message about a commitment to philanthropy.

Motives. As mentioned in the previous section, historically CSR has been regarded as involving social and responsible behaviors. It seems that corporations do CSR beyond their own profits and interests. Nevertheless, some scholars and stakeholders undervalue CSR programs as just tools for publicity or marketing to increase their profits (Kim & Choi, 2012; David et al., 2005; L'Etang, 1994). Thus, it is crucial to state a corporation's motive for CSR practices to decrease stakeholder skepticism and increase favorable responses.

In terms of CSR motive, scholars have discussed two aspects of CSR motives: firm-serving motive, which means a business-related motive such as boosting sales or increasing awareness of the brand, and a public-serving motive, which is an intrinsic and altruistic motive (Becker-Olsen et al., 2006; Du et al. 2010; Kim & Choi, 2012). While stakeholders expect companies to serve the public or society, they become suspicious if companies promote CSR efforts with a public-serving motive only (Ellen et al., 2006; Forehand & Grier 2003; Yoon et al. 2006). Forehand and Grier (2003) also asserted that corporations can minimize stakeholder skepticism and increase the credibility of the CSR message by acknowledging both intrinsic and extrinsic motives in its CSR communication.

Kim (2014) examined different effects of a CSR message with two different CSR communication motive: public-serving motive only and public-serving motive and firm-serving motive. She found that when firm-serving motive was included with a public-serving motive, stakeholders showed a less skeptical attitude and more positive behavior intention. She also examined the role of corporate reputation on the effects of motives on attitude and behavior. For companies with bad reputations, a communication strategy with only a public-serving motive resulted in greater skepticism.

Similarly, Bae and Cameron (2006) also found that people tend to judge CSR motives depending on corporate reputation. They found that people inferred CSR activities as mutually beneficial when the company had a good reputation, but they believed CSR activities were self-interested when the company had a bad reputation.

While many studies examined two types of motives (public-serving motive vs. firm-serving motive), most scholars have emphasized a balance between the two types of motives. Du et al. (2010) suggest that only emphasizing public-serving motives without mentioning firm-

serving motives may cause skepticism because people tend to think the organization is hiding something. As mentioned above, Kim (2014) examined the different effects of two different strategies of stating motive and found that stating both motives encouraged participants to support the CSR, to seek employment with the company, to invest in the company, and to purchase from the company. Becker-Olsen et al. (2006) suggest that consumers believe that corporations' transparent communication is valuable. Thus, corporations do not need to hide a company's firm-serving motives.

Some studies measured perceived motive and examined the effects of perceived motive on attitude and behavior (e.g. Kim & Lee, 2012). Kim and Lee (2012) found that when people think the company practiced CSR with a more public-serving motive, they tend to believe that company is trustworthy and showed higher supportive and behavior intention. However, they also suggested that consumers referred to their previous perceptions of the company when they evaluated the companies' CSR.

While most scholars admit the importance of presenting the CSR motive, more investigation into the most effective way of communicating CSR is still required. Hence, this study will examine the effects of two different types of strategies of expressing motives (public-serving motive only vs. public-serving and firm-serving motive). The following hypotheses will be examined:

H4. A CSR message with a stated public-serving motive and a stated firm-serving motive will have a more positive influence on attitude toward companies than a message with a stated public-serving motive only.

H5. A CSR message with a stated public-serving motive and a stated firm-serving motive will have a more positive influence on purchase intention than a message with a stated public-serving motive only.

H6. A CSR message with a stated public-serving motive and a stated firm-serving motive will have a more positive influence on intention of word-of-mouth than a message a stated public-serving motive and a stated firm-serving motive.

In previous studies, scholars have found some interaction effects between motives and other factors such as fit, prior reputation, or characteristics of companies (Becker-Olsen et al., 2006; Kim, 2014). Based on those studies, it can be assumed that when combined with other variables, stated motives makes an interaction effect in the process. Thus, in spite of the lack of studies that examined the interaction effects of issue types and stated motives, the current study expects some interaction effects of two predictor variables. The following research question will be answered:

RQ1. Are there any interaction effects of issues and CSR motives on a) attitude toward company, b) purchase intention, and c) intention of WOM?

Covariate Variable

Corporate reputation. Fombrun (1996) defines reputation as “a perceptual representation of a company’s past actions and future prospects that describes the firm’s overall appeal to all of its key constituents when compared with other leading rivals” (p. 72). Hong and Yang (2009) defined corporate reputation as a public’s collective evaluation of a corporation’s behaviors and its abilities to make positive outcomes. Corporate reputation encompasses different dimensions such as product quality, innovative activities, value of investment, human resources, and CSR. A company’s reputation is distinct from its image (the view of the company held by external stakeholders) or how a company wants to be viewed by stakeholders (Davies, with Chun, DaSilva, & Roper, 2003; Pruzan, 2001). It is also different from an image established by companies (Davies et al., 2003).

While some scholars examine reputation as an outcome of CSR, others suggested that

CSR reputation has a direct effect on consumer responses, such as perceived corporate benefits (Lichtenstein et al. 2004), attitude (Marin & Ruiz 2007), and perception about corporate-consumer identification (Lii & Lee, 2011). Lyon and Cameron (2004) found that both purchase intention and attitudes were better toward companies with good reputations than toward companies with bad reputations. Some scholars suggest that reputation has moderator effects (An & Kwon, 2005; Bae & Cameron, 2007; Du et al., 2010; Lii & Lee, 2011), asserting that reputation is a pre-existing schema that stakeholders already have and use to interpret the information about the company including its CSR activities. For instance, when a company has a poor reputation, individuals may evaluate its CSR practices as a mere marketing tool. As a result, if a company with a bad reputation only emphasizes public-serving motives, that strategy may make people skeptical. In contrast, if those companies acknowledge firm-serving motives, they may reduce negative responses (Crowley & Hoyer, 1994). Overall, consumers showed skeptical attitudes when the company's reputation was low but have a more positive attitude toward a company or a brand when they think the company's reputation is high, regardless of choice of CSR issues (Kim, 2014).

In terms of motive, Lii and Lee (2011) found that if a company's prior reputation was favorable, people were more likely to perceive the CSR motive as more mutually beneficial. In addition, they found that corporate reputation plays a moderator role in the case of some CSR activities such as philanthropy but does not in the case of other activities such as sponsorship and CRM. The result implies that corporate reputation influences on consumers' attitude and behavior differently depending on the CSR activities. Thus, it is necessary to investigate corporate reputation before practicing CSR communications.

Since this study focuses on message strategies and outcomes, corporate reputation is not regarded as a main variable in the model. However, as previous studies suggested, the effects of reputation can be significant. Thus, for the purpose of controlling the potential effect, perceived reputation will be measured and regarded as a covariate variable.

Situational Theory of Publics

When it comes to understanding CSR information, people may have a different understanding and awareness of CSR. In addition, their involvement levels vary. Thus, communication effects can vary depending on people's perception of issue, constraint, and involvement. PR scholars have asserted that different types of publics form according to the issue. To segment publics based on their perception about an issue and to examine the communication effects among different types of publics, this study will adopt the situational theory of publics (STP). In this section, the basic conceptualization of STP, variables, and the way publics are segmented according to the theory will be discussed.

Overview of Situational Theory of Publics (STP)

The situational theory of publics (STP) is a foundational theory in public relations research and practices (Aldoory & Sha, 2006; Grunig, 1997). Grunig (1968) originally conceptualized the STP for making economic decisions. Later, this theory was expanded to the collective level to identify publics in different situations (Grunig, 1997).

Basically, situational theory explains the relationship between the degree of people's recognition of an issue (or problem) and their communication behavior regarding that issue. The theory assumes that people will actively seek information when they recognize an issue or a problem but will not if they do not recognize an issue or problem (Aldoory & Grunig, 2012; Grunig & Hunt, 1984). The theory consists of two dependent variables (i.e., active

communication behavior and passive communication behavior) and three independent variables (problem recognition, constraint recognition, and level of involvement) (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). Recently, the theory has been expanded by adding cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral outcomes as dependent variables and by examining the antecedent variables that may affect independent variables in the theory (Aldoory & Grunig, 2012; Aldoory & Sha, 2006). Because the STP is useful to explain and predict who is the most active public about an issue, the theory has been frequently adopted by both scholars and practitioners (Aldoory & Sha, 2006; McKeever, 2013). The theory also provides a framework for examining differences in publics' attitudes and behaviors toward the issue or organization among different types of publics (Grunig, 1997; Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Hamilton, 1992).

Situational theory has some strengths. First, it helps us understand the nature of publics (Aldoory & Grunig, 2012) as well as when and how publics communicate about the problem or issue. Grunig (1997) stated that by utilizing STP, public relations practitioners could both identify the public they most want to communicate with and understand the public most likely to communicate. This theory is also useful in breaking up the general population into more meaningful segments regarding an issue (Aldoory, 2001; Kim, Ni, & Sha, 2008; Sha, 2006; Tindall & Vaderman, 2008). Lastly, the theory is a useful way to evaluate the effectiveness of public relations campaigns (Kim & Ni, 2009; Kim, Shen, & Morgan, 2009).

By applying STP to CSR, this study expects to find CSR effects on various types of publics. In addition, by examining the relationship between publics' perception regarding CSR issues and communication behavior, the study will be able to identify effective communication strategies. In the next section, specific variables in the theory will be discussed.

Variables of STP

The STP predicts communication behavior according to three independent variables (Grunig, 1978; Grunig & Hunt, 1984): problem recognition, constraint recognition, and level of involvement. The dependent variables are information processing and information seeking.

Independent variables. The independent variables of STP are situational because they are people's perception about specific situations, problems, or issues (Grunig, 1997). Originally, Grunig suggested four situational, independent variables (i.e., problem recognition, constraint recognition, involvement, and referent criterion). Referent criterion was later dropped because of its low reliability and validity (Grunig & Hunt, 1984).

The first independent variable is *problem recognition*, which is defined as the extent to which individuals perceive a problem. According to Grunig and Hunt, people stop to think about an issue or problem if they realize that they should do something about it. Studies have found a positive relationship between the degree of problem recognition and communication behavior. For instance, Major (1993) found that, regardless of the degree of involvement, people who perceive a problem to be important tend to seek and process information more than people who do not perceive there to be a problem.

The second variable, *constraint recognition* refers to the extent to which individuals perceive factors that inhibit their ability to solve a problem or act in relation to an issue (Aldoory & Sha, 2006; Grunig & Hunt, 1984; McKeever, 2013; Sriramesh et al., 2007). When people face a problem or issue, some first perceive the problem or issue exists. At the same time, they also perceive constraints that might limit their behavior. If they realize they have little choice or if the solution or the behavior has little value to them, the degree of constraint recognition will be high. Generally, degree of constraint recognition is negatively related to communication behavior in

STP. That is, when people believe that they cannot do anything about the issue or situation, they are less likely to communicate about it even when their problem recognition and perceived involvement with the situation are high (Aldoory & Sha, 2006; Kim, Shen, & Morgan, 2011; McKeever, 2013).

The third variable is the level of involvement. *Level of involvement* is defined as the degree of perceived connection between people and an issue or a problem (Aldoory, 2009; Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Kim et al., 2011; McKeever, 2013). Grunig (1976) found that some people did not have any interest in issues even though they recognized them. Accordingly, they did not seek information regarding the issues. To explain this type of people, Grunig (1997) suggested a concept of level of involvement, which was first introduced by Krugman (1965). Grunig regarded involvement as a primary variable in categorizing public types. Individuals who are highly involved in or connected with the issue prefer messages that contain more and better arguments and attain greater knowledge levels. In addition, high involvement will cause active information seeking.

While the other variables have been rarely adopted in CSR studies, involvement has been frequently adopted as a moderator or a predictor in CSR studies. For instance, Hong et al. (2010) found that the more people believe they are involved in the issue, the higher their purchase intention. Involvement is also related to issue type in examining effects of communication message. Previous studies suggest that when people have high involvement in a certain issue, they tend to show more positive attitude or behavior intention. While this study does not consider the independent variables separately, this study will examine the different level of involvement when examining the issue type to interpret why people have different attitudes toward a company and behavior intention depending on the issue type.

Dependent variables. Situational theory originally had two dependent variables: information seeking and information processing (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). *Information seeking* is usually considered more important than information processing because of the degree of activeness. According to Grunig and Hunt, information seeking is a deliberate search for information about an issue. *Information processing*, on the other hand, is unplanned accepting of a message followed by continued processing of it. Information processing means that people just absorb information without any effort (Aldoory & Sha, 2007).

Some scholars use the term “*information gaining*” to encompass both information processing and information seeking, arguing that it is hard to distinguish information processing from information seeking in today’s media environment (e.g., Aldoory, Kim, & Tindall, 2010; McKeever, 2013). Passive information gaining means that individuals receive information presented to them but do not gather information actively. Active information gaining implies that individuals make efforts to gain or consume information about an issue, which may lead to subsequent, relevant behaviors. Considering the change of media environment, this dissertation also uses the term information gaining. High level of information gaining means more active communication behavior and vice versa. Knowing whether information is actively or passively processed is useful in public relations to help identify message strategy and medium of delivery (Grunig, 1997).

Segmentation of Publics

The main idea of the STP is that communication behavior can be predicted based on publics’ types. Thus, based on the theory, practitioners can segment their publics and then make strategic communication plans for each type of public, developing different communication

strategies and allocating different amounts of resources to match the different priorities (Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Grunig & Repper, 1992).

Grunig and Hunt (1984) grouped general publics into four types by combining the three situational variables. *Active publics* organize to do something about the problem and actively seek information. They have high problem recognition, high involvement, and low constraint recognition. According to Reber et al. (2013), members of the active public are likely to serve as supporters for the corporation's practice or campaign and to influence members of other public types regarding the issue. Thus, the company should build a good relationship with the active public. *Aware publics* have high problem recognition and involvement but, due to higher levels of constraint recognition, do not move to action. Once constraints are removed, aware publics are more likely to become active. *Latent publics* have low problem recognition, but their level of involvement is above moderate level. Issues do not make people interested until they see personal connections. Organizations often believe they need a relationship with latent public who might recognize a problem or an issue but not perceive any connection between them and the problem or the issue. This type of public also feels constrained in doing something about the issue or the problem. Due to this characteristic, latent publics are often designated as targets of campaign messages. *Nonpublics*, who do not have a relationship with an organization, tend to not be organized in any meaningful way with respect to the problem at hand; they are not involved with the problem (Aldoory & Sha, 2007; Grunig, 1993; Grunig & Hunt, 1984). The type of public is described in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2. The types of publics

Problem recognition	Constraint recognition	Involvement	Public type
High	High	High	Aware Public
		Low	Latent Public
	Low	High	Active Public
		Low	Aware Public
Low	High	High	Latent Public
		Low	Nonpublic
	Low	High	Aware Public
		Low	Latent Public

In spite of the fact that publics have different attitudes based on their perception about CSR, most studies regarding CSR effectiveness do not consider different types of publics. One study conducted by Kim and Yang (2009) found that active publics who were highly engaged with CSR issues have more positive attitudes when they think the motive of the CSR is based on both public-serving and firm-serving motives. This indicates that active publics tend to judge CSR issues based on stricter and more rational criteria.

In sum, by adopting the STP, this study first will identify public type and then will examine the different effects depending on the types. The study will address the following research question:

RQ2: Does the type of public (active, aware, latent, nonpublic) moderate the relationship between CSR message strategies and a) attitude toward company, b) purchase intention, and c) intention of WOM?

Overall Summary, Experimental Hypotheses, and Research Questions

This study aims to examine the effects of CSR message strategies on publics' attitudes toward the company, purchase intention, and word-of-mouth intention. For CSR message strategies, issue type and stated motive are examined. For the issue type, three hypotheses will be tested about the different effects between an issue related to the commitment to production and an issue related to the commitment to philanthropy. The following hypotheses will be examined.

H1. A CSR message about a commitment to production has a more positive influence on attitude toward a company than a CSR message about a commitment to philanthropy.

H2. A CSR message about a commitment to production has a more positive influence on purchase intention than a CSR message about a commitment to philanthropy.

H3. A CSR message about a commitment to production has a more positive influence on intention of word-of-mouth than a CSR message about a commitment to philanthropy.

For stated motive, three hypotheses will be examined. Based on previous studies, the study examined public-serving motive with firm-serving motive and public-serving motive only. The following hypotheses will be examined.

H4. A CSR message with a stated public-serving motive and a stated firm-serving motive will have a more positive influence on attitude toward company than a message with a stated public-serving motive only.

H5. A CSR message with a stated public-serving motive and a stated firm-serving motive will have a more positive influence on purchase intention than a message with a stated public-serving motive only.

H6. A CSR message with a stated public-serving motive and a stated firm-serving motive will have a more positive influence on intention of word-of-mouth than a message a stated public-serving motive and a stated firm-serving motive.

In addition, to investigate the interactive effects of communication strategies, the following research questions will be examined:

RQ1. Are there any interaction effects of issue and CSR motives on a) attitude toward company, b) purchase intention, and c) intention of WOM?

Lastly, considering the importance of the type of public in strategic communication, this study examines the moderator effect of the type of public. Based on the STP, the study first segmented participants into four types of public and examined the effect of the type of public.

Research question two is proposed as follows:

RQ2: Does the type of public (active, aware, latent, nonpublic) moderate the relationship between CSR message strategies and a) attitude toward company, b) purchase intention, and c) intention of WOM?

The conceptual model for this study is presented in Figure 2-2.

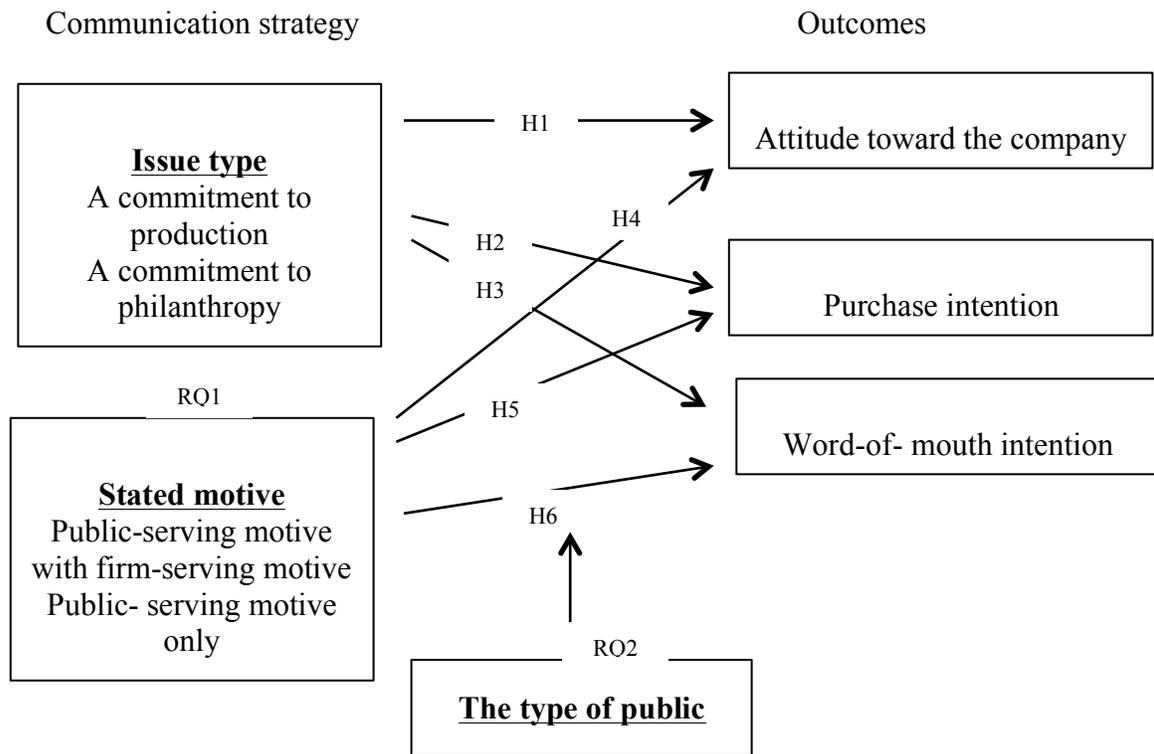


Figure 2-2. The conceptual model for the study

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Participants

The main purpose of this study is to examine the impact of CSR message strategies on publics' attitude toward corporations, purchase intention, and positive WOMI. In addition, this study examines the moderator effect of the type of public in the process of CSR communication.

To examine the hypotheses and answer the research questions, an online self-administered experiment was employed. A between-subject design without a control group was employed because the aim is to compare different types of conditions rather than to examine different levels of a factor. Two 2 (CSR issue type: a message about a commitment to production vs. a message about a commitment to philanthropy) X 2 (stated motive: public-serving motive with firm-serving motive, public-serving motive only) factorial experiments were conducted using two companies. To enhance external validity and consider companies' individual differences, this study chose two existing companies, Target and Walmart.

To determine the sample size, the researcher used G Power's statistical power analysis. A priori sample size of 171 participants was required to provide the minimum acceptable power at the 95% confidence level. Considering the possible incompleteness rate, 306 participants were recruited from the undergraduate student population of a large Southeastern university in the United States. Based on survey completion and manipulation check results, 272 respondents were finally included in the analysis. Among those respondents, 134 (49.3%) viewed Target

stimuli, and 138 (50.7%) viewed Walmart stimuli. All students received course extra credit for participating.

Stimulus Development

To develop the stimulus, the researcher first conducted a pretest to choose companies for the study. Ten significant companies (Apple, Chick-fil-A, Coca-Cola, Kellogg's, McDonalds, Microsoft, Samsung, Starbucks, Target, and Walmart) were chosen from the list of *Fortune 500* and the list of *the most admired companies*. Then, the researcher conducted a pretest with 83 college students. Using a 5-point Likert scale, familiarity and evaluation toward the companies were measured, and Target and Walmart were finally chosen. In terms of evaluation, although companies' difference in preference is not a topic of this study, to avoid biased results, this study chose two companies that have contrasting reputations. Target had a high score in evaluation ($M = 4.18$, $SD = .880$) and Walmart had a low score ($M = 3.06$, $SD = 1.290$) in evaluation and both have sufficient variances. Both Target and Walmart scored high in familiarity (Walmart: $M = 4.6$, $SD = .912$ and Target: $M = 4.8$, $SD = .816$).

After deciding on the corporations, the researcher chose ten issues (five issues related to production and five issues related to corporate philanthropy) possibly related to the companies. Another pretest was conducted with 32 students who were asked about their familiarity with each issue, its importance in society, and its importance to themselves. Based on the result, an issue about a commitment to production and an issue about a commitment to philanthropy were selected. A company's endeavor to provide products with less sugar and sodium was chosen as the issue related to a commitment to production (familiarity: $M = 3.7$, $SD = 1.07$; importance for society: $M = 4.07$, $SD = .785$; importance for individuals: $M = 3.63$, $SD = .999$) and the fight against childhood obesity (familiarity: $M = 4.1$, $SD = .759$; importance for society: $M = 4.57$, SD

= .504; importance for individuals: $M = 3.52$, $SD = .1.09$) was selected for the issue related to a commitment to philanthropy.

With regard to stated motives, previous studies suggested that presenting a public-serving motive with a firm-serving motive is more effective than presenting a public-serving motive only. In addition, it is not common to provide a firm-serving motive only in the real world. Thus, even though some studies examined different effects between public-serving motive and firm-serving motive, this study used public-serving motive only and public-serving motive with firm-serving motive. All stimuli contained a text message with visual presentation. The four different messages for Target are provided in Table 3-1 and all the stimuli used in the survey are presented in Appendix 1.

Procedures

Before the online questionnaire was released, a pretest was conducted with 25 college students to examine reliability and understandability of stimuli and questionnaires. The participants were asked to answer the survey and also asked to give opinions about readability and believability. After the pretest, the researcher modified the questionnaires and stimuli based on the result.

In the main test, respondents were randomly assigned to one of eight conditions. Once the experiment began, participants were asked to report their experience with the company or products and their prior perceptions of the company reputation before being exposed to the CSR messages. In the following section, participants were asked to read a fictitious post on Facebook containing the company's CSR message. After reading the articles, subjects were asked to answer questions regarding problem recognition, constraint recognition, involvement, communication behavior, attitude toward the company, purchase intention, and WOMI.

Questions to check the manipulation were also provided. The survey took about 15 minutes to complete on average.

Table 3-1. Message Contents of Experimental Test for Target

Issue Type	Motive	Message
Issue of commitment to production	Public-serving motive only	Target announced its commitment to provide healthier foods. Target will reduce sodium by 25% and added sugars by 10%. Target continues to integrate sustainable practices for our communities. We hope to contribute to improving public health.
	Public-serving motive with firm-serving motive	Target announced its commitment to providing healthier foods. Target will reduce sodium by 25% and added sugar by 10%. Target continues to integrate sustainable practices for our business and society. We hope to contribute to improving public health as well as to generate more profits.
Issue of commitment to philanthropy	Public-serving motive only	Target announced its commitment to supporting childhood obesity prevention and wellness programs. Target continues to integrate sustainable practices for our communities. We hope to contribute to improving public health.
	Public-serving motive with firm-serving motive	Target announced its commitment to supporting childhood obesity prevention and wellness programs. Target continues to integrate sustainable practices for our business and society. We hope to contribute to improving public health as well as to generate more profits.

Measurement

Most of the measures in this study were adapted from previous research on CSR (e.g., David et al., 2005; Kim, 2011; Kim & Choi, 2012; Lii & Lee, 2012; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001)

and STP (e.g., Aldoory et al., 2010; Hamilton, 1992; Kim et al; 2012; McKeever, 2014). Using the internal consistency method, scale reliability was assessed. Cronbach's alpha (α) provided a reasonable estimate of internal consistency and was above 0.7 for all variables, which is an acceptable level (Nunnally, 1978).

Dependent Variables

For H1 to H6, RQ1, and RQ2, three dependent variables were measured: attitude toward corporation, purchase intention, and positive WOMI.

Attitude toward a corporation. As in previous studies, attitude toward corporations was operationalized as “overall degree of favorability” (Ajzen, 2001, p. 29) toward the company. In previous studies, attitude toward a company or a brand was usually measured by five items (Ajzen, 2001; Brown & Dacin, 1997; Chung, Lee, & Heath, 2013; Wigley, 2008): good/bad, favorable/unfavorable, satisfactory/unsatisfactory, positive/negative, and like/dislike. All those items were measured with 7-point bipolar adjective scales (Cronbach's $\alpha = .967$).

Purchase intention. Based on previous studies (David et al., 2005; Kim, 2014; Lee & Shin, 2013), purchase intention was measured using two items: “How probable is it that you would like to pay for products/services from this company?” and “If there were another brand as good as this company, would you still prefer to buy the products of this company?” All the measures used 7-point scales (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree; Cronbach's $\alpha = .763$).

Positive WOM intention. To measure customers' intention to engage in positive WOM, measurement scales used in previous studies (Harrison-Walker, 2001; Hong & Yang, 2009) were used, adapting the wording to fit the context of the current study. This variable was measured with two items: “How likely would you be to talk about the company favorably?” and “How

likely would you be to recommend the company or the products of the company to friends or family members?" (Cronbach's $\alpha = .885$).

Variables Related to Moderator Variable

The moderator variable, public type should be calculated through several steps. First, three variables of STP were measured by several continuous items. Then, those items were recoded into a categorical variable with two categories. In the last step, the scores of three categorical variables were summed. The final situational scores range from 0 to 3. Those who got 3 were considered an active public, 2 an aware public, and 1 a latent public. Those who had a score of 0 were named as a nonpublic.

Previous STP studies used or adapted the scale developed by Grunig (1978, 1993) to suit the requirements of the issues and situations under study. This study adopted scales mainly from McKeever's study (2013) because of the similarity of the research.

Problem recognition. This variable was measured with three items: "I am aware of the issue addressed in the post," "How likely would you be to stop to think about this issue?" "How likely would you stop and think about what you can do to help with the problem?" All the questions were measured using seven-point scales (Q1: 1 = very unlikely, 7 = very likely, Q2-3: 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree; Cronbach's $\alpha = .706$)

Constraint recognition. This variable was measured by asking respondents the extent to which they can do something about this issue. Two items were used to measure this variable: "If I personally tried to do something about the issue, I think that I could make a difference in the way that the issue is handled." "I believe that I could affect the way the issue is eventually solved if I wanted to." Response options ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree; Cronbach's $\alpha = .779$).

Involvement. This variable was measured by asking two items: “I believe the issue addressed in the post could involve me or someone closely related to me” and “To what extent is the issue in the post important to you personally?” All items were answered on 7-point scales (Q1: 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree; Q2: 1 = not at all, 7 = very strongly; Cronbach’s α = .865).

Information gaining (communication behavior). Although communication behavior is not the topic of this study, this variable was measured to validate the successful segmentation of type of public. Originally, STP had two communication behaviors, information seeking and information processing. However, Aldoory et al. (2010) combined these two variables into one composite variable called information gaining because the two variables conceptually were included in one dimension and showed strong correlations. Adopting this idea, this study also measured information gaining as a communication behavior. The variable was measured with two items: “How likely would you be to pay attention to the issue in the story, if you have a chance to hear or see news regarding the issue?” and “How likely would you be to search for more information about the issue portrayed in the post?” (Cronbach’s α = .868).

Covariate variable

Corporate reputation. Since this study focuses on the effects of CSR communication strategies, corporate reputation was considered as a covariate variable. Corporate reputation was operationalized as participants’ prior perception of corporations’ behavior. Perceived corporate reputation has been used as a moderator variable in previous CSR studies. To measure corporate reputation, four items were adopted from previous studies (Berens, van Riel, & van Bruggen, 2005; Lichtenstein et al., 2004; Lii & Lee, 2012): “I admire and respect the company,” “I think the company offers high quality products and services,” “I have a good feeling about the

company,” and “I think the company’s reputation for socially responsible behavior is above average for the industry.” Those questions were measured with a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). Cronbach’s alpha is .902 for Target and .898 for Walmart.

Manipulation Check

The following questions were designed to assess the effectiveness of the manipulation. First of all, to check their understanding of the stimuli, participants were asked, “What was the main topic of the post?” Participants chose one of four options: 1) Target’s commitment to providing healthy foods, 2) Target’s commitment to supporting a childhood obesity prevention and wellness program, 3) Walmart’s commitment to providing healthy foods, and 4) Walmart’s commitment to supporting a childhood obesity prevention and wellness program. To check the effectiveness of the two different types of motive, participants rated three bipolar items: self-interested/community interested, firm-focused/customer-focused, and profit-motivated/socially motivated.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This chapter consists of five parts. First, the demographic profile of the sample is presented. In the second section, the manipulation check is discussed. The third section is the covariate variable analysis. The fourth section analyzes the hypotheses, and the last section will report the results of the two research questions.

Demographic Profile of the Sample

Among 306 participants, 34 were excluded from the analysis because of incomplete surveys and incorrect answers on the manipulation check, for a final sample size of 272 for the analysis. Participants were randomly assigned to one of eight conditions. The number of each condition is detailed in Table 4-1. Of the 272 participants in this study, 223 were female and 49 were male. The mean age of the participants was 19 years old ($SD = 1.09$ years), ranging from 17 ($n = 4$) to 24 ($n = 2$). In terms of ethnicity, a large portion of the sample was Caucasian ($n = 222$; 81.6%), followed by African-American ($n = 22$; 8.1%), Hispanic ($n = 10$; 3.7%), Asian ($n = 8$; 2.9%), or other ($n = 6$; 2.2 %). Four people did not answer the question. For Target, 106 females (79.1%) and 28 males (20.9%) completed the questionnaires. For Walmart, 117 females (84.8%) and 21 males (15.2%) participated in the survey. Table 4-2 gives the complete demographic profile for each condition. While the sample is skewed toward female, the independent t -test showed that there was no difference between the two gender groups. For attitude toward a company, t value ($df = 270$) is $-.591$ ($p > .05$) ($M_{male} = 5.16$, $SD = 1.25$; $M_{female} = 5.29$, $SD = 1.46$). For purchase intention, t value ($df = 270$) is $-.817$ ($p > .05$) ($M_{male} = 4.8$, $SD = 1.46$; M_{female}

= 5.0, $SD = 1.58$). For WOMI, t value ($df = 270$) is $-.403$ ($p > .05$) (Attitude: $M_{male} = 4.73$, $SD = 1.53$; $M_{female} = 4.83$, $SD = 1.51$). Likewise, with regard to ethnicity groups, Caucasians account for about 80% of the sample. However, the ANOVA test indicated that no difference existed among groups. For attitude toward a company, $F(3, 258)$ value is $.453$ ($p > .05$) ($M_{African American} = 5.37$, $SD = 1.37$; $M_{Asian/Pacific} = 4.8$, $SD = .52$; $M_{Caucasian} = 5.2$, $SD = 1.46$; $M_{Hispanic} = 4.9$, $SD = 1.5$). For purchase intention, $F(3, 258)$ value is $.321$ ($p > .05$) ($M_{African American} = 5.02$, $SD = 1.3$; $M_{Asian/Pacific} = 4.6$, $SD = .83$; $M_{Caucasian} = 4.99$, $SD = 1.9$; $M_{Hispanic} = 4.6$, $SD = 1.56$). For WOMI, $F(3, 258)$ value is $.706$ ($p > .05$) ($M_{African American} = 4.96$, $SD = 1.6$; $M_{Asian/Pacific} = 4.56$, $SD = 1.49$; $M_{Caucasian} = 4.88$, $SD = 1.48$; $M_{Hispanic} = 4.25$, $SD = 1.75$).

Table 4-1 Manipulation and participants

Company	Issue type	Stated motives	Participants
Target	A commitment to production	Public-serving motive only	34
		Public-serving motive with firm-serving motive	35
	A commitment to philanthropy	Public-serving motive only	33
		Public-serving motive with firm-serving motive	32
Walmart	A commitment to production	Public-serving motive only	35
		Public-serving motive with firm-serving motive	36
	A commitment to philanthropy	Public-serving motive only	34
		Public-serving motive with firm-serving motive	33

Table 4-2. Demographic profile of the sample

Variable	Category	Participants
Target		
Gender	Female	106 (79.1%)
	Male	28 (20.9%)
Ethnicity	African-American	13 (9.7%)
	Asian-American	5 (3.7%)
	Caucasian	107 (79.9%)
	Hispanic	2 (1.5%)
	Other	5 (3.7%)
Walmart		
Gender	Female	117 (84.8%)
	Male	21 (15.2%)
Ethnicity	African-American	9 (6.5%)
	Asian-American	3 (2.2%)
	Caucasian	115 (83.3%)
	Hispanic	8 (5.8%)
	Other	1 (0.7%)

Manipulation Check

This study manipulated CSR issue type and stated motive of the CSR. Issue type was confirmed by a question recalling the topic of the post. Those who failed to recall the topic were removed from the analysis. In terms of stated motives, independent *t*-tests were conducted to compare the two scores between public-serving motive only and public-serving motive with firm-serving motive. Three items with 5-point bipolar scales were tested and the results showed the differences were all statistically significant ($M_{public\ only} = 3.26$, $SD = 1.61$; $M_{public\ \&\ firm} = 3.70$, $SD = 1.61$; $t [270] = -2.385$, $p < .05$). A lower score means that participants perceived the motive

of CSR activity as more centered on public serving and a higher score means that participants perceived the motive as more firm serving.

Confounding Variable Analysis

Perceived reputation was measured to determine if this variable would have a confounding effect on the dependent variable. Regression analyses and one-way ANOVA were conducted. In order to be considered a covariate in the analysis of the hypotheses and research questions, the confounding variable must be significantly correlated to each possible dependent variable, and there must not be a significant correlation between the confounding variable and each possible independent variable. The results showed that perceived corporate reputation was determined to be a significant predictor of attitude toward companies (Target: $R^2 = .310$, $F(1, 132) = 60.63$, $p < 0.001$; Walmart: $R^2 = .495$, $F(1, 136) = 133.208$, $p < 0.001$), purchase intention (Target: $R^2 = .223$, $F(1, 132) = 37.895$, $p < 0.001$; Walmart: $R^2 = .401$, $F(1, 136) = 91.106$, $p < 0.001$), and positive WOMI (Target: $R^2 = .084$, $F(1, 132) = 12.06$, $p < 0.05$; Walmart: $R^2 = .325$, $F(1, 136) = 65.38$, $p < 0.001$). In addition, this variable was not significantly correlated to either independent variable: type of issue (Target: $F(1, 139) = .147$, $p > .05$; Walmart: $F(1, 142) = .037$, $p > .05$) and stated motive (Target: $F(1, 139) = .016$, $p > .05$; Walmart: $F(1, 142) = 2.193$, $p > .05$). Thus, based on the result, the current study regarded corporate reputation as a covariate for every analysis.

Creating and Validating Moderate Variable

Using three situational variables, this study segmented participants into four types of public. To examine if the public types were segmented properly, information-gaining behavior was explored. According to the STP, publics can be categorized into four types based on their perception about the issue and their perception about involvement with the issue (Aldoory &

Sha, 2007). The result showed that the means of information gaining behavior among the four different publics are significantly different. In addition, it also appeared that more active public tend to gain information more actively, a finding that accords with previous studies.

Table 4-3. The four types of public and communication behavior (information gaining)

	Public type	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Post hoc</i>
Target					16.35***	
	Nonpublic (A)	34	2.59	.87		A < B*
	Latent public (B)	47	3.36	1.2		A < C***
	Aware public(C)	43	3.99	1.13		A < D***
	Active public (D)	10	4.9	1.15		B < C* B < D*** C < D**
	Total	134	3.4	1.27		
Walmart					28.96**	
	Nonpublic (A)	32	2.24	1.1		A < B**
	Latent public (B)	50	3.24	1.38		A < C***
	Aware public (C)	41	4.25	1.23		A < D***
	Active public (D)	14	5.57	1.11		B < C** B < D*** C < D**
	Total	137	3.54	1.59		

Note. Post Hoc: Bonferroni

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Data Analysis for Hypotheses and Research Questions

H1, H2, and H3 examined the differences of means of level of attitude toward the company, purchase intention, and positive WOMI by exposing participants to different types of CSR issue. Three dependent variables were measured via 7-point Likert scales and the scores of each item were summed and averaged to calculate mean values. Since each hypothesis was tested with a covariate variable (i.e., perceived corporate reputation), several univariate analysis

of covariance (ANCOVA) tests were conducted. Because the difference between companies is not the concern of this study, two separate analyses were conducted for each company.

H1 predicted that people who are exposed to the corporations' Facebook post about an issue of a company's commitment to production would be more likely to have a more positive attitude toward the company than those who were exposed to a post about an issue of a company's commitment to philanthropy. In the case of the group exposed to the Target stimulus, no significant difference between the two different issue types existed. However, in the case of the group exposed to the Walmart stimulus, the ANCOVA test showed that there was a significant effect of issue type after controlling for the effect of corporate reputation ($F(1,136) = 4.236, p < .05, \eta^2 = .030$). Issue types explained 3% when controlling the level of corporate reputation, which indicates that participants who read a post about the company's commitment to production showed a higher mean value of attitude toward the company (adjusted $M = 4.713$) than did participants who read a post about the company's commitment to philanthropy (adjusted $M = 4.373$). Therefore, hypothesis 1 was partially supported. See Table 4-4 for details.

Table 4-4. ANCOVA results of different effects of issue type on attitude toward a company

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η^2
Target	Corrected model	2	30.115	.000	.315
	Intercept	1	43.790	.000	.251
	Corporate reputation	1	58.576	.000	.309
	Issue	1	.038	.846	.000
Walmart	Corrected model	2	70.307	.000	.510
	Intercept	1	67.843	.000	.334
	Corporate reputation	1	135.787	.000	.501
	Issue	1	4.236	.042	.030

H2 predicted that people who were exposed to the corporations' Facebook post about an issue of a company's commitment to production would be more likely to have greater purchase intention than those who were exposed to a post about an issue of a company's commitment to philanthropy. The ANCOVA test showed that there was a significant effect of issue type on purchase intention after controlling for the effect of corporate reputation for both companies (Target: $F(1,132) = 9.017, p < .01, \eta^2 = .064$; Walmart: $F(1,136) = 4.294, p < .05, \eta^2 = .031$). Therefore, hypothesis 2 was supported. In the case of Target, the issue of message explained about 6.4% of variance, which indicates that participants who read a message about the company's commitment to production showed a higher mean value of purchase intention (adjusted $M = 5.9$) than did participants who read a message about the company's commitment to philanthropy (adjusted $M = 5.4$). In the case of Walmart, the issue of message explained about 3.1% of variance, which indicates that participants who read a message about the company's commitment to production showed a higher mean value of purchase intention (adjusted $M = 4.49$) than did participants who read a message about the company's commitment to philanthropy (adjusted $M = 4.06$). See Table 4-5.

Table 4-5. ANCOVA results of different effects of issue type on purchase intention

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η^2
Target	Corrected model	2	24.682	.000	.274
	Intercept	1	26.511	.000	.168
	Corporate reputation	1	45.057	.000	.256
	Issue	1	9.017	.003	.064
Walmart	Corrected model	2	48.249	.000	.417
	Intercept	1	26.072	.000	.162
	Corporate reputation	1	91.718	.000	.405
	Issue	1	4.294	.040	.031

H3 predicted that people who were exposed to the corporations' Facebook post about the company's commitment to production would be more likely to have greater WOMI than those who were exposed to a post about the company's commitment to philanthropy. The ANCOVA test showed that there was a significant effect of issue type on positive WOMI after controlling for corporate reputation for both companies (Target: $F(1,132) = 12.4, p < .01, \eta^2 = .086$; Walmart: $F(1,136) = 4.63, p < .05, \eta^2 = .033$). Therefore, hypothesis 3 was supported. In the case of Target, issue type explained about 8.6% of variance, which indicates that participants who read the message about a company's commitment to production showed a higher mean value of purchase intention (adjusted $M = 5.6$) than did participants who read the message about a company's commitment to philanthropy (adjusted $M = 4.86$). In the case of Walmart, issue type explained about 3.3% of variance, which indicates that participants who read a message about the company's commitment to production showed a higher mean value of purchase intention (adjusted $M = 4.62$) than did participants who read a message about the company's commitment to philanthropy (adjusted $M = 4.15$). See Table 4-6.

Table 4-6. ANCOVA results of different effects of issue type on positive WOMI

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η^2
Target	Corrected model	2	12.926	.000	.165
	Intercept	1	22.066	.000	.144
	Corporate reputation	1	17.033	.000	.115
	Issue	1	12.403	.001	.086
Walmart	Corrected model	2	34.196	.000	.336
	Intercept	1	43.380	.000	.243
	Corporate reputation	1	63.345	.000	.319
	Issue	1	4.629	.033	.033

H4, H5, and H6 explored the difference of means of level of attitude toward the company, purchase intention, and positive WOMI when exposed to different types of motive. Similar to the effect of issue type, each hypothesis was tested with a covariate variable (i.e., perceived corporate reputation). Accordingly, several ANCOVA tests were conducted.

H4 predicted that people who were exposed to the CSR message with public-serving motive and firm-serving motive would be more likely to have a positive attitude toward the company than those who were exposed to the post with the public-serving message only. The ANCOVA test showed that the mean value of attitude toward the company was not significantly different when participants were exposed to the message with public-serving motive and firm-serving motive together than when participants were exposed to the message with only public-serving motive (Target: $F(1,132) = .245, p > .05$; Walmart: $F(1,136) = .029, p > .05$). As seen in Table 4-7, there was a small difference between the two conditions. Hence, H4 was not supported.

Table 4-7. Descriptive mean comparisons of the attitude toward a company of different conditions of stated motive

Company	Motive type	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Target	Public-serving motive and firm-serving motive	67	5.98	1.11
	Public-serving motive only	67	6.0	.99
Walmart	Public-serving motive and firm-serving motive	69	4.43	1.3
	Public-serving motive only	69	4.66	1.44

H5 predicted that people who were exposed to the CSR message with public-serving motive and firm-serving motive would be more likely to have greater purchase intention than those who were exposed to the post with the public-serving message only. The ANCOVA test showed that purchase intention was not significantly different between participants who were exposed to the message with public-serving motive and firm-serving motive together and those who were exposed to the message with only public-serving motive (Target: $F(1,132) = .152, p > .05$; Walmart: $F(1,136) = .042, p > .05$). As seen in Table 4-8, there was a small difference between the two conditions. Hence, H5 was not supported.

Table 4-8. Descriptive mean comparisons of purchase intention of different conditions of stated motive

Company	Motive type	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Target	Public-serving motive and firm-serving motive	67	5.7	1.2
	Public-serving motive only	67	5.61	1.04
Walmart	Public-serving motive and firm-serving motive	69	4.43	1.55
	Public-serving motive only	69	4.12	1.66

H6 predicted that people who were exposed to the CSR message with public-serving motive and firm-serving motive would be more likely to have greater WOMI than those who were exposed to the post with public-serving message only. The ANCOVA test showed that positive WOMI was not significantly different when participants were exposed to the message with public-serving motive and firm-serving motive together than when participants were exposed to the message with only the public-serving motive (Target: $F(1,132) = .032, p > .05$;

Walmart: $F(1,136) = .626, p > .05$). As seen in Table 4-9, there was a small difference between the two conditions. Hence, H6 was not supported.

Table 4-9. Descriptive mean comparisons of positive WOMI of different conditions of stated motive

Company	Motive type	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Target	Public-serving motive and firm-serving motive	67	5.29	1.5
	Public-serving motive only	67	5.22	1.15
Walmart	Public-serving motive and firm-serving motive	69	4.2	1.55
	Public-serving motive only	69	4.6	1.53

RQ1 asked whether there is any interaction effect between issue type and stated motive controlling for corporate reputation on a) attitude toward company, b) purchase intention, and c) positive WOMI. Three ANCOVA tests were conducted with issue type and stated motive as fixed factors predicting three outcomes, controlling for corporate reputation, a covariate variable.

RQ1a asked if there is an interaction effect between issue type and stated motive on attitude toward the company. The result showed that there was no interaction effect between issue type and stated motive for both companies. In the case of Target, only corporate reputation was significantly related to attitude toward the company ($F(1,129) = 57.807, p < .001, \eta^2 = .309$), explaining 30.9% of variance. In the case of Walmart, the main effect of issue type was found ($F(1,133) = 4.166, p < .001, \eta^2 = .030$). Similarly, corporate reputation explained a large portion (49.7%) of variance ($F(1,133) = 131.464, p < .001, \eta^2 = .497$). See Table 4-10 for details.

Table 4-10. Results of main and interaction effects on attitude toward a company

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η^2
Target	Corrected model	2	14.922	.000	.316
	Intercept	1	43.015	.000	.250
	Corporate reputation	1	57.807	.000	.309
	Issue	1	.241	.624	.002
	Motive	1	.034	.854	.000
	Issue*motive	1	.021	.884	.000
Walmart	Corrected model	2	34.682	.000	.511
	Intercept	1	65.648	.000	.330
	Corporate reputation	1	131.464	.000	.497
	Issue	1	4.166	.032	.030
	Motive	1	.021	.884	.000
	Issue*motive	1	.076	.783	.001

RQ1b asked if there is an interaction effect between issue type and stated motive on purchase intention. The result showed that there was no interaction effect between issue type and stated motive for both companies. In the case of Target, only a main effect of issue type was found ($F(1,129) = 8.852, p < .01, \eta^2 = .064$), explaining 6.4% of variance. Corporate reputation was also significantly related to purchase intention ($F(1,129) = 44.02, p < .001, \eta^2 = .254$), explaining 25.4% of variance. In the case of Walmart, the main effect of issue type was found ($F(1,133) = 4.264, p < .05, \eta^2 = .031$), explaining 3.1% of variance. Corporate reputation explained 40.1% of variance ($F(1,133) = 88.945, p < .001, \eta^2 = .401$). Details are presented in Table 4-11.

Table 4-11. Results of main and interaction effects on purchase intention

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η^2
Target	Corrected model	2	12.295	.000	.276
	Intercept	1	26.420	.000	.170
	Corporate reputation	1	44.025	.000	.254
	Issue	1	8.852	.003	.001
	Motive	1	.108	.742	.064
	Issue*motive	1	.294	.588	.002
Walmart	Corrected model	2	24.004	.000	.419
	Intercept	1	25.337	.000	.160
	Corporate reputation	1	88.945	.000	.401
	Issue	1	4.264	.041	.031
	Motive	1	.066	.798	.000
	Issue*motive	1	.495	.483	.004

RQ1c asked if there is an interaction effect between issue type and stated motive on WOMI. In the case of Target, no interaction effect between issue type and stated motive was found, but a main effect of issue type was found ($F(1,129) = 12.208, p < .01, \eta^2 = .086$), explaining 8.6% of variance. Corporate reputation was also significantly related to positive WOM intention ($F(1,129) = 16.797, p < .001, \eta^2 = .115$), explaining 25.4% of variance. In the case of Walmart, an interaction effect between issue type and stated motive was found ($F(1,133) = 4.132, p < .05, \eta^2 = .03$), which explained 3% of variance. The interaction effect indicates that a type of stated motive is significantly effective in an issue, whereas it is not statistically significant in other conditions. More specifically, among participants who read a post about the company's commitment to philanthropy, those who read a post with only a public-serving motive showed greater WOM intention ($M = 4.52, SD = 1.46$) than those who read a post with a public-serving motive and a firm-serving motive ($M = 3.74, SD = 1.6$). Participants who read a

post related to a company's commitment to production showed little difference in the two different types of motive ($M_{public\ only} = 4.65, SD = 1.62; M_{public\ \&\ firm} = 4.6, SD=1.41$). These results are presented in Table 4-12 and Figure 4-1.

Table 4-12. Results of main and interaction effects on positive WOMI

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η^2
Target	Corrected model	2	6.388	.000	.165
	Intercept	1	21.657	.000	.144
	Corporate reputation	1	16.797	.000	.115
	Issue	1	12.208	.001	.086
	Motive	1	.016	.900	.000
	Issue*motive	1	.066	.798	.001
Walmart	Corrected model	2	18.671	.000	.360
	Intercept	1	43.738	.000	.247
	Corporate reputation	1	63.001	.000	.321
	Issue	1	4.788	.030	.035
	Motive	1	.799	.373	.006
	Issue*motive	1	4.132	.044	.030

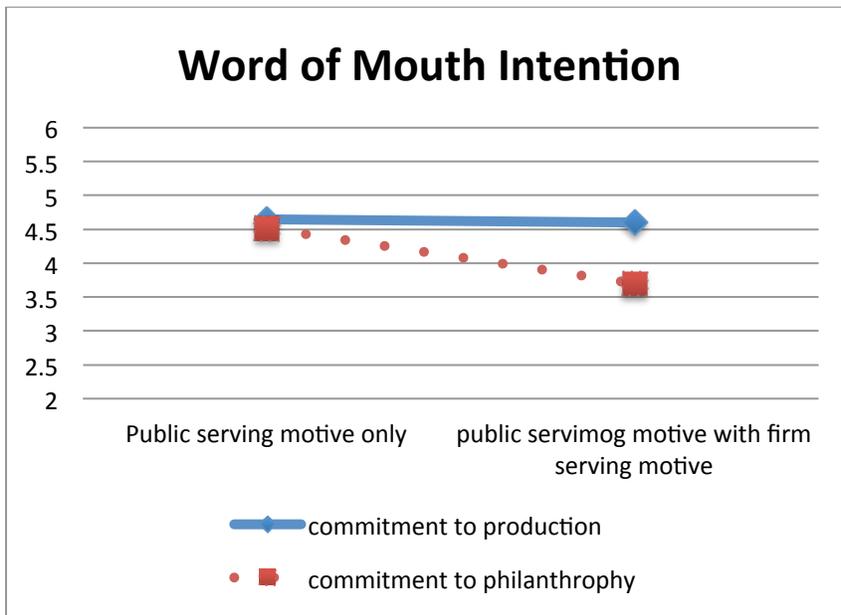


Figure 4-1. Interaction of issue type and motive on positive WOMI (Walmart)

RQ2 examined the moderator effect of type of public on the relationship between CSR communication strategies (issue type and state motive strategy) and three outcomes: a) attitude toward the company, b) purchase intention, and c) positive WOMI. Three ANCOVA tests were conducted with issue type, stated motive, and type of public as fixed factors predicting three outcomes, controlling for corporate reputation, a covariate variable.

RQ2a asked if the type of public moderates the effect of CSR communication strategy on attitude toward the company. The result showed that there were no moderator effects of public type on attitude toward the company for either company. In addition, any interaction effect and main effects of predictors were found for both companies. In the case of Target, only corporate reputation was significantly related to attitude toward the company ($F(1,117) = 39.129, p < .001, \eta^2 = .251$), explaining 25.1% of variance. Similarly, in the case of Walmart, only corporate reputation was significantly related to attitude toward the company ($F(1,121) = 109.785, p < .001, \eta^2 = .476$), explaining 47.6% of variance.

RQ2b asked if the type of public moderates the relationship between communication strategy and purchase intention. For the group exposed to Target, the type of public did not moderate the communication strategy on purchase intention. However, a main effect of the type of public was found ($F(3, 117) = 3.389, p < 0.5, \eta^2 = .080$), explaining 8% of variance. The Bonferroni post-hoc test showed that nonpublic was significantly different from the other three groups. Although the other three groups were not significantly different from each other, the more active group tended to have greater purchase intention. The result of the Bonferroni post-hoc test is presented in Table 4-13. In addition, a main effect of issue type was found ($F(1, 117) = 5.296, p < 0.5, \eta^2 = .043$), explaining 4.3% of variance. Corporate reputation was also significantly related to purchase intention ($F(1,117) = 32.304, p < .001, \eta^2 = .216$), explaining 21.6% of variance. In the case of Walmart, no interaction effect among fixed factors and no main effects were found. Only corporate reputation was significantly related to purchase intention ($F(1,121) = 68.053, p < .001, \eta^2 = .360$), explaining 36% of variance. Table 4-14 shows detailed results.

Table 4-13. Bonferroni result of purchase intention among different type of public (Target)

Type of public comparisons	Mean difference	SE
Nonpublic vs. Latent public	.911**	.249
Nonpublic vs. Aware public	.934**	.244
Nonpublic vs. Active public	1.22*	.391
Latent public vs. Aware public	.022	.229
Latent public vs. Active public	.292	.378
Aware public vs. Active public	.314	.381

Note. Post Hoc: Bonferroni

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Table 4-14. Results of main and interaction effects of predictors and moderator effect of the type of public on purchase intention

Company		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η^2
Target	Corrected model	2	4.751	.000	.394
	Intercept	1	29.362	.000	.201
	Corporate reputation	1	32.304	.000	.216
	Issue	1	5.296	.023	.043
	Motive	1	.032	.858	.000
	Public	3	3.389	.020	.080
	Motive*issue	1	.309	.580	.003
	Issue*public	3	.539	.656	.014
	Motive*public	3	1.257	.292	.031
	Issue*motive*public	3	2.269	.084	.055
	Walmart	Corrected model	2	6.376	.000
Intercept		1	29.503	.000	.196
Corporate reputation		1	68.053	.000	.360
Issue		1	3.693	.057	.030
Motive		1	.183	.670	.002
Public		3	1.483	.223	.035
Motive*issue		1	1.677	.198	.014
Issue*public		3	.229	.876	.006
Motive*public		3	.756	.521	.018
Issue*motive*public		3	.488	.691	.012

RQ2c asked if the type of public moderated the relationship between communication strategy and positive WOMI. For the group exposed to Target, the ANCOVA test showed that type of public moderated the effect of communication strategy on WOMI ($F(3, 117) = 3.703, p < 0.1, \eta^2 = .098$). However, since the type of public was categorized only based on respondents' perception, the number of each cell could not be controlled by the researcher. As a result, some

cells did not have a large enough sample size. Considering that the main assumption about the higher level of public means more activeness, the researcher recoded the public type into two categories and looked at the moderator effect of the activeness of public to explore the behavior pattern. Both analyses revealed a significant result only for a certain condition. In the case of the message about the company's commitment to production, no significant differences were found. However, in the case of the message about the company's commitment to philanthropy, the active public showed a significant pattern of greater positive WOMI when they were exposed to a post with public-serving motive with firm-serving motive ($M_{public\ only} = 4.88, SD = 1.19$; $M_{public\ \&\ firm} = 5.94, SD = 1.57$). This issue will be discussed in the next section. Detailed results are presented in Table 4-15 and Figures 4-2, 4-3, and 4-4.

Table 4-15. Results of main and interaction effects of predictors and moderator effect of the type of public on positive WOMI

Company		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η^2
Target	Corrected model	2	3.401	.000	.317
	Intercept	1	29.276	.000	.200
	Reputation	1	9.404	.003	.074
	Issue	1	4.856	.030	.040
	Motive	1	.467	.496	.004
	Public	3	4.241	.007	.098
	Motive*issue	1	.119	.731	.001
	Issue*public	3	.147	.932	.004
	Motive*public	3	.217	.885	.006
	Issue*motive*public	3	3.703	.014	.087
	Walmart	Corrected model	2	6.509	.000
Intercept		1	54.946	.000	.312
Reputation		1	52.117	.000	.301
Issue		1	5.218	.024	.041
Motive		1	.008	.929	.000
Public		3	5.460	.001	.119
Motive*issue		1	6.243	.014	.049
Issue*public		3	.181	.909	.004
Motive*public		3	.558	.644	.014
Issue*motive*public		3	1.021	.386	.025

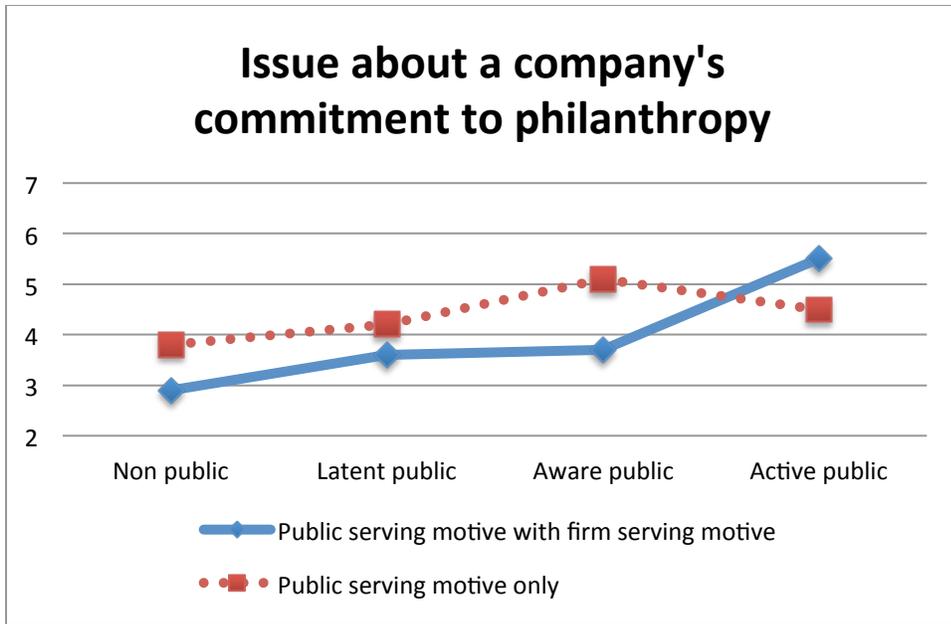


Figure 4-2. Interaction of the type of motive and the type of public with a message about a commitment to philanthropy on positive WOMI (Target)

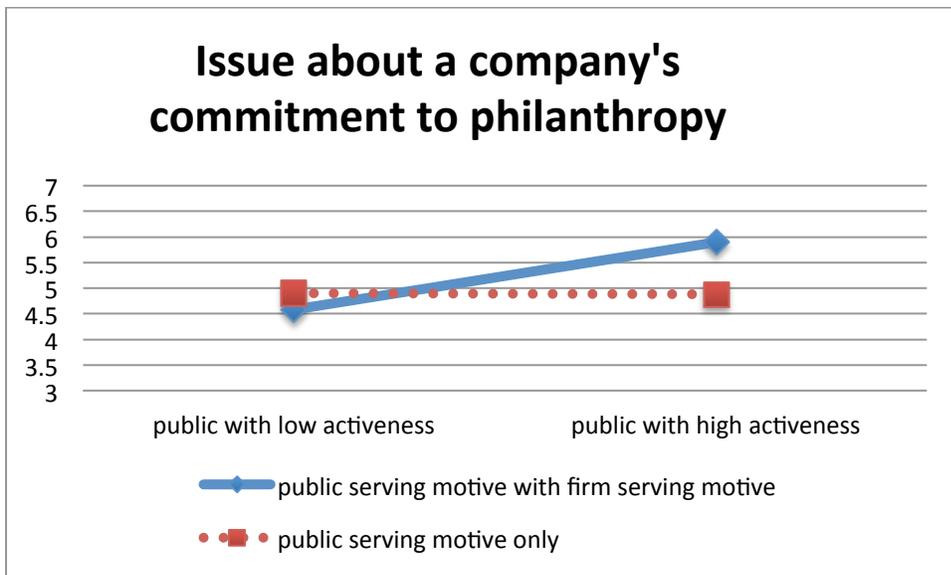


Figure 4-3. Interaction of the type of motive and public activeness with a message about a commitment to philanthropy on positive WOMI (Target)

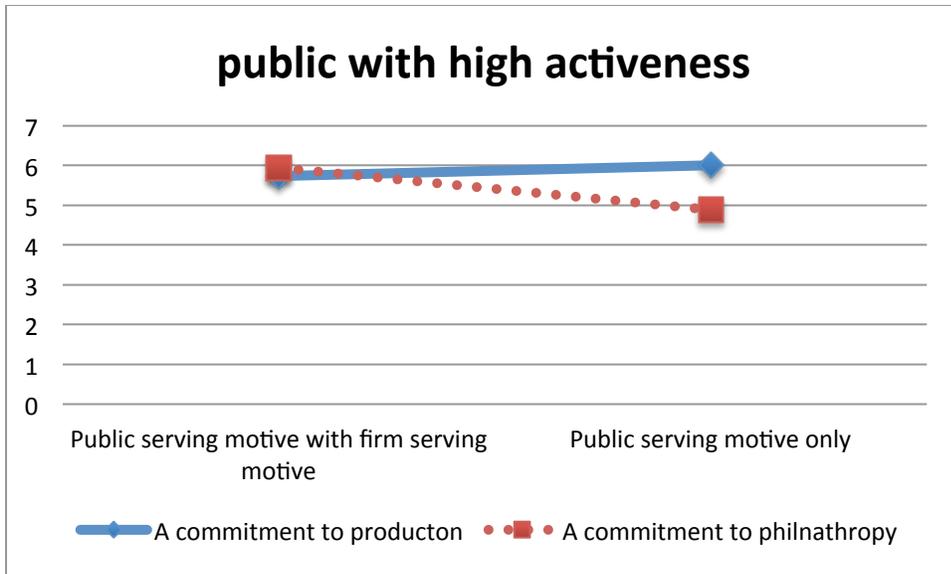


Figure 4-4. Interaction of stated motive and issue type on positive WOMI for public with high activeness (Target)

In the case of Walmart, no moderator effect was found ($F(1,121) = 1.021, p > .05$). However, an interaction effect between two predictors was found ($F(1,121) = 6.243, p < .05, \eta^2 = .049$), explaining 4.9% of variance. In addition, a main effect of the type of public was found ($F(3,121) = 5.469, p < .01, \eta^2 = .119$), explaining 11.9% of variance. Similar to RQ1c, among participants who read a post about the company's commitment to philanthropy, those who read a post with only a public-serving motive showed greater WOMI ($M = 4.52, SD = 1.46$) than those who read a post about the company's commitment to production ($M = 3.74, SD = 1.6$). In terms of the type of public, a Bonferroni post-hoc test showed some significant differences in positive WOMI among the type of public. This result is also consistent with STP. More active publics are likely to have greater positive WOMI (Nonpublic: $M = 3.6, SD = 1.4$; Latent public: $M = 4.16, SD = 1.4$; Aware public: $M = 4.9, SD = 1.4$; Active public: $M = 5.5, SD = 1.6$). See Figure 4-5. The result of the Bonferroni post-hoc test is presented in Table 4-16.

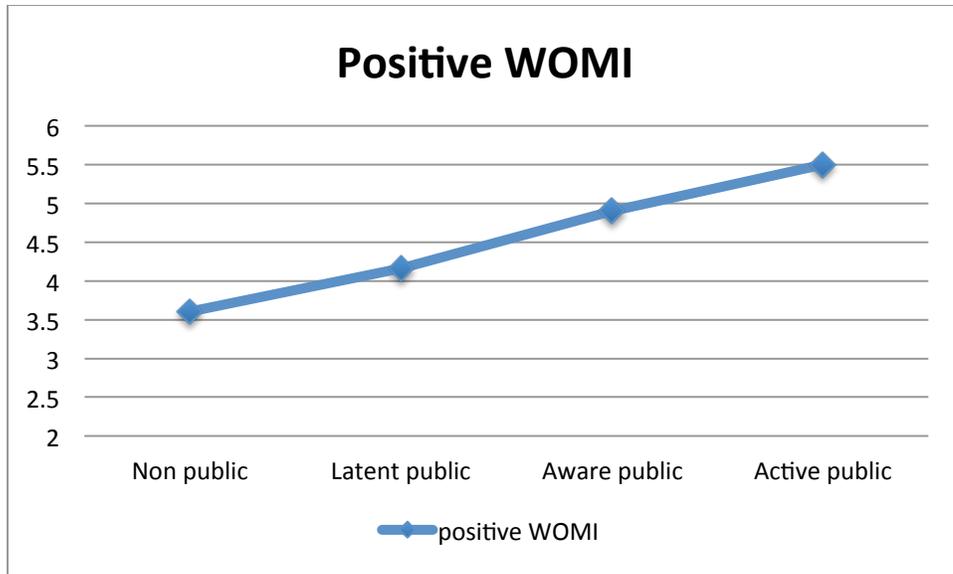


Figure 4-5. Differences of positive WOMI among public types (Walmart)

Table 4-16. Bonferroni result of positive WOMI among different type of public (Walmart)

Type of public comparisons	Mean difference	SE
Nonpublic vs. Latent public	.552	.32
Nonpublic vs. Aware public	.129**	.34
Nonpublic vs. Active public	1.9 ***	.46
Latent public vs. Aware public	.74	.3
Latent public vs. Active public	1.37*	.43
Aware public vs. Active public	.63	.45

Note. Post Hoc: Bonferroni

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 4-17 summarizes the findings of this study.

Table 4-17. Summary of the results of hypotheses and research questions

Hypotheses and Research questions	Results
H1. A CSR message about a commitment to production has a more positive influence on attitude toward a company than a CSR message about a commitment to philanthropy.	Partially supported. Only participants exposed to the Walmart post showed a significant difference between the two types of messages.
H2. . A CSR message about with a commitment to production has a more positive influence on purchase intention than a CSR message about a commitment to philanthropy.	Supported. Participants who were exposed to an issue of a company’s commitment to production obtained significantly higher scores for purchase intention than those who were exposed to an issue of a company’s commitment to philanthropy.
H3. A CSR issue with a commitment to production has a more positive influence on intention of word-of-mouth than a CSR issue with a commitment to philanthropy.	Supported. Participants who were exposed to an issue of a company’s commitment to production obtained significantly higher scores for positive WOMI than those who were exposed to an issue of a company’s commitment to philanthropy
H4. A CSR message with a stated public-serving motive and a stated firm-serving motive will have a more positive influence on attitude toward companies than a message with a stated public-serving motive only.	Not supported. There was no significant difference between the two stated motives.
H5. A CSR message with a stated public-serving motive and a stated firm-serving motive will have a more positive influence on purchase intention than a message with a stated public-serving motive only.	Not supported. There was no significant difference between the two stated motives.

<p>H6. A CSR message with a stated public-serving motive and a stated firm-serving motive will have a more positive influence on intention of word-of-mouth than a message with a stated public-serving motive only.</p>	<p>Not supported. There was no significant difference between the two stated motives.</p>
<p>RQ1a. Is there an interaction effect between issue type and stated motive on attitude toward company?</p>	<p>There was no interaction effect between type of issue and stated motive on attitude toward the company. In the case of Walmart, a main effect of issue type was found.</p>
<p>RQ1b. Is there an interaction effect between issue type and stated motive on purchase intention?</p>	<p>There was no interaction effect between type of issue and stated motive on purchase intention. For both companies, a main effect of issue type was found.</p>
<p>RQ1c. Is there an interaction effect between issue type and stated motive on positive WOMI?</p>	<p>In the case of Target, no significant interaction effect was found. However, in the case of Walmart, a significant interaction effect was found. Participants who were exposed to a message about a company's commitment to philanthropy had greater positive WOMI when the message was associated with a public-serving motive only than when the message was associated with a public-serving motive and firm-serving motive.</p>

<p>RQ2a. Does the type of public (active, aware, latent, nonpublic) moderate the relationship between CSR message strategies and attitude toward company?</p>	<p>No moderator effect of the type of public was found for either company.</p>
<p>RQ2b. Does the type of public (active, aware, latent, nonpublic) moderate the relationship between CSR message strategies and purchase intention.</p>	<p>No moderator effects of the type of public were found for either company. However, in the case of Target, a main effect of the type of public was found. In other words, there was a significant difference in purchase intention among the four types of public.</p>
<p>RQ2c. Does the type of public (active, aware, latent, nonpublic) moderate the relationship between CSR message strategies and positive WOMI?</p>	<p>In the case of Target, the type of public moderated the relationship between message strategies and positive WOMI. In the case of Walmart, the type of public did not moderate the effects of message strategies on positive WOMI. However, interaction effects between two predictors and a main effect of the type of public were found.</p>

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to develop a more refined understanding of the effects of CSR message strategies on a public's attitude and behavior. In addition to examining the effects of message strategies, this study was designed to examine the moderator effect of the type of public.

This chapter consists of three parts. In the first part, specific findings are discussed. Second, theoretical and practical implications will be provided. Lastly, some limitations and suggestions for future studies will be presented.

Summary of Results

H1, H2, H3: The effects of CSR issue type on attitude, purchase intention, and WOMI

This dissertation first examined the different effects of CSR issue of a message. An issue related to a corporation's commitment to production and an issue related to a corporation's commitment to philanthropy were adopted for the study for two reasons. First, previous studies found that people respond to CSR activities differently depending on the issue or activity. Second, people tend to have more positive attitudes and behavior intentions when they think the issue is related to the company's products or services. Most findings supported the expectation except for one condition. The effects of issue type on purchase intention and WOMI were significant. However, in terms of attitude, only the Walmart case was significant. This finding supports previous arguments that different types of CSR activities result in consumers' different perceptions of corporations (Lee & Shin, 2010; Lii & Lee, 2011). This finding also confirms that

people have more positive behaviors when the issue is related to the company's specific commitment to production that satisfies the consumers than when the issue is related to the company's commitment to philanthropic activities for the community or society. The reason people for this can be inferred from findings of previous studies that consumers perceive CSR campaigns differently depending on their own involvement with the issue, which may affect the degree of their corporate evaluation and purchase intention (Du et al., 2007; Lichtenstein et al., 2004; Lii & Lee, 2011). The *t*-test result of involvement, one of the independent variables of STP, showed that there was a significant difference in the level of involvement between two groups of participants (Target: $t [132] = 3.964, p < .001$; Walmart: $t[136] = 3.735, p < .001$). Thus, it can be assumed that people tend to respond more positively to the issue about a company's commitment to production because they think those issues are more related to them. Second, people feel less skeptical when they are exposed to the message about a commitment to production than when exposed to the message about a commitment to philanthropy. As Du et al. (2010) suggested, if the issue is not related to the company or products, people think of the CSR message as dishonest or manipulative.

Among three dependent variables, WOMI was most influenced by issue type. In terms of attitude, corporate reputation is the most effective factor to explain the attitude toward a company. The findings indicate that when people have a positive perception of corporate reputation, they tend to have a more positive attitude toward the company regardless of CSR issue types. That is, as previous studies found the role of corporate reputation, this study also found the power of corporate reputation on publics' attitude toward a company. In addition, while there was a significant different effect on purchase intention between the two issue types, the issue type explained only a small portion of the variance (Target: 6.4%; Walmart: 3.1%).

This result implies that people may support the issue and decide to buy the products based on the CSR issue, but they still consider other factors such as product quality and price in deciding to purchase. Regarding WOMI, people who read a message about commitment to production tended to show greater intention of WOM than their counterparts did. Thus, when corporations communicate on SNSs about CSR issues, it might be more effective to focus on communicating about an issue related to their products and services .

While overall findings support the hypotheses, several critical issues should be discussed. First, as Becker-Olsen et al. (2006) and Kim (2014) asserted, the effects of issue type on attitude and behavior showed different results. The analysis indicated that attitude was not strongly influenced by issue type. Instead, the ANCOVA test showed that corporate reputation explained a high proportion of variance (Target: 30.9%; Walmart: 50.1%). Second, similar to attitude, other outcomes were also strongly influenced by reputation. In particular, in the case of Walmart, reputation explained a high proportion of variance for three outcome variables. The possible explanation for this is that the effect of corporate reputation is bigger when a company has a bad reputation than when a company has a good reputation. The mean of reputation for Walmart is lower ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 1.55$) than the mean for Target ($M = 5.9$, $SD = 1.09$). This implies that corporations can communicate more strategically by considering reputation level. While corporate reputation is not within the scope of this study, based on this finding, future studies will need to explore the role of reputation in building CSR communication.

H4, H5, H6: The effects of stated motive on attitude, purchase intention, and WOMI

The dissertation also examined the different effects of stated motive. Previous studies have examined two different types of motive (public-serving motive and firm-serving motive) or three different types of motive (public-serving motive, firm-serving motive, and hybrid).

However, considering that no companies present only a firm-serving motive in the real world, this study examined a message with a public-serving motive only and a message with both a public-serving and firm-serving motive. No significant differences between two different ways of stating motives were found on attitude toward a company, purchase intention, and WOMI. One possible explanation is that although the manipulation check indicated the manipulation was successfully implemented, the difference between the two groups was low. Thus, it is still unclear whether participants really paid attention to the stated motive. Whereas stating the motive is an important strategy in CSR communication, to better understand the role of motive, it is worthwhile to consider examining the effects of motive by measuring perceived motive for a more accurate result. Several previous studies examined the effects of motive by measuring participants' perceived motive and found significant results (e.g., Kim & Choi, 2012).

RQ1. Interaction effects between issue type and motive on attitude, purchase intention, and WOMI

While stated motive itself did not influence attitude and behavior, the interaction effect showed an interesting result. In terms of attitude and purchase intention, no significant interaction effects were found, but an interaction effect on WOMI was found. This result indicates that when the participants read a message about commitment to philanthropy, a public-serving motive only was more effective than a public-serving motive with firm-serving motive (hybrid strategy). However, this result does not agree with previous studies in which a hybrid strategy is more effective than a public-serving motive only (e.g., Becker-Olsen et al., 2006; Kim, 2014). In particular, previous studies have found that in the case of a bad reputation, a disclosure of self-interested motives could inhibit the consumer's skepticism and generate positive attitude or behavior (Forehand & Grier, 2003). However, in the case of Walmart, which

has a relatively poor reputation, significant differences were not found. This result implies that the strategies should be differentiated based on issue type to get stronger support from stakeholders. In addition, the findings imply that the effects of message strategies could be different depending on various conditions. In particular, a stated motive, an important message strategy in CSR communication, should be explored in more contexts.

RQ2. Moderator effects between issue type and motive on attitude, purchase intention, and WOMI

RQ2 asked about the moderator effect of type of public. According to STP, more active publics tend to communicate more actively. Activeness is decided by publics' perception about an issue, their perceptions about constraints, and their involvement with the issue. The theory suggests how to segment publics and expects them to communicate differently (Aldoory & Sha, 2006; Grunig, 1997). When segmenting and exploring their communication behavior, the type of public is successfully divided into four groups. The result of the current study indicated that for the most part there was no significant moderator effect of public type except for WOMI, where the result showed that when publics with high activeness read a message about commitment to philanthropy, stating a public-serving motive with firm-serving motive is more effective than stating a public-serving motive only. This result is also interesting because when the type of public was not considered, the finding was opposite (RQ1c). This result indicates that in terms of active publics the finding coincides with previous studies (i.e. Friestad & Wright, 1994). That is, compared to other types of public, active public is more negative if the company does not talk about their self-interested motive. However, this study broke down public type based on participants' answers, and the sample of each cell was not equally distributed, meaning a certain cell did not have a large enough sample size. Thus, to look at the pattern of behavior, the

researcher recoded the four types of public into two groups: publics with low activeness and publics with high activeness. The result indicated that publics with high activeness tended to engage in higher WOMI when they read a message about commitment to philanthropy. Due to the differences between companies and the small sample size, it is hard to generalize this result. Nonetheless, the finding implies that tailored strategic communication according to the type of public could be more effective in boosting the effects of CSR message.

Beyond the moderator effect, several significant results were also found. First, in the case of purchase intention, the type of public was a significant factor in the model. The result showed that nonpublics had less purchase intention than any other groups (aware, latent, and active). Second, no moderator effect of the Walmart message was found on WOMI, but public type itself had an effect, and an interaction effect between the two main predictors was found. Interestingly, as STP predicted, the more active a public is, the stronger their WOMI is. One possible explanation is that because WOMI is a kind of communication behavior, the variable showed a similar pattern to communication behavior, which is a dependent variable in STP. In the case of interaction, the result is similar to that for RQ1c, which means that people who read a message about an issue of a company's commitment to philanthropy with public-serving motive only showed higher WOMI.

Implications

The findings of this dissertation provide a new insight into the field of CSR. First, while the majority of CSR studies have focused on the effects of CSR initiatives or CSR practices in general, this study examined CSR message strategies. By doing so, this study expands the scope of CSR studies from behavior-focused strategies to communication-focused strategies (Kim, 2011).

In addition, this study suggests the importance of the type of public in the CSR communication model. As a result of the increasing interest in CSR, scholars have investigated whether corporate CSR activities can affect desired outcomes such as consumers' increased positive attitude and purchase intention. In spite of the importance of publics' individual perception, however, few studies have considered consumers' individual factors such as CSR support and perception of CSR issue. By examining the moderator effect of public, this study found that the type of public can be applied to CSR studies as well. More specifically, the result implied that the different types of public could be influenced differently by CSR messages. Thus, the findings suggest a possibility of synthesizing STP and the CSR communication model.

Lastly, in terms of outcome variables, while the many behavior studies or communication studies assumed a causal, or at least positive, relationship between attitude and behavior, Grunig and Hunt (1984) asserted that attitude and behavior are situational and specific. Thus, attitudes do not explain behavior all the time. As such, this study also found a different pattern of CSR effects on attitude and behavior. In the case of WOMI and purchase intention, a significant difference was found depending on issue type. However, a slight difference was found on attitude toward a company only in Walmart case. Thus, researchers should be careful to examine the effect of CSR communication on those variables. In addition, the relationship among outcomes was not explored in this study, but it will be meaningful to look at those relationships in future studies.

The findings of this study also provide several practical suggestions. First, the results imply the importance of message strategies in CSR communication. As scholars have pointed out, in spite of consumers' interest in CSR, they do not reward every CSR activity (Becker-Olsen et al., 2006; Boulstridge & Carrigan, 2000; Schmeltz, 2012). This study offers various

possibilities for CSR effectiveness that can help practitioners understand when and why consumers reward CSR activities. Even though the study did not find significance in different message strategies in stating motives, the findings suggest that the effects of CSR communication can be maximized in certain conditions. Practitioners can use this finding to design effective CSR communication strategies. Practitioners should choose the right CSR issue considering the company's identity, consumers' requirements, and mission. In particular, when they communicate using their own communication channel such as a company website, media release, or social media, they should remember that people do not pay attention to a large amount of information. Thus, they should design their message strategically by focusing on an important and relevant issue that will get the appropriate publics' attention.

Second, the current study suggests that practitioners identify different types of publics and understand their perception about CSR issues before they plan the CSR communication strategies. The findings indicate that publics understand CSR messages differently and show different behavior intentions in certain conditions. As Taubken and Leibold (2012) asserted, the findings of this study also suggest that CSR communication must consider the different interests and perception of the target group. That is, if practitioners identify a target group accurately, they will design a communication strategy in accordance with the public easily and successfully.

Third, while reputation is not a main concern of this study, the findings imply the importance of reputation. In most cases, reputation was an important variable to explain the outcomes. In the case of Walmart, a corporation with a relatively low reputation, corporate reputation played a crucial role in influencing attitude and behavior. That means that before effective communication is designed, a good reputation should be established. Future researchers should focus on communication strategies of companies with different levels of reputation.

Limitations and Suggestions

Despite the theoretical and practical implications of this study, the findings must be interpreted with caution.

In terms of sample, this study has some limitations. First, this study has limited generalizability because it adopted a convenience sample of students. In addition, among participants, even though there were no differences in mean between gender and among ethnicity groups, females and Caucasians comprise a large proportion of the sample. Future studies could benefit from the use of panel groups that are more representative of the population. In addition, this study segmented the type of public based on participants' responses, and as a result the researcher failed to control the number of each public type. To overcome this limitation, future studies should increase the sample size.

In addition, this study has some limitation in the experimental design. This study adopted existing companies in a specific industry category for testing. Therefore, it was impossible to control the participants' previous perception about the companies. Moreover, certain situational factors such as perceived product necessity, price, and prior experience with the company were not included in the study. Thus, future researchers should consider these various factors. In terms of issue, this study selected only two issues: a company's commitment to production and a company's commitment to philanthropy. If future studies examine more issue types, the effects of CSR message strategies will be clearer and more generalizable.

Lastly, referring the type of public, this study adopted Kim's(2010) method of summation . However, in spite of its effectiveness, this method loses some explanation power because the method should recode continuous variables into two-level categorical variables. If future researchers examine the relationship between the situational variable and outcome variable

using continuous variables or use the three situational variables separately, more valuable results will be discovered.

There are several suggestions for future research. First, as mentioned above, considering corporate reputation and perceived motive as predictors or moderators will be meaningful to understand the overall process of CSR communication. Second, more insightful findings can be expected if researchers investigate the relationship among outcome variables such as attitude, purchase intention, and WOMI, more insightful findings will be expected. Third, this study did not consider negative outcomes such as skepticism and negative WOMI. Investigating these variables will provide better understanding of CSR communication effects.

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APPENDIX 1. STIMULUS

1. Target (Non-product based issue with public-serving motive and firm-serving motive)

The image is a screenshot of the Target Facebook page. At the top, the navigation bar includes the Facebook logo, the name 'Target', a search icon, and location options for 'Alabama', 'Home', and 'Find Friends'. The profile picture is the Target bullseye logo, and the cover photo features a woman's face with a Target logo on her ear against a red and white striped background. The page name is 'Target' with a verified checkmark, and the category is 'Retail and Consumer Merchandise'. Navigation tabs include 'Timeline', 'About', 'Photos', 'Product Recalls', and 'More'. On the left sidebar, it shows '22,912,110 people like this', '1,841,739 people have been here', and an 'Invite friends' button. The 'ABOUT' section includes links to 'Ask for Target's address', 'Ask for Target's phone', and the website 'http://target.com/'. The 'NEARBY LOCATIONS' section shows a map and three store locations: 'Target Lake Park/Palm Beach Gardens' (500 N Congress Ave), 'Target West Palm Beach' (1760 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd), and 'Target Royal Palm Beach' (10155 Okeechobee Blvd). The main post, from 4 hours ago, features a large graphic with the text 'Stop Childhood Obesity' and a sub-headline 'Childhood obesity is one of the serious public health challenges in the U.S.'. Below this, it lists three bullet points: '- Supports nutrition education programs in local communities.', '- Provides play and exercise equipments to schools.', and '- Contributes to "improving public health" and hopes to "strengthen our business."'. The graphic also includes an illustration of a pizza, fries, a drink, and a burger, with the quote 'Target hopes to help children be healthy.' at the bottom. The post has 'Like', 'Comment', and 'Share' buttons.

2. Target (Non-product-based issue with public-serving motive)

The image is a screenshot of the Target Facebook page. At the top, the navigation bar includes the Facebook logo, the name 'Target', a search icon, and location-based options like 'Alabama', 'Home', and 'Find Friends'. The main header features the Target logo, the name 'Target' with a verified badge, and the category 'Retail and Consumer Merchandise'. Below this are navigation tabs for 'Timeline', 'About', 'Photos', 'Product Recalls', and 'More'. On the left side, there are statistics: '22,912,110 people like this' and '1,841,739 people have been here', along with an 'Invite friends to like this Page' button. The 'ABOUT' section includes links to 'Ask for Target's address', 'Ask for Target's phone', and the website 'http://target.com/'. The 'NEARBY LOCATIONS' section shows a map and lists three stores: 'Target Lake Park/Palm Beach Gardens' (500 N Congress Ave), 'Target West Palm Beach' (1760 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd), and 'Target Royal Palm Beach' (10155 Okeechobee Blvd). The main content area shows a post from Target, dated '4 hrs' ago. The post text reads: 'Target announced its commitment to supporting childhood obesity prevention and wellness program. Target continues to integrate sustainable practices for our communities. We hope to contribute to IMPROVING PUBLIC HEALTH.' Below the text is a large graphic with the title 'Stop Childhood Obesity' and the subtitle 'Childhood obesity is one of the serious public health challenges in the U.S.'. The graphic lists three points: 'Target - Supports nutrition education programs in local communities.', 'Target - Provides play and exercise equipments to schools.', and 'Target - Contributes to "improving public health."'. At the bottom of the graphic is the quote 'Target hopes to help children be healthy.' and an illustration of a pizza, fries, a drink, and a burger. The post has 'Like', 'Comment', and 'Share' buttons, and a comment input field at the bottom.

3. Target (Product-based issue with public-serving motive and firm-serving motive)

The image is a screenshot of the Target Facebook page. At the top, the navigation bar includes the Facebook logo, the name 'Target', a search icon, and location options for 'Alabama', 'Home', and 'Find Friends'. The profile picture is the Target bullseye logo, and the cover photo features a woman's profile with a Target bullseye over her eye, set against a red and white striped background. The page name is 'Target' with a verified checkmark and the tagline 'Retail and Consumer Merchandise'. Below the profile information are tabs for 'Timeline', 'About', 'Photos', 'Product Recalls', and 'More'. On the left sidebar, it shows '22,912,110 people like this', '1,841,739 people have been here', and an 'Invite friends to like this Page' button. The 'ABOUT' section includes links to 'Ask for Target's address', 'Ask for Target's phone', and the website 'http://target.com/'. The 'NEARBY LOCATIONS' section displays a map and lists three stores: 'Target Lake Park/Palm Beach Gardens' (500 N Congress Ave), 'Target West Palm Beach' (1760 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd), and 'Target Royal Palm Beach' (10155 Okeechobee Blvd). The main content area shows a post from Target, dated '4 hrs · 🌐'. The post text reads: 'Target announced its commitment to providing healthier foods. Target will reduce sodium by 25% and added sugar by 10%. Target continues to integrate sustainable practice for our business and society. We hope to contribute to IMPROVING PUBLIC HEALTH as well as to GENERATE MORE PROFITS.' Below the text is a promotional graphic with the headline 'Less sugar, less salt' and the subtext 'Taking too much sugar and salt is one of the most serious public health challenges.' The graphic lists three points: 'Target - Takes our responsibility in well-being for our communities.', '- Works with suppliers to reduce salt and sugar.', and '- Joined the National Salt Reduction Initiative(NSRI) to reduce salt in packaged foods by 25% by 2016.' It also states '-Contributes to "improving public health" and hopes to "strengthen our business."' and includes a quote: '"Target commits to providing healthy foods."' with an image of a salt shaker. At the bottom of the post are 'Like', 'Comment', and 'Share' buttons.

4. Target (Product-based issue with public-serving motive only)

The image is a screenshot of the Target Facebook page. At the top, the navigation bar includes the Facebook logo, the name 'Target', a search bar, and location options for 'Alabama', 'Home', and 'Find Friends'. The profile picture is the Target bullseye logo, and the cover photo features a woman's face with a Target bullseye graphic over her eye. The page name is 'Target' with a verified badge, and the category is 'Retail and Consumer Merchandise'. Navigation tabs include 'Timeline', 'About', 'Photos', 'Product Recalls', and 'More'. On the left sidebar, it shows '22,912,110 people like this', '1,841,739 people have been here', and an 'Invite friends' button. The 'ABOUT' section contains links to 'Ask for Target's address', 'Ask for Target's phone', and the website 'http://target.com/'. The 'NEARBY LOCATIONS' section shows a map and lists three stores: 'Target Lake Park/Palm Beach Gardens' (500 N Congress Ave), 'Target West Palm Beach' (1760 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd), and 'Target Royal Palm Beach' (10155 Okeechobee Blvd). The main content area shows a post from Target, 4 hours old, with the text: 'Target announced its commitment to providing healthier foods. Target will reduce sodium by 25% and added sugar by 10%. Target continues to integrate sustainable practice for our business and society. We hope to contribute to IMPROVING PUBLIC HEALTH.' Below the text is a promotional graphic with the headline 'Less sugar, less salt' and the subtext 'Taking too much sugar and salt is one of the most serious public health challenges.' The graphic lists three points: '- Takes our responsibility in well-being for our communities.', '- Works with suppliers to reduce salt and sugar.', and '- Joined the National Salt Reduction Initiative(NSRI) to reduce salt in packaged foods by 25% by 2016.' It also includes the quote '-Contributes to "improving public health."' and a quote at the bottom: '"Target commits to providing healthy foods."' with an image of a bowl of popcorn. The post has 'Like', 'Comment', and 'Share' buttons.

5. Walmart (Non-product-based issue with public-serving motive and firm-serving motive)

The image is a screenshot of Walmart's Facebook page. At the top, the navigation bar includes the Walmart logo, a search bar, and links for 'Alabama', 'Home', and 'Find Friends'. The main header features a background image of fresh produce (peaches, grapes) and the Walmart logo with the text 'Walmart Retail and Consumer Merchandise'. Below this are buttons for 'Shop Now', 'Like', and 'Share'. The page is divided into a left sidebar and a main content area. The sidebar contains: '32,694,764 people like this', '11,722,651 people have been here', 'Invite friends to like this Page', 'ABOUT' section with 'Ask for Walmart's address', phone number '(800) 925-6278', and website 'http://www.walmart.com/'; 'APPS' section with 'Like Your Local Store', 'Fan Photo of the Week', and 'Local Ad'; and 'PHOTOS' section with three image thumbnails. The main content area shows a 'Post' section with a text input field and a 'Post' button. Below that is a post from Walmart, dated '3 hrs', with the text: 'Walmart announced its commitment to supporting childhood obesity prevention and wellness program. Walmart continues to integrate sustainable practices for our business and society. We hope to contribute to IMPROVING PUBLIC HEALTH as well as to GENERATE MORE PROFITS.' The post includes a large graphic with the Walmart logo and the headline 'Stop Childhood Obesity'. The graphic text reads: 'Childhood obesity is one of the serious public health challenges in the U.S.' followed by a list: 'Walmart - Supports nutrition education programs in local communities. - Provides play and exercise equipments to schools. - Contributes to "improving public health" and hopes to "strengthen our business."' and the quote 'Walmart hopes to help children be healthy.' The graphic also features images of a pizza, fries, a drink, and a burger. At the bottom of the post are 'Like', 'Comment', and 'Share' buttons.

6. Walmart (Non-product-based issue with public-serving motive)

The image is a screenshot of the Walmart Facebook page. At the top, the navigation bar includes the Walmart logo, a search bar, and location options for Alabama, Home, and Find Friends. The main header features a background image of fresh produce (peaches, grapes, and a paper bag of grapes) and the Walmart logo. Below the header, the page is divided into sections: 'Timeline', 'About', 'Photos', 'Videos', and 'More'. The 'About' section on the left lists 32,694,764 likes, 11,722,651 check-ins, and provides contact information for Walmart. The main content area shows a post from Walmart, dated 3 hours ago, with the text: 'Walmart announced its commitment to supporting childhood obesity prevention and wellness program. Walmart continues to integrate sustainable practices for our communities. We hope to contribute to IMPROVING PUBLIC HEALTH.' Below the text is a large graphic with the Walmart logo and the headline 'Stop Childhood Obesity'. The graphic includes the subtext 'Childhood obesity is one of the serious public health challenges in the U.S.' and a list of Walmart's contributions: 'Supports nutrition education programs in local communities.', 'Provides play and exercise equipments to schools.', and 'Contributes to "improving public health."' The graphic also features an illustration of fast-food items (pizza, fries, a drink, a sandwich) and the quote 'Walmart hopes to help children be healthy.' At the bottom of the post, there are 'Like', 'Comment', and 'Share' buttons.

7. Walmart (Product-based issue with public-serving motive and firm-serving motive)

The image is a screenshot of the Walmart Facebook page. At the top, the navigation bar includes the Walmart logo, a search bar, and links for 'Alabama', 'Home', and 'Find Friends'. The main header features a large image of fresh produce (peaches and grapes) with the Walmart logo and name, and buttons for 'Shop Now', 'Like', and 'Share'. Below the header, the page is divided into several sections: 'Timeline' (selected), 'About', 'Photos', 'Videos', and 'More'. On the left side, there are statistics: '32,694,764 people like this', '11,722,651 people have been here', and an 'Invite friends to like this Page' button. Below these are 'ABOUT' and 'APPS' sections. The 'ABOUT' section includes a link to 'Ask for Walmart's address', a phone number '(800) 925-6278', and the website 'http://www.walmart.com/'. The 'APPS' section features three promotional cards: 'Like Your Local Store', 'Fan Photo of the Week', and 'Local Ad'. The main content area shows a post from Walmart, dated '3 hrs' ago. The post text reads: 'Walmart announced its commitment to providing healthier foods. Walmart will reduce sodium by 25% and added sugar by 10%. Walmart continues to integrate sustainable practice for our business and society. We hope to contribute to IMPROVING PUBLIC HEALTH as well as to GENERATE MORE PROFITS.' Below the text is a large graphic with the Walmart logo and the headline 'Less sugar, less salt'. The graphic includes the sub-headline 'Taking too much sugar and salt is one of the most serious public health challenges.' and a list of three bullet points: '- Takes our responsibility in well-being for our communities.', '- Works with suppliers to reduce salt and sugar.', and '- Joined the National Salt Reduction Initiative(NSRI) to reduce salt in packaged foods by 25% by 2016.' A quote at the bottom of the graphic says 'Walmart commits to providing healthy foods.' and is accompanied by an image of a salt shaker. At the bottom of the post, there are buttons for 'Like', 'Comment', and 'Share'.

8. Walmart (Product-based issue with public-serving motive)

The image is a screenshot of the Walmart Facebook page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Walmart logo, a search bar, and links for 'Alabama', 'Home', and 'Find Friends'. Below the navigation bar is a large banner image of fresh fruits like peaches and grapes. The Walmart logo is prominently displayed on the left side of the banner. To the right of the logo, the text 'Walmart' is followed by a verified account checkmark and the tagline 'Retail and Consumer Merchandise'. Below this, there are buttons for 'Shop Now', 'Like', and 'Share'. Underneath the banner, there are tabs for 'Timeline', 'About', 'Photos', 'Videos', and 'More'. On the left side of the page, there are statistics: '32,694,764 people like this' and '11,722,651 people have been here'. Below these are links to 'Ask for Walmart's address', a phone number '(800) 925-6278', and the website 'http://www.walmart.com/'. There are also sections for 'APPS' with 'My Local Walmart' and 'Fan Photo of the Week', and 'PHOTOS'. The main content area on the right shows a post from Walmart, dated '3 hrs · 🌐'. The post text reads: 'Walmart announced its commitment to providing healthier foods. Walmart will reduce sodium by 25% and added sugar by 10%. Walmart continues to integrate sustainable practice for our business and society. We hope to contribute to IMPROVING PUBLIC HEALTH.' Below the text is a large graphic with the Walmart logo and the headline 'Less sugar, less salt'. The graphic includes the text: 'Taking too much sugar and salt is one of the most serious public health challenges.' and a list of commitments: '- Takes our responsibility in well-being for our communities.', '- Works with suppliers to reduce salt and sugar.', '- Joined the National Salt Reduction Initiative(NSRI) to reduce salt in packaged foods by 25% by 2016.', and '- Contributes to "improving public health."' A quote at the bottom of the graphic says: '"Walmart commits to providing healthy foods."' There is a small image of a salt shaker and a bowl of popcorn. At the bottom of the post, there are buttons for 'Like', 'Comment', and 'Share'.

APPENDIX 2. IRB APPROVAL

Office for Research
Institutional Review Board for the
Protection of Human Subjects



August 10, 2015

Se Na Lim
CCIS
Box 870172

Re: IRB#: 15-OR-239 "Examining Strategic CSR Communication: Effects of Corporate Social Responsibility Communication on Public Attitude and Behavior Intention and Moderating Effects of Public Types"

Dear Ms. Lim:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for your proposed research.

Your application has been given expedited approval according to 45 CFR part 46. You have also been granted the requested waivers. Approval has been given under expedited review category 7 as outlined below:

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies

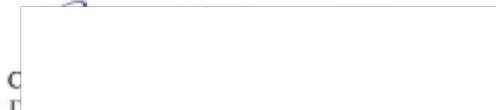
Your application will expire on August 9, 2016. If your research will continue beyond this date, complete the relevant portions of the IRB Renewal Application. If you wish to modify the application, complete the Modification of an Approved Protocol Form. Changes in this study cannot be initiated without IRB approval, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants. When the study closes, complete the appropriate portions of the IRB Request for Study Closure Form.

Please use reproductions of the IRB approved stamped information sheets to provide to your participants.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal, please include the above application number.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,


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358 Rose Administration Building
Box 870172
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487-0127
(205) 348-8461
FAX (205) 348-7189
TOLL FREE (877) 820-3066

Information Sheet

This study is being conducted by Sena Lim, a Ph.D student, supervised by Dr. Karla Gower, a professor at the department of advertising and public relations, at the University of Alabama. Please consider this information carefully before deciding whether to participate in this research.

Background Information and Procedures

The objective of this study is to investigate the consumers' attitude and perception toward a corporation's social responsibility (CSR). Participants will be asked to answer questions about their opinion and evaluate a corporate and its behavior. The research findings will be shared in academic settings through papers and presentations, but not used for any marketing purposes.

If you agree to be in this study, please click the "YES, I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE" button and your participation in the study will begin. The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to finish. You will only be asked to complete this survey once and your participation is absolutely voluntary.

The information from the consent form and from the questionnaires will be stored in two separate database files in two different folder locations to ensure confidentiality. There will be no way to link your information from the consent forms with your answers on the questionnaire.

Students will receive 0.5 points for participation in the research.

Risks of Being in this Study

Participants will be asked about their thoughts and attitude toward a company and its products and about their demographic features and political beliefs. Some of those questions may cause any feelings of embarrassment or discomfort for the participant, but it is only a minimal risk to the participant.

Benefits of Being in this Study

This research enables the researcher to investigate how a corporation's socially responsible behavior can affect consumers' or potential consumers' attitudes toward the company and its products. The findings of this study may contribute to both academic and professional fields.

Confidentiality and Voluntary Nature of the Study

Please note that there is no place to put the participant's name on the questionnaire. The researcher will not, in any way, be able to identify your answers. Your confidentiality will be maintained throughout the entire process.

If you decide to participate in this study, please remember that you can participate in this study only once. If you agree to be in the study, but later change your mind, you may drop out at any time. There are no penalties or consequences of any kind if you decide that you do not want to participate.



This study is strictly voluntary. You can skip answering any questions or can withdraw from the survey at any time without any concern of reprisal or without affecting their current or future relations with the instructor of the class or with the College.

Contacts and Questions

If you have further questions about this research project, please contact the principal investigator, Sena Lim, at slim12@crimson.ua.edu or the faculty advisor, Dr. Karla Gower, at gower@apr.ua.edu. If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about your rights as a participant in this research study, you may contact Ms. Tanta Myles, the Research Compliance Officer at UA, at 205-348-8461 or toll-free at 1-877-820-3066. You may also ask questions, make suggestions, or file complaints and concerns through the IRB Outreach website at http://osp.ua.edu/site/PRCO_Welcome.html or email participantoutreach@bama.ua.edu. After you participate, you are encouraged to complete the survey for research participants that is online at the outreach website or you may ask the investigator for a copy of it and mail it to the UA Office for Research Compliance, Box 870127, 358 Rose Administration Building, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0127.

YES, I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN. _click

NO, I DECIDED NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN _click

APPENDIX 3. SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES

How familiar are you with these companies?

	Very unfamiliar	Unfamiliar	Somewhat familiar	Familiar	Very familiar
Kroger					
Publix					
Target					
Walmart					

How frequently do you visit those stores?

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	A moderate amount	A great deal
Kroger					
Publix					
Target					
Walmart					

How frequently do you buy products at those stores?

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	A moderate amount	A great deal
Kroger					
Publix					
Target					
Walmart					

Based on your previous knowledge, check the number that indicates your feelings about each company (Kroger, Publix, Target, & Walmart).

	Strongly disagree			Neither agree nor disagree		Strongly agree	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I think the company offers high quality products and services.							
I admire and respect the company.							
I think the company's reputation for socially responsible behavior is above average for the industry.							

This message is posted on Target Facebook. Please read this message carefully and check the number that indicates your thought (See Appendix 1).

I am very aware of the issue addressed in the post.

Strongly disagree Strongly agree
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

How likely would you be to stop to think about this issue?

Very unlikely Very likely
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

How likely would you be to stop to think about what you can do to help with the issue?

Very unlikely Very likely
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Very unlikely Very likely
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

How likely would you be to communicate through social media about the issue?

Very unlikely Very likely
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

How likely are you to talk about the company favorable?

Very unlikely Very likely
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

How likely are you to recommend the product or company to friends or family?

Very unlikely Very likely
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Given the information shown, I would evaluate the company as

	1							7	
Very bad									Very good
Unfavorable									Favorable
Unsatisfactory									Satisfactory
Negative									Positive
Disliked									Liked

Given the information shown, how probable is that you would like to buy products/ services from the company?

Not probable Very probable
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

If there were another brand as good as the company, would you still prefer to buy the company's product?

Strongly disagree Strongly agree
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Please check the number that indicates your response.

The company's activity in the post seems to be...

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Self(Firm)-interested								Community-interested
Firm-focused								Customer-focused
Profit motivated								Socially motivated

What was the main topic of the post?

- 1) Target's commitment to fight childhood obesity
- 2) Target's commitment to lower sugar and salt products.
- 3) Walmart's commitment to fight childhood obesity
- 4) Walmart's commitment to lower sugar and salt products.

❖ In this section, you will be asked some basic information about yourself. Please check or type the number that indicates your response.

What is your gender?

- 1) Male
- 2) Female

What is your age?

What is your race?

- 1) Caucasian

- 2) African-American
- 3) Asian or Pacific Islander
- 4) Hispanic Native American/American Indian
- 5) Other

Do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

- 1) Republican
- 2) Democrat
- 3) Independent
- 4) No preference

Would you describe your political views as...

- 1) Very conservative
- 2) Conservative
- 3) Moderate
- 4) Liberal
- 5) Very liberal