

**Consumer Responses to Corporate Social Responsibility in  
Middlebury, Vermont**

*Kevin Bright, Emily Egginton, Xan Hopcraft, Marisa Lipsey, and Matt Rales*

ENVS 401 Environmental Studies Senior Seminar  
Fall 2005  
Kathryn Morse and Diane Munroe

## **Table of Contents**

I. Introduction.....	2
II. Methods.....	4
III. Results and Discussion.....	7
A. Where to Shop?.....	7
B. Consumer Attitudes and Behavior.....	9
1. Attitudes Toward CSR.....	9
2. Actual Behavior Towards Responsible Products.....	13
C. CSR in Marketing and Responsibility of Corporate Practices.....	17
IV. The Role of Standards.....	21
A. Biases: Is Middlebury Special.....	24
V. Conclusions.....	25
Appendix 1: Customer Survey.....	29
Appendix 2: Product Spreadsheet with Actual-CSR and Marketing-CSR Scores..	31
Appendix 3: Criteria for Assigning Company Actual-CSR Scores.....	41
Appendix 4: Product Sales Data.....	42
Appendix 5: Survey Results.....	46

## **I. Introduction**

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can be defined as a business' focus on the "triple bottom line," which includes not only economic, but also social and environmental goals, as measures of a company's success. Our seminar work in Fall 2005 focused on this idea of CSR, and more specifically on the interplay of CSR and global governance. We worked with the Middlebury-based organization ECOLOGIA (ECOlogists Linked for Organizing Grassroots Initiatives and Action) in our considerations of socially and environmentally responsible businesses, both in Middlebury as well as internationally.<sup>1</sup>

The idea of CSR can be a powerful tool in holding companies accountable for their social and environmental impacts, and as a means to increase corporate transparency toward all concerned stakeholders. Over the last several decades, a wide range of companies have begun to realize that an emphasis on the "triple bottom line" is not only morally superior, but can often bring financial rewards as well. Real social change, however, will not come from individual companies driving up their profit margins by imposing regulations on themselves, but instead from the more pervasive arena of global governance using internationally-recognized standards. Presently, civil society organizations (CSOs) have created a number of competing CSR standards. For example, the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), a CSO founded in 1997, maintains voluntary standards for sustainable development and ethical principles across a range of businesses. Compliance with GRI standards is completely voluntary, and opponents have consequently accused GRI of doing nothing more than providing a mechanism of "green washing" to subscribing companies.<sup>2</sup> In 2004, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) began work on a new CSR-standard, dubbed ISO26000. ISO is currently collecting inclusive stakeholder participation in drafting the standard, a process which includes input from NGOs such as ECOLOGIA.<sup>3</sup> The hope is that such a meticulous, "consensus" drafting process will identify, clarify, and refine the elements of CSR to the satisfaction of all stakeholders, and allow the new standard to become the main yardstick in measuring responsibility within the corporate community.<sup>4</sup> Given ECOLOGIA's interest and action in the standards arena, one of the primary goals of our project was to find out whether standards-based certifications could

---

<sup>1</sup> See [www.ecologia.org](http://www.ecologia.org)

<sup>2</sup> Governance by Standards: Opportunities for Civil Society Organizations. ECOLOGIA November 2004 Briefing Paper for the Ford Foundation.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

ensure social and environmental accountability of products, and if consumers would recognize and act upon these corporate claims.

In the early stages of our work we found, in general, two types of businesses which subscribe to the values and practices of CSR: small businesses founded by visionary leaders—founded on sound principles of CSR—and, alternatively, larger corporations that are more recently adopting CSR in direct response to consumer demand. Our particular project centered on this second type of company. More specifically, we were interested in understanding how the attitudes and actions of *consumers* influence the creation and maintenance of CSR. We wondered, is there consumer demand for CSR? Do consumers have awareness of CSR? What are consumers' responses to companies' commitment to CSR, and to their marketing of CSR? Do businesses have the ability to manipulate consumer purchasing power? Are people making decisions about where to shop, or what to buy based on social or environmental standards? We looked for answers to these and other questions in the town of Middlebury, Vermont.

We investigated Middlebury consumers' attitudes towards CSR as well as their shopping behaviors, hoping to discover what (if any) reward businesses can hope to gain from producing goods in a socially and/or environmentally responsible manner. Vermont is an especially appropriate and interesting location in which to examine the phenomenon of CSR. The state has historically "led the way" in creating and adopting CSR. In fact, Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility (VBSR) was one of the CSR-movement's founding organizations. And, including the membership of such notoriously responsible businesses as Seventh Generation and Ben and Jerry's, VBSR surely stands to this day as one of the leading CSR organizations in the world. Middlebury, too, is a unique community considering its unusually high levels education, community identity and environmental awareness, not to mention Middlebury's above-average level of affluence. Although Middlebury's exceptional nature prevents us from directly extrapolating our findings to the nation as a whole, the information we collected does provide a powerful illustration of the potential influence of local consumers on corporate behavior.

## **II. Methods**

We focused our research on a variety of local grocery stores in Middlebury, Vermont, in order to expose any differences in consumer behavior between stores. We decided that Shaw's and Hannaford's would provide us with the best results for stores that cater to a broad base of shoppers, and carry a variety of products. We chose Greg's Meat Market for its smaller, more selective choice of products as well as for its local appeal that is lacking at Shaw's and Hannaford's. Finally we included the Middlebury Natural Foods Co-op because, as a store that caters primarily to the environmentally-conscious, we hoped to see any discrepancy between the attitudes of Co-op costumers and those patronizing more conventional stores. These four stores are the only major groceries in Middlebury, and therefore provide a fairly comprehensive cross-section of shopping in the town.

One of the first steps that we took was to conduct a survey of shoppers in Middlebury. The questions on the survey were aimed at determining the level of consumer awareness of CSR, as well as the receptiveness of consumers to making purchasing decisions based on environmental or social responsibility. The survey also asked for a general level of education and annual income from each respondent (see Appendix 1 for survey questions). Information from the survey was intended to give us a deeper understanding of current consumer attitudes concerning CSR. We surveyed customers outside all but one of the stores listed above, and provided apple cider as an added incentive for people who were willing to fill them out. The survey generally took volunteers anywhere between 2-5 minutes to complete. We purposefully kept the questions brief to encourage a larger number of participants. We spent approximately 2-4 hours at tables outside of each store in order to collect enough surveys to provide us with reliable data. At Shaw's we collected 76 surveys, 51 at Greg's, and 25 at the Co-op. We were unable to survey at Hannaford's because the management considers surveying to be solicitation, and it is strictly forbidden by company regulations.

Within each of the four stores we looked specifically at four product types. We narrowed our search to products in the sectors of coffee and chocolate, paper products, cleaning products, and dental hygiene products. Although concentrating on grocery stores, we decided mostly to avoid food products and concentrate in other areas. The above sectors, we felt, provided us with a fairly wide array of products, coming from companies that show a great range in levels of social and environmental responsibility (see Appendix 2 for a complete list of products).

Once we had determined the product sectors, we went to each of the four stores and noted which products within each sector were carried at each store. We then assigned a score to each individual product based upon its packaging appearance with regard to any commitment to CSR. The scores that we gave were assigned with the perspective of the casual shopper in mind. Our goal was to score the product based upon how easy it would be for consumers to interpret any information about CSR on the packaging while they conducted their daily shopping routine. For example, products that were advertised as organic, fair trade, or “natural” received higher scores than products that did not. Products claiming to be free of harsh chemicals (e.g. phosphates or chlorine) were scored higher. Any other CSR-claims evident on the product were considered as well. Only the characteristics of the product itself were considered in this designation. Characteristics of the packaging (such as recycled content) did not factor into this score. The scores were designated according to the following rubric (see Appendix 2 for complete list of products and their marketing-CSR scores):

<b>CSR Score: Marketing</b>	
0	product not assessed
1	no advertised CSR
2	some CSR claims, if you look closely
3	well-advertised CSR

In addition to assigning products “marketing-CSR scores,” we also researched them to determine who their parent companies were, and then scored those companies based on the most accurate information we could find concerning their social and environmental responsibility. We did this in order to see if there was any discrepancy between the claims on the product packages and how the company actually conducts itself (i.e. “green-washing” vs. under-advertising). We used information on the web to assess each company. Detailed company evaluation sheets can be provided upon request. While we found it quite difficult to thoroughly and accurately “evaluate” the CSR practices of each company in such a short amount of time, we approximated company scores based on consideration of a range of responsibility indicators. These included characteristics of the products produced, environmental responsibility, social responsibility, community involvement, CSR infrastructure, philanthropy, and NGO-affiliations (see Appendix 3 for complete list of criteria used in evaluations). These “actual-CSR scores,” while probably

not entirely “actual,” tell us generally which companies seem to subscribe most fully to CSR. We scored the companies using a similar rubric to that of the marketing scores (see Appendix 2 for list of companies and their actual-CSR scores):

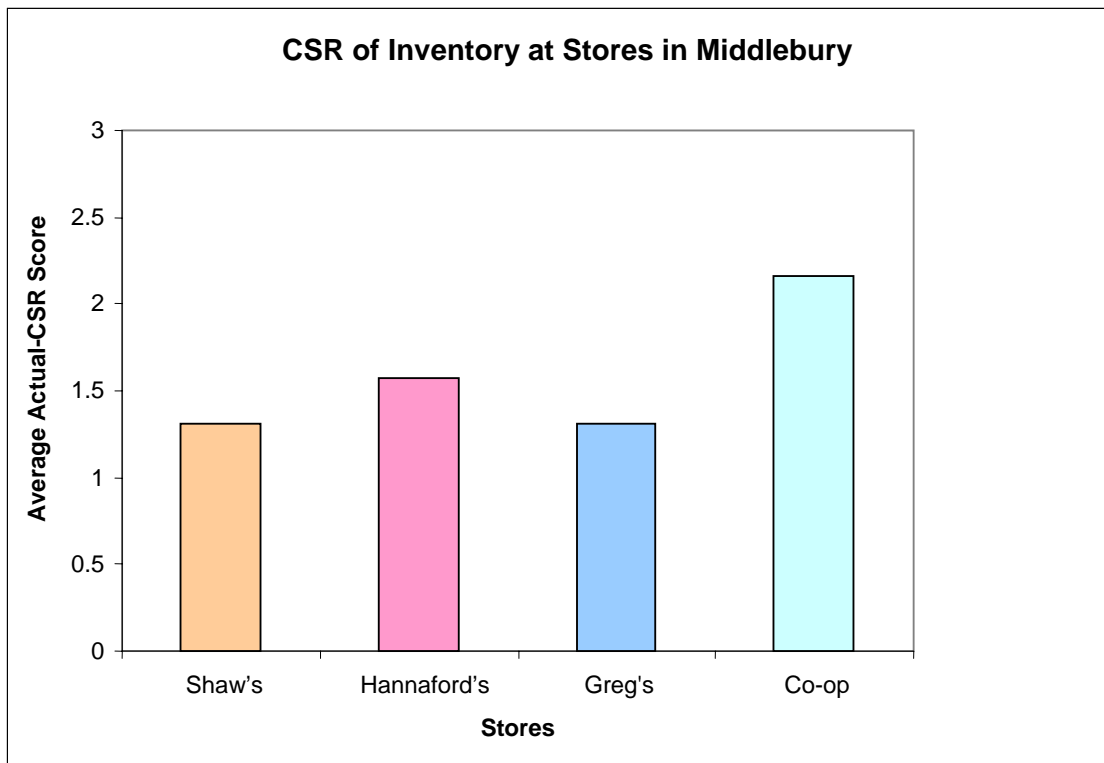
<b>CSR Score: Actual</b>	
0	no mention of CSR, no attempts
1	only one component developed, other aspects neglected; still largely profit-driven; goals may be set out, but concrete progress not demonstrated
2	concrete goals and significant progress to attain them
3	exemplary CSR, responsible to fullest extent possible

Our final step was to create a survey for each of the store managers containing a list of products, so that they could provide us with sales rankings for each (e.g. products with a rank of “1” are the best-sellers in their sectors). Originally we wanted to obtain actual sales records from the stores, but it is against company policy to directly release such information. The managers, however, were willing to provide us with rankings as it does not compromise privacy policies. The sales data were a key component because it provides us with an indication of what consumers are actually buying, as opposed to what they say they are buying. It also allows us to compare sales among companies with varying levels of CSR (see Appendix 4 for sales rankings from store managers).

### III. Results and Discussion

#### **A. Where to Shop?**

The grocery stores in Middlebury have a number of different characteristics. Shaw's, Hannaford's, Greg's Meat Market, and the Co-op vary in size, inventory, and management. Shaw's and Hannaford's are the two largest stores that carry the widest range of products, followed by Greg's Meat Market and the Co-op. We compared product inventories between stores to the responsibility (actual-CSR scores) of the parent companies that manufacture the products. By taking an average of the "actual-CSR scores" of each of our products, we can get an overall picture of the responsibility of the inventories of each store:



*Figure 1*

Figure 1 highlights some interesting trends. Most obviously, the Co-op sells the highest proportion of environmentally and socially-responsible goods than any other store in Middlebury. Hannaford's sells the second-largest proportion of socially responsible goods, and Greg's and Shaw's are similar here to one-another, each with an average score of about 1.3.

Considering its large size and non-specialized nature, Hannaford's is a surprising second-place. In order for this store to profit from a relatively high proportion of environmentally and socially responsible goods, there must be a significant consumer demand for them. The differences seen here probably reflect not only differing customer demand at each store, but also the differing attitudes of the store management or corporate chain decisions. It is apparent that the Co-op strives specifically to provide environmentally and socially responsible goods to the public of Middlebury. The trend at Hannaford's is less clear, but for a large non-specialized chain grocery store, it provides a comparatively large number of socially responsible goods. The management of Shaw's and Greg's mostly likely lend more weight to other factors when considering the choice of products for their inventories.

To further explore the question of why people choose to shop where they do, we asked customers at each store to choose from a list of factors influencing their choice of store. The proposed factors included location, price of products, selection, product quality, atmosphere/customer service, and social/environmental responsibility of the products. We allowed each survey respondent to mark as many of these factors as they thought contributed to their decision. The response was variable, and differed markedly between stores:



Figure 2

Patrons of Shaw's seem to choose it overwhelmingly based on its location. Shoppers at Greg's come not only because of its location, but also because of its atmosphere and customer service. The Co-op draws customers chiefly because of the quality of its products, but also attracts shoppers with the social and environmental responsibility of these products. Interestingly enough, when considering location, prices, and other factors in choice of stores, consumers of various socioeconomic and education levels did not differ much in their responses. It seems that the decisions consumers make about where to shop do not depend much on education or degree of affluence, but more likely are made based on the overall characteristics of the stores themselves. Overall, it was apparent that people are not choosing their shopping locations based solely on the social and environmental responsibility of the inventories. Only 9% of individuals polled claimed to shop at a certain location for these reasons, the lowest-ranked of any contributing factor. Interestingly, the results also indicate that people tend to value atmosphere and customer service over the quality of products. Less important was price, only 4% higher than social or environmental responsibility (see Appendix 5 for complete survey data).

## **B. Consumer Attitudes and Behaviors**

### 1. Attitudes Towards CSR

From the data that we collected in our surveys (Appendix 5), it became clear that consumers generally respond positively towards higher levels of CSR. While this is perhaps to be expected given that the respondents were self-motivated to fill out the survey, it is still important to consider. When we asked respondents if they would be influenced in their purchasing if they were aware of a company's devotion to social or environmental responsibility, the response was an overwhelming yes:

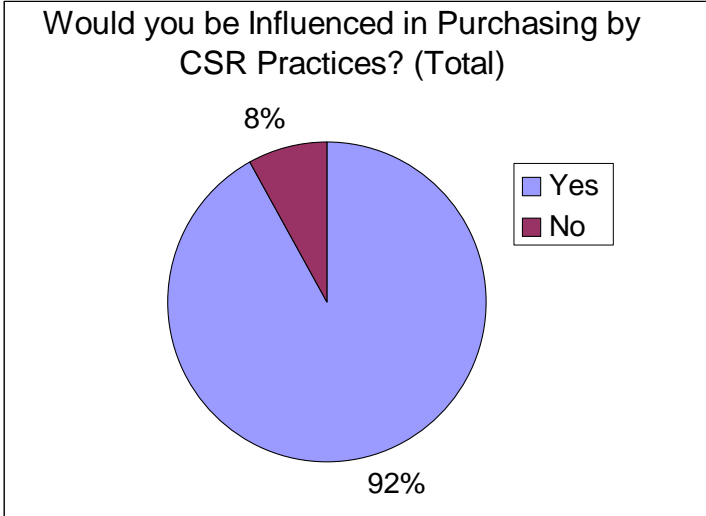


Figure 3

Ninety-two percent of consumers say they would be influenced in their purchasing by knowledge of a company’s responsibility. In addition to this, roughly 36% of all individuals surveyed claim to have read a CSR report, indicating that many members of the Middlebury community are familiar with the concept of CSR and its implications:

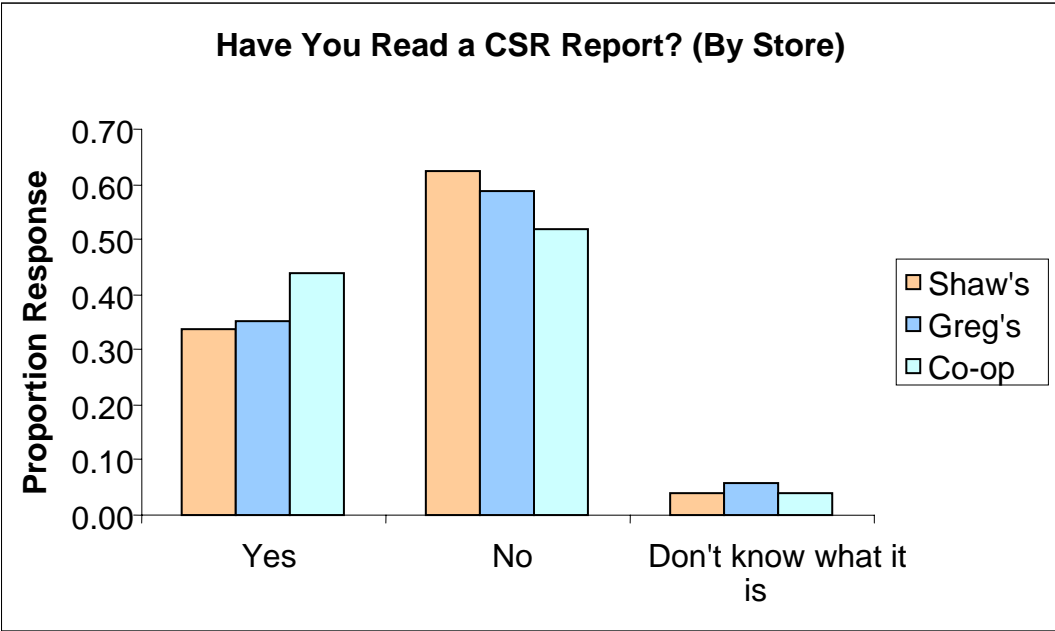


Figure 4

It appears that individuals who shop at the Co-op are the most active when it comes to reading CSR reports, followed by those who shop at Greg's, and then finally those at Shaw's. The data show the opposite trend for individuals who have never read a CSR report. It is not surprising that people who shop at the Co-op show more participation in researching CSR, in line with their choice to shop at such an environmentally-aware store, while the individuals who shop at the more conventional store (Shaw's) show the least awareness.

Even though it is clear that most individuals do not choose shopping *locations* based on CSR, their attitudes concerning what to purchase within a given store revealed somewhat different trends. As noted in Figure 3, 92% of respondents claimed they would be influenced in their purchasing based on knowledge of a product's parent company's responsibility. Customers also indicated that environmental and health qualities had a high degree of importance when they were deciding which products to buy:

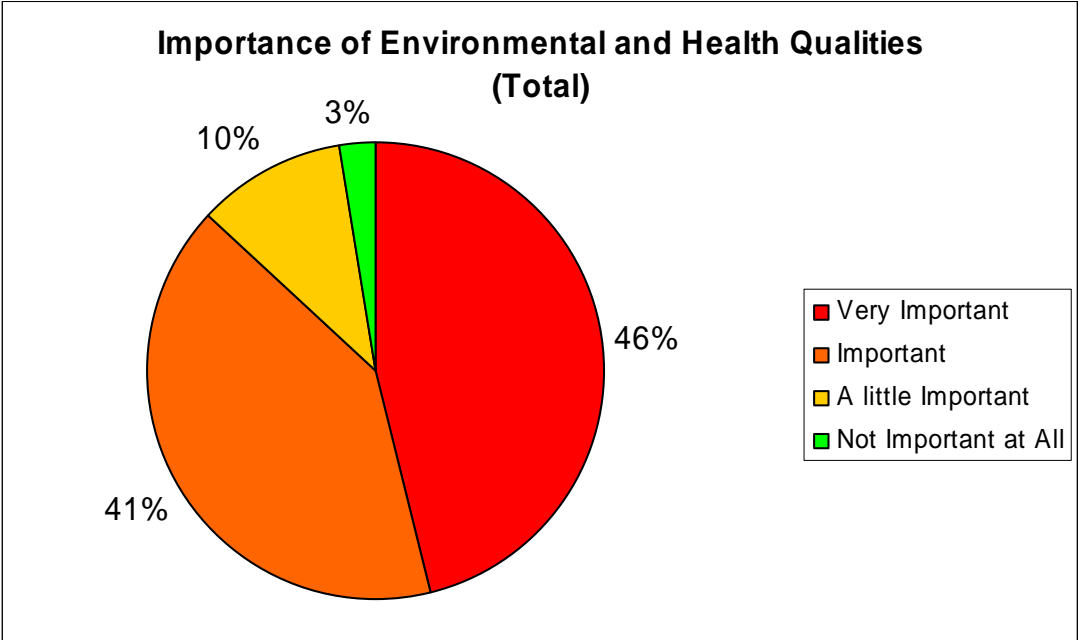


Figure 5

This chart indicates that an overwhelming 46% of all consumers polled stated that a product's environmental and health qualities were "very important" when it came to the decision of whether or not to buy it. Survey questions also asked about several other factors influencing purchasing decisions, on the same scale of importance. Price was "very important" to 36% of

consumers; a company’s reputation was “very important” to 33%; and the appearance or packaging of a product was “very important” to only 9% (see Appendix 5 for complete survey results). From these responses, it seems that the category of “environmental and health qualities” is the most important factor of the four in influencing consumer choices.

Our survey also took into account the influences of education and income on an individual’s attitude concerning CSR. We found that the lowest-income households are less likely to buy based on CSR, while those with higher earnings are more likely to do so:

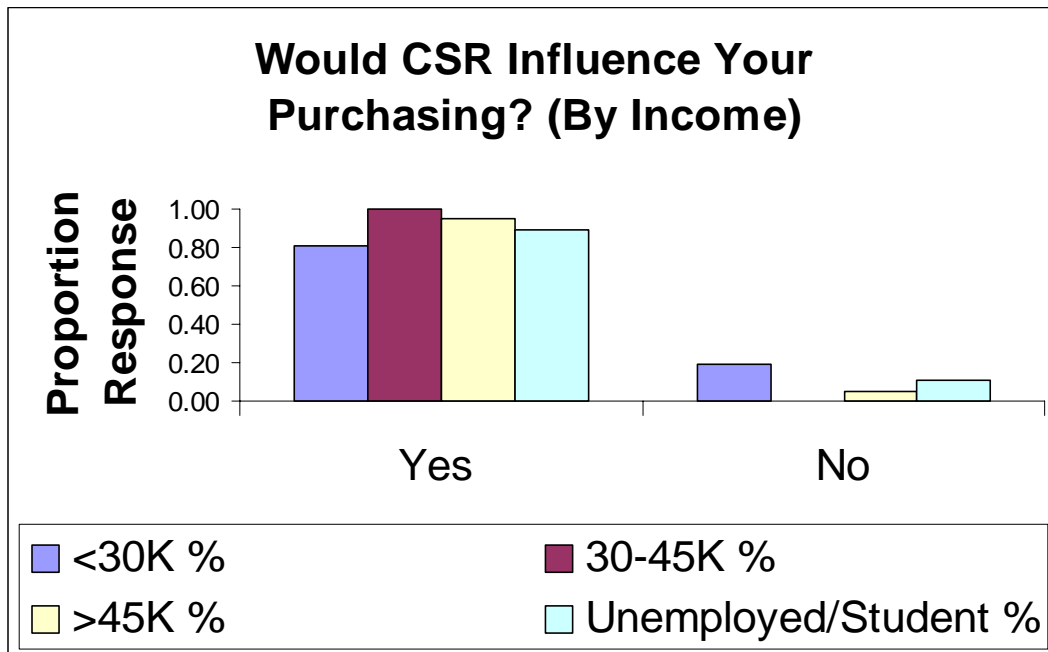


Figure 6

The largest percentage of individuals who replied that they would not be influenced in their purchasing by CSR were those who earn less than \$30,000/yr, while those who earn more showed slightly higher percentages. This seems reasonable, due to the fact that products advertising greater CSR (such as Seventh Generation, organic, and fair trade coffee) are often more expensive than products which do not advertise such commitments to CSR. But overall, degree of affluence had much less influence on consumer attitudes towards CSR than might be expected.

A much more pronounced trend appeared when we looked at the influence of education on purchasing CSR products:

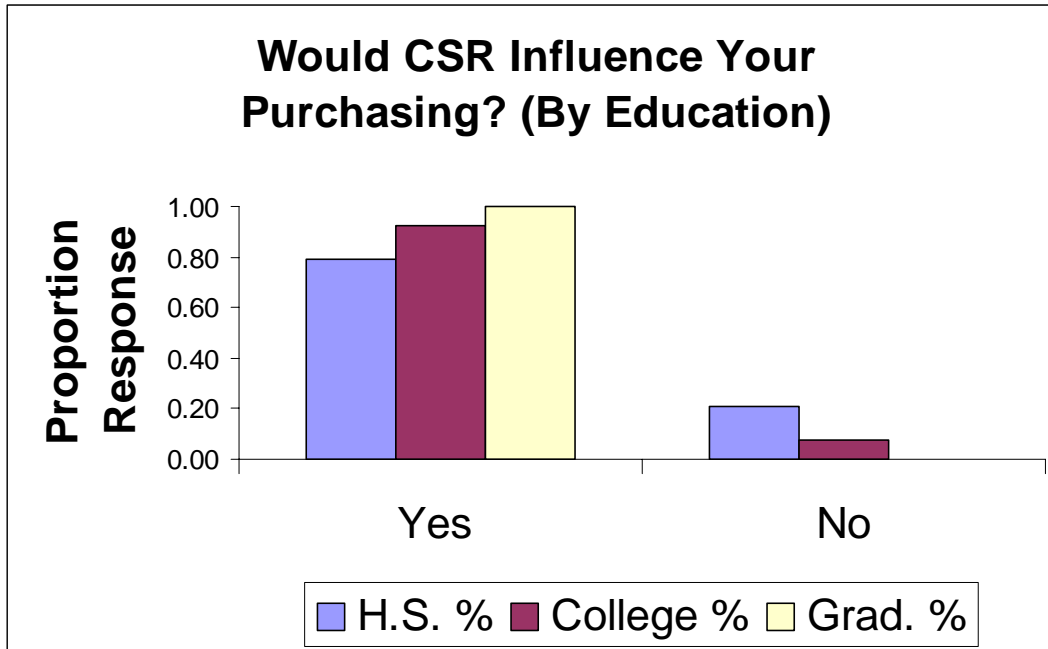


Figure 7

There is a steady increase in the percentage of individuals who replied “yes,” as their level of education increased, indicating that people with higher levels of education are *more* likely to buy based on CSR. The highest percentage of negative response came from individuals who completed high school only, whereas not a single respondent completing graduate studies responded “no.” Overall, it seems that people with a higher level of education have better knowledge of CSR and its implications, and further are more likely to respond with their purchasing decisions. Although this alludes to the importance of education in building awareness, consumers with a wide variety of educational backgrounds responded favorably to the idea of CSR.

## 2. Actual Behavior Towards Responsible Products

With an indication of the product sales rankings from the store managers, we were able to compare the CSR-scores to product sales. We were interested to see whether consumers were actually buying responsible products to the extent that they indicated in the survey responses. Do consumers attitudes concerning CSR line up with their behavior? Even though 92% of respondents claimed that they would be influenced to purchase products that claimed higher CSR

standards, our sales results indicated that people are clearly *not* acting on this desire to buy socially-responsible products:

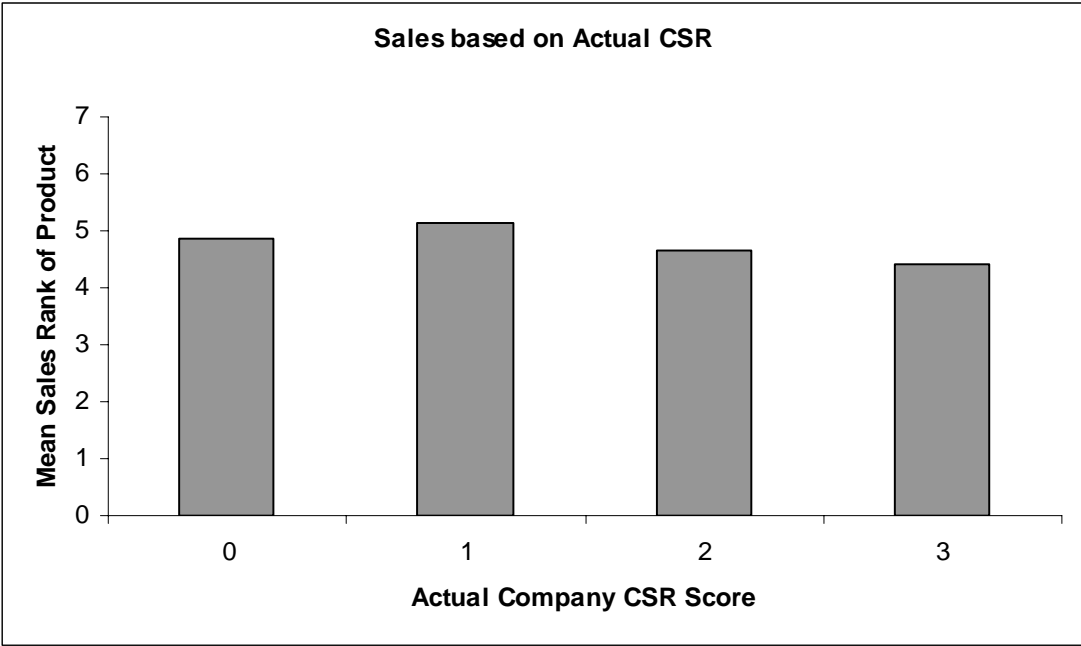


Figure 8

Sales rank represents the average sales of all products across all stores in each category of CSR, where the “actual company CSR” scores are defined as:

CSR Score: Actual	
0	no mention of CSR, no attempts
1	only one component, other aspects neglected; still largely profit-driven; goals may be set out, but concrete progress not demonstrated
2	concrete goals and significant progress to attain them
3	exemplary CSR, responsible to fullest extent possible

Figure 8 shows that in the overall data, there is no relationship whatsoever between the responsibility of the company and how well its products are selling. When these data are broken down by store, however, the Co-op shows the highest percentage sales ranking within the best CSR score, which does not hold true for any of the other stores. Shaw’s and Hannaford’s remain essentially the same across all four categories while Greg’s reveals slightly fewer sales on products that have exemplary CSR. None of these discrepancies from store to store, however,

are really large enough to draw strong conclusions from (see Appendix 4 for complete sales data).

When we considered product sales, based not on the actual behavior of the companies, but on the extent to which their packages advertised good CSR practices, we found an inverse relationship:

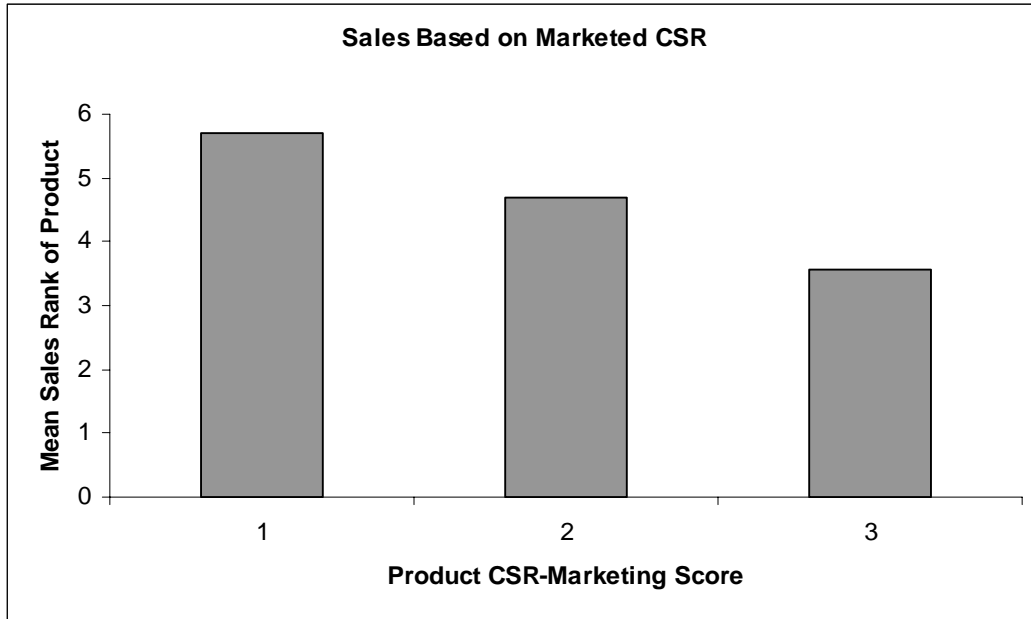


Figure 9

For Figure 9, product sales rank is defined the same as in Figure 8, and CSR-marketing scores can be defined as:

CSR Score: Marketing	
1	no advertised CSR
2	some CSR claims, if you look closely
3	well-advertised CSR

Figure 9 shows very little to indicate that CSR practices actually make a difference to consumer purchasing decisions. In fact, consumers buy fewer products with well-advertised CSR than products that have no CSR advertising whatsoever. Again, when this data is broken down by store, we see a slight variation in trends. At Shaw's and the Co-op, sales remain virtually

unchanged among CSR-marketing scores. At Hannaford's and Greg's, though, products with the best advertised CSR clearly do more poorly than those with less-advertised CSR (see Appendix 4 for complete sales data).

The explanation for this trend is not entirely clear. Pricing of products may have had more influence on purchasing than we would have expected based on the responses to our survey questions, though survey respondents in general listed environmental and health qualities as more important than price. Although we did not compare the prices of our products, it is very likely that differing costs have a significant effect on purchasing.

The brand recognition of products also plays a large role in purchasing decisions. Larger and more well-known companies with recognized brands seem to sell the best. Such companies generally do not make any responsibility claims on their packaging, and often have marginal or low levels of social responsibility in practice. The overall number-one sellers in nearly all of our product sectors are made by large corporations with well-known brand names: Unilever's "Pure and Gentle" baby wipes, Hershey's candy bars, ConAgra's "Swiss Miss" hot chocolate, Kraft's "Maxwell House" coffee, Johnson & Johnson's dental floss, Kimberly-Clark's "Kleenex" facial tissues, Georgia-Pacific's "Quilted Northern" toilet tissue, and Colgate-Palmolive's toothpaste and toothbrushes. Proctor and Gamble, amazingly, has a total of *five* brands topping out sales lists across stores, more than any other company. These include "Joy" liquid dish detergent, "Cascade" dish soap, "Luvs" diapers, "Bounce" fabric softener, and "Tide" laundry detergent.

Only at the Co-op did smaller, more socially-responsible products gain top sales rankings. Their best sellers include Seventh Generation, Dean's Beans, Tom's of Maine, and Lotus Brand's "Eco-dent." The stark differences between this list, and the list of overall best-sellers probably contributes greatly to the differences in purchasing trends between the Co-op and other stores. Neither socially-responsible packaging claims nor socially-responsible practices seemed to have a significant effect on customers at the Co-op. The likely explanation for this pattern is that the Co-op has a much more specialized, and overall more responsible, inventory. Co-op customers probably do not feel the need to pick and choose products based on responsibility—they might be more likely to assume that a majority of products stocked at the store come from responsible companies.

### C. CSR in Marketing and Responsibility of Corporate Practices

In addition to comparing consumer attitudes with behaviors, we examined a similar question concerning the products and corporations themselves. We were interested to know how the marketing of the product compared to the companies' actual environmental and social practices. To do this, we compared the marketing-CSR scores of the products to the actual-CSR scores of the companies' practices (see section II for methods). There was correlation between the scores to some extent, but also some striking discrepancies. In other words, some companies advertise their products as socially or environmentally-friendly when their behavior is not, whereas some responsible companies do not make their practices clear through their packaging. In order to quantify the extent that companies either "green-wash" or under-advertise their products, we counted instances where there was a product that had an actual CSR score of a 0 or 1 (low) and a marketing score of a 3 (high), which would represent a degree of false advertising, or in some cases "green-washing." We also noted when there were products that had actual-CSR scores of 3 (high) with marketing scores of 1 (low). Such products are considered to be "under-advertised" in terms of their producers' social and environmental responsibility. The results are as follows:

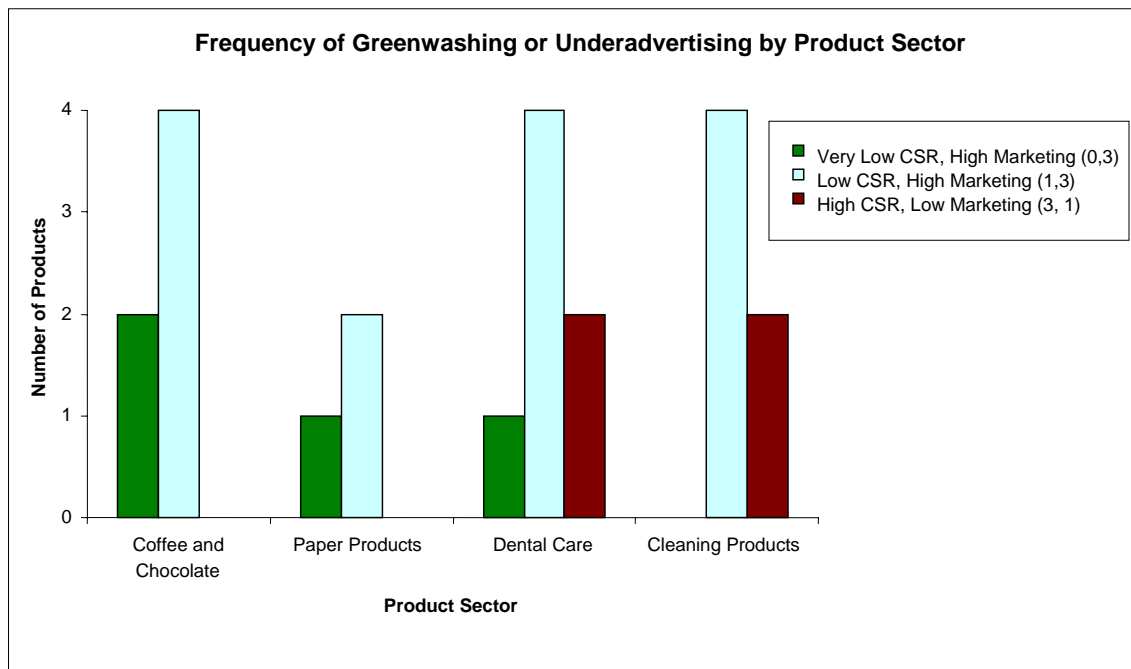


Figure 10

Figure 10 shows the number of times in each product sector that companies either over- or under-advertised their responsibility. Coffee and chocolate, more often than other products are “green-washed” to appear more socially or environmentally-friendly than they are in reality. For example, Millstone and Seattle’s Best coffees both have packaging that suggests they are socially or environmentally-friendly products, but we found both companies (Proctor and Gamble and Seattle’s Best, respectively) to have less-than perfect records of responsibility. Four products total, two in dental, and two in cleaning, actually had marketing-CSR scores lower than their actual-CSR scores. These companies seem to under-advertise their socially- or environmentally-friendly products. As examples, the packaging of Equa-line toothpaste/toothbrushes and Sun-Light cleaning products do not generally reflect the behavior of the responsible companies behind them. However, any trend towards green-washing or under-advertising of products is in general relatively small. The above graph shows only 22 instances of products out of a total of 176 (or about 10%) that over- or under-advertising their responsibility.

Despite a moderate degree of accuracy in packaging claims, we recommend that companies that under-advertise their responsibility consider changing their packaging to inform consumers of their good behavior. This would serve to spread awareness of responsibility further into the consumer base. We would also strongly support any controls implemented on green-washing.

#### **D. Consumer Responses to Corporate Marketing and Corporate Practices**

Interestingly, the trends we see in sales based on marketed-CSR differ quite markedly from the trends we see for sales based on companies’ actual CSR practices. The only correlation between CSR and purchasing decisions at all is a negative one, which shows up only when we consider the extent that CSR is marketed on the product packaging (Figure 9). However, there seems to be no differences in purchasing based on the *actual* responsibility of the companies in question. These results represent a significant discrepancy between consumer attitudes towards socially-responsible products, and the actual decisions they are making when they are shopping. The explanations for this trend are not entirely clear. It seems likely that other factors such as price and brand-recognition are influencing purchasing decisions to a much larger extent than the social or environmental responsibility of the products.

First, it is possible that claims of social or environmental responsibility on packaging occur only within a small, niche market. It is unclear whether having responsibility claims *negatively* impacts sales, and products marketed in this way have been “relegated” to the niche market, or alternatively, if these companies start out with the intention of catering to the niche’s consumers, and market their products to this end. What is interesting from our data, if we accept the niche idea, is that the products in the niche market are more heavily-*advertised* as having good CSR, but their parent companies do not necessarily have more responsible practices than mainstream, non-niche producers. The implications of this situation, if it is indeed the case, would be profound. Products that are advertised to have good CSR can be automatically relegated to a niche market or specialty section of a store, without regard to any actual behavior of the companies producing them. Such a trend may allude to significant confusion between CSR and “natural” products, which are aimed at a specialized group of consumers.

Secondly, we must carefully consider a shopper’s choice of the products themselves. Consumers in general rely on very little information when making purchasing decisions. Sixty-four percent of surveyed customers said that they had never read or heard of a corporate social responsibility report. Although it was pleasantly surprising that 36% *had* done so, it is not clear that reading the glossy reports of large corporations provides much real information concerning social and environmental responsibility. Even the most aware of consumers may find it difficult to make an informed decision. Just in the course of research for this project, our group often found it problematic to assign “scores” to companies based on information about them on the web. Often it was the largest and least-responsible companies that had the longest “sustainability” or “CSR” reports, and deciphering the reality of the company’s responsibility from within those reports was a formidable task. In western companies it is often communications departments who produce CSR reports, which result in statements that have less to do with core business or long-term commitments. The surprising lack of accurate information about the responsibility of companies is probably reflected in our failure to see any meaningful connection between responsibility and sales in our data.

Very few consumers, then, have sufficient awareness *even* if they have actively looked for information about a company’s responsibility, and *even* if there were able to find accurate information. How, then, are our well-meaning survey respondents to act on their good intentions? The only source of information readily available to the average shopper is the product

packaging itself. If we accept that most consumers prefer to buy products from responsible companies, but we also concede that in practice they are *not* basing their decisions on the responsibility claims of packaging, we can only conclude that current packaging must be ineffective at influencing shoppers. This could be for three reasons: consumers are not seeing the products at all, they are not reading the product packages, or they simply do not trust any claims that are made on the packages. Each of these explanations most likely contributes. Products in a niche market are often sold in separate stores, or separate sections of stores, than is mainstream merchandise. For example, Hannaford’s has a “Nature’s Place” section containing natural products that is kept quite separate from the bulk of their inventory. The Co-op, in itself, represents a niche-product supplier. Average consumers may not even encounter the products in these stores or sections, much less stop to consider their labels. Even if products with well-advertised CSR are included in proximity to other products, however, customers might not take the time to read or consider packaging. More likely, they simply grab products and brand names that they recognize. Lastly, even if consumers do read packages, they do not necessarily place confidence in what they are reading.

When one of our survey questions showed two pictures of product packages and asked, “Which paper towel is more environmentally-friendly?” a large majority (66%) chose Georgia-Pacific’s “Green Forest” over plain-looking towels produced by the New-Jersey-based company, Marcal (see Appendix 1 for pictures on survey):

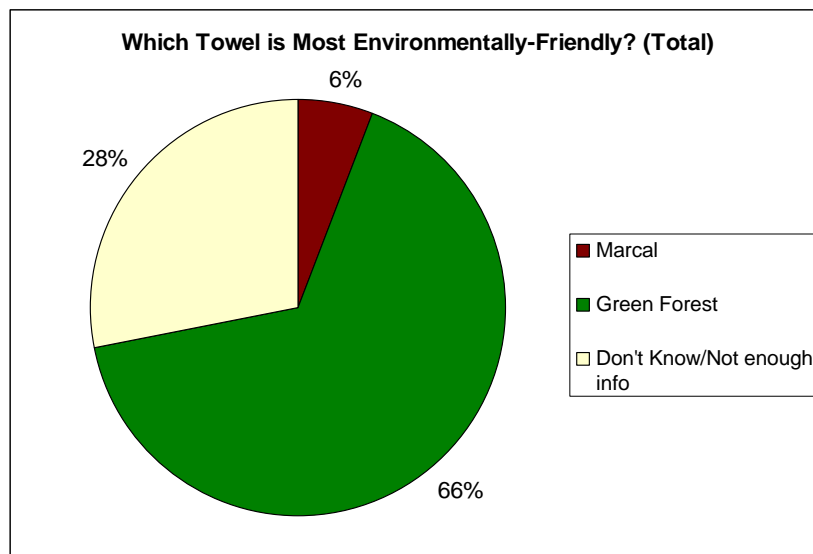


Figure 11

Figure 11 shows that, when pressed to make a decision concerning environmental responsibility, consumers generally respond to product packaging. Interestingly, however, 28% of respondents replied that they did not have enough information based on the question to make a fair decision. Indeed, it seems that some consumers are uncomfortable relying on the claims of product packaging. And for good reason: in fact, Green Forest towels contain only about 10% post-consumer recycled content whereas Marcal towels always contain a minimum of 30% (usually closer to 70%). Response to this question shows that, when consumers truly are basing their decisions on responsibility of the product, they will likely look at product packaging. It also demonstrates that at least some consumers, even when pressed, have very limited trust in product labels. Only a very few (6%) had enough background knowledge to accurately choose Marcal over Green Forest.

#### **IV. The Role of Standards**

Consumer recognition of good CSR is highly dependent upon the appropriate certification and labeling of products. However, it is often difficult to determine whether labels are honest and accurate, and whether they reflect the genuine intentions of the company. Our primary goals throughout the evolution of this project were to find out whether corporate certifications could ensure social and environmental accountability of products, and if consumers would recognize and act upon these corporate actions defined by the certification process. Through our investigative efforts, our team encountered a wide variety of small businesses and large corporations which exhibited an even wider variety of values toward the social and environmental health of their respective local, regional, national, or global communities. We discovered thriving local businesses, founded on the premises of environmental stewardship and community development, and we also came across profit driven, multinational corporations which were only beginning to consider CSR, likely due to its promising influence on profits. Our search yielded examples of business people working to influence market forces through the incorporation of CSR into their production models, and of consumers working to stimulate change through market demand.

One of our larger questions was: what are consumer's attitudes toward the vast and varied products available in the marketplace, and how are they acting on those attitudes? Any answers to this broad question, we believed, would help us determine whether CSR evidenced in

certification and labeling could show promise for a viable future marketplace – hopefully a marketplace driven by genuine concern for social and environmental health and sustainability. What we found was that consumer attitudes (if not their actual behavior) tended to reflect a desire for this kind of commerce, placing value on the “triple bottom line” rather than price alone. With few exceptions, consumers recognized two common existing certifications in America – USDA Certified Organic, and Certified Fair Trade – and many consumers bought products with these labels on a regular basis.

The survey responses to Organic and Fair Trade certifications reflect some promising trends, with income and level of education being significant factors. Across all three stores that we surveyed, 78% of consumers report buying Organic products “sometimes,” and 63% report buying Fair Trade products “sometimes.” Sixteen percent of respondents for each category reported that they “always” bought Organic and Fair Trade products when they were available. Level of education had more influence on these decisions than did income level. Consumers who had completed college or graduate studies were always more likely to buy Organic and Fair Trade certified products. Similarly, all of the people who were unfamiliar with the certifications had not continued their educations after high school. Income was much less of a determining factor with regard to the purchase of certified products, and results in this category were highly varied. Though we did not specifically examine the relationship between the certifications, it seems reasonable to assume that consumers who frequently purchase Organic products, or frequently purchase Fair Trade products, probably purchase both.

Our results show that many companies whose products are certified Organic or Fair Trade have social or environmental responsibility records to match. If a product is labeled USDA Certified Organic, this precludes the use of many harmful substances in the production of that product and therefore, producers must turn to positive, environmentally enhancing alternatives. These practices ensure healthy working conditions for producers, as well as clean, toxin-free products for consumers. Further, certified labeling, overall, is much more accurate in reflecting a company’s responsibility than are general packaging claims.

The definition of the Fair Trade movement according to the 2003 Report on Fair Trade Trends in US, Canada, & the Pacific Rim is “a global network of producers, traders, marketers, advocates and consumers focused on building equitable trading relationships between consumers

and the world's most economically disadvantaged artisans and farmers.”<sup>5</sup> This definition reveals that the driving force behind Fair Trade certification is an international social movement. Organic certification, on the other hand, seems more based upon an environmental movement, and often operates on a more localized level. Our survey results did reveal that a few more people (78% vs. 63%) “sometimes” bought Certified Organic products than they did Certified Fair Trade products; a 15% difference. Perhaps the small difference is a result of Middlebury being an extremely environmentally-conscious town (with respect to the rest of the country). Environmental concerns in Middlebury might take precedent over concern for social movements that tend to occur within a broader, global framework. Our results overall, though, reflect a community that would like to support *both* environmental and social initiatives through their purchasing power, even though local, USDA Certified Organic products prove to be slightly favored over international, Fair Trade Certified products.

So are certifications a solution? Our results suggest that they are quite promising, as they give consumers a standardized framework within which to make their purchasing decisions. They provide consumers with a background on the product's production history, revealing the external costs and benefits of the product's production, as well as its environmental and social costs and benefits. This seems to be the main reason that such a large number of people in Middlebury buy Certified Organic and Certified Fair Trade products. If the attitude behind the label reflects the attitude of the consumer, the consumer is very likely to purchase the product. But before we conclude that government certification is useful across the board, we need to reflect on the diverse group of companies that we are dealing with.

Certification may be more appropriate for large multinational corporations who are in the process of cleaning up their act. In our research, these giants flaunted their devotion to International Standards Organization (ISO) standards (largely the environmental standards of ISO 14000-series) to a much greater extent than smaller companies did. We also noted that many smaller companies were created through exceptional visionary leadership, with social and environmental responsibility as founding values of the company. In a case like this, standardized government certification may hinder product sales because the company's progressive nature has put it substantially ahead of any applicable standards. There is no doubt that certifications have

---

<sup>5</sup> 2003 Report on Fair Trade Trends in US, Canada, & the Pacific Rim, [http://www.fairtradefederation.org/2003\\_trends\\_report.pdf](http://www.fairtradefederation.org/2003_trends_report.pdf), Accessed November 14<sup>th</sup> 2005.

enormous potential for influencing consumer purchasing habits, as the response to Organic and Fair Trade certifications in Middlebury has shown. More accurate labeling, then, may be the only way for consumers to avoid being fooled by “green-washing” when it comes to large corporations who only publish relevant information in lengthy, confusing reports.

### **A. Biases: Is Middlebury Special?**

As we assess and draw conclusions from our results, we must consider the distinctive qualities of our community. Middlebury, Vermont is a progressive college town where people tend to be highly aware of social and environmental issues. So, by default, people in Middlebury are probably more likely to understand the implications of CSR, and thus are more likely to purchase responsible and or certified products. National averages for purchases of Fair Trade coffee for example are likely to be much lower than those that we obtained for local stores in Middlebury. Even so, it was reported in 2002 that total sales of Fair Trade products in the US was \$131 million, which was up from \$85.6 million in 2001 – a 53% increase – and trends have continued to climb since then.<sup>6</sup> Global trends also show promise as Fair Trade labeled sales across the world grew by 42.3% between 2002 and 2003.<sup>7</sup> We would like to see reporting on Fair Trade’s market share as compared to the market share for similar products (coffee and chocolate) that are produced conventionally. This could provide more information on the effectiveness of certifications and labels at a national level. Further analysis is necessary to determine the accuracy of our Middlebury-based survey sample in representing the larger U.S. population. We would need to compare statistics on the percentage of the market share that Fair Trade and Organic certifications currently hold at both the local (Middlebury) and national level. In all likelihood, national trends would not be as promising as what we found to be the case in Middlebury, but that does not mean that such trends cannot serve as support for improved certification and labeling across the country.

Perhaps the finest example of CSR marketing and socially and environmentally responsible purchasing takes place at the Middlebury Natural Foods Co-op. Despite the Co-op being our smallest sample size, it boasted the highest percentage of consumers who *always* bought Organic and Fair Trade certified products when compared to the other two stores.

---

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.fairtrade.net/sites/impact/facts.html>, Accessed November 14, 2005.

According to sales by volume at the Co-op, the best selling coffee (Dean's Beans) and chocolate products fulfill three criteria that are the crux of sound CSR: they are local (Vermont-based), USDA Certified Organic, and Fair Trade Certified. This is a shining example of honest and accurate labeling, appealing to the attitudes of informed consumers. The Co-op also works hard to educate its consumers about certified products and why it is important to buy them. If you look around, you will see pictures of local farms and farmers, and information tags on the shelves describing the production methods behind the label. This is a way to promote consumer awareness, and avoid impulse purchasing—essentially, it is a way to change consumer attitudes. If the nation were to adopt a framework for commerce similar to the Co-op's paradigm, we could move forward with a set of standards that reflect the social and environmental integrity of individual companies, along with responsibility and awareness on the part of consumers.

## **V. Conclusions**

Our study provides a number of findings involving both the consumer and the parent company. Knowing that ninety-two percent of consumers agree that they would be influenced in their purchasing by a company's responsibility, it is disappointing that their attitudes are not reflected in their actions. Customers indicated that environmental and health qualities would have a high degree of importance when they decided which products to buy, but the results indicate that there is a significant discrepancy between consumer attitudes towards socially responsible products, and their purchasing. Second we found that there is no relationship between the responsibility of the company and how well its products are selling. More specifically, consumers buy fewer products with well-advertised CSR than products that have no CSR advertising with the exception of the Co-op, which shows the highest percentage sales ranking with respect to higher CSR scores.

Commitment to CSR practices seems to be represented by a niche market either because the claims potentially impact sales in a negative way, or because the products in the niche market are more heavily-advertised as having good CSR, when in reality their parent companies are no more responsible than mainstream producers. This could be the reason for the gap between customers' attitudes and behaviors because it can be difficult to decipher accurate information from "green-washing" in order to make an informed purchase. For the most part, customers rely on the information written on the packaging as the determining factor when acting on their desire

to consider a company's CSR. However this strategy often fails to reflect the consumer's true intent due to ineffective advertising. What can we conclude from the lack of response from consumers (albeit well-meaning ones) to the marketed and actual responsibility of companies? How can we translate consumer desire to do the right thing into effective action?

In order to make the right purchasing decisions, consumers not only need to be exposed to the full range of products, but they need to have accurate information from which they can base their choices. Products from companies with good track records of responsibility should be integrated alongside other, similar products so that shoppers are able to see the full range of options. Socially and environmentally-responsible products need to come out of the niche market, and the concept of responsibility should permeate as far as possible into mainstream products and packaging. This is especially true of mainstream products from responsible companies, which currently under-advertise their high levels of CSR. If such companies could make their actions clear to consumers, consumers might begin to expect similar behavior from other mainstream, household names. Relegation to a niche should *not* be the immediate consequence for products advertising their responsibility.

Lastly, it is essential that information about a product or company's responsibility be not only accessible, but also accurate. In order to realize the full potential of consumer purchasing power in creating a market force for responsibility, we must encourage the development of reliable and widely recognized standards or certifications that can be included on a range of product labels. This could take many forms such as government-mandated labeling of irresponsible practices, or simply more voluntary, independent standards in the spirit of "Fair Trade" certifications. Such third-party verification of responsibility would be considerably more dependable than claims coming from the companies themselves, and would accordingly elicit a much greater response from consumers. Finally more accurate standards may be the only way for consumers to avoid being misdirected.

Clearly there are two driving forces at work when looking at consumer purchasing. Standards and purchasing power are driven ultimately by environmental concerns of individual consumers, as well as by the desire of companies to have their corporate brand become associated with environmental responsibility. It's not hard to imagine the following scenario: Consumers come to expect and require socially responsible behavior, and in turn reward businesses for behavior that the public wanted. As a result of market forces, consumer demand

for such practices drives large corporations to change. As seen in our findings, consumers potentially could play a key role in driving corporate behavior in the right direction, but they do not necessarily act on it. At the same time, small local companies who have set a precedent such as Seventh Generation, Ecover, Earth Friendly and Tom's of Maine are pushing consumers' expectations and causing increased demand.

In looking at the issue from the business side, it is important to look at the international level in considering if producers are compensated for their commitment to CSR practices. A survey of 182 Chinese companies conducted by WWF over the period August-December 2004 found that "...54% of respondents indicated that environmental care was a core value. Customer demand was ranked second, and the use of environmental care as a marketing tool—something that could be seen as an improvement compared to the situation in the West—third."<sup>8</sup> The report also notes that, "Fifty-one per cent of respondents already promote some of their products and services as environmentally friendly through advertising. Real and verified environmental performance might also be used as a selling point to boost exports."<sup>v</sup> This is where standards would play a role to assure responsible corporate behavior gets communicated to consumers honestly and effectively. Currently, the international response of developing countries to international standards is skyrocketing. The negative side effect seems to be that as standards are adjusted to meet the needs of developing countries, they are getting "watered down," making them less evenly applied on a global scale. By looking at a local and international case study, it helps to see how our study fits into the larger picture of global governance by standards.

In conclusion, CSR and global governance standards will make a difference because there is a documented desire, as seen in our study, by store and extent of education. A few educated consumers are aware of actual CSR practices and respond, whereas many consumers are not acting on their affirmative attitudes toward CSR. Our study points out that only a few consumers are aware of companies' actual CSR practices, illustrating that we live in a confusing world where consumers are often misinformed and misdirected. However, there are three solutions in sight. Government standards could differentiate between companies that label products "all-natural" vs. companies that are truly dedicated to CSR behavior, labeling products whose parent companies are truly devoted to CSR practices. This should make it easier for

---

<sup>8</sup> "Chinese Companies in the 21st Century" 2005  
<http://www.panda.org/downloads/policy/chinesecompaniesinthe21centuryfinal.pdf>, Accessed November 21, 2005.

consumers to act sincerely on their internal desire. Secondly, store managers could improve education through information tags and improved store layout in order to avoid customers from feeling frazzled and confused and in turn making impulsive decisions. Our group felt that Hannaford's "Nature Place" deterred people from purchasing socially responsible products because it excluded the products to the niche market. It was also a bit arbitrary where products were assigned because coffee products were placed in three locations throughout the store, making it difficult for consumers to compare. Finally, corporations who are committed to CSR should make more efforts to inform customers of their efforts because it could pay off. There is demand for CSR but companies need to move beyond a business model centered on the bottom line and accept responsibility for providing sustainable goods and services. Standards could help facilitate an increased awareness of actual CSR practices by bridging the gap between marketing and actual practices. We feel that change will come from two levels: an ISO standard encouraging corporations to reform, and an increase in transparency and education to consumers through store managers and corporate efforts.

## Appendix 1: Customer Survey

1. Why did you choose this store for your shopping today? Check all that apply.

- Location
- Prices
- Selection
- Quality of products
- Atmosphere/Customer Service
- Social or environmental responsibility of the products

2. What is your average annual household income?

- <\$25,000 per year
- \$25,000-\$45,000
- \$45,000-\$55,000
- \$55,000 and above
- Unemployed/ student

3. Check all that you have completed or are currently enrolled in

- High School
- College
- Graduate or Post-graduate

4. If several companies make the same kind of product, how important are the following factors for deciding which one to buy? (check one for each)

A. Price:

Very important    Important    A little important    Not important at all

B. Environmental and health qualities:

*[For example: higher recycled paper content or fewer harsh chemicals]*

Very important    Important    A little important    Not important at all

C. Product appearance or packaging:

Very important    Important    A little important    Not important at all

D. The reputation of the company:

Very important    Important    A little important    Not important at all

E. Other? Please list: \_\_\_\_\_

Very important    Important    A little important    Not important at all

5. Do you buy certified organic products?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know what that means

6. Do you buy certified Fair Trade products?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know what that means

7. Have you ever read a company's corporate social responsibility report?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know what that is

8. Would you be influenced in your purchasing if you were aware of a company's devotion to social responsibility or environmental protection?

- Yes
- No

9. Which paper towel is more environmentally-friendly? (circle one)

a.



b.



Any other comments welcome:

Thank you very much for your participation!

## Appendix 2: Product Spreadsheet with Actual-CSR and Marketing-CSR Scores

### Coffee and Chocolate

Product Type	Parent Company	Brand Name/ Variety	Specifications	Stores Present				CSR Score	
				Shaw's	Hannaford's	Greg's	Co-op	Actual	Marketing
Coffee	Autocrat Premium Coffee and Syrup	NewPort	Regular	X				2	2
Coffee	Awake (Middlebury)	Awake- VT Organic Coffee	Organic			X			3
Coffee	Bud's Beans (Middlebury)	Bud's Beans	Organic				X	0	3
Coffee	Cameroon-Boyo	Boyo Coffee	Organic				X	3	3
Coffee	Comfort Foods, Inc. (MA)	Harmony Bay	Regular		X			0	1
Coffee	Dean's Beans		FT				X	3	3
Coffee	Don Francisco	Don Francisco	Regular	X	X			1	1
Coffee	Eight O' Clock Coffee	Eight O' Clock	Regular	X	X	X		0	1
Coffee	Equal Exchange	Equal Exchange	FT/Organic	X	X		X	3	3
Coffee	Green Mountain Coffee	Green Mountain Coffee	FT/Organic	X	X	X		2	3
Coffee	Green Mountain Coffee	Green Mountain Coffee	Regular	X	X	X		2	1
Coffee	Green Mountain Coffee	Green Mountain Coffee	FT	X	X	X		2	3
Coffee	Hannaford	Hannaford Brand	Regular		X			2	1
Coffee	Internatural Foods, LLC	Mount Hagen Organic Café	Organic				X	3	3
Coffee	Jim's Organic Coffee	Jim's Organic Coffee	Organic				X	3	3
Coffee	Kraft	Maxwell House	Regular	X	X	X		1	1
Coffee	Kraft	Sanka	Regular	X	X	X		1	1
Coffee	Kraft	Yuban	Regular	X	X			1	0
Coffee	Melitta Coffee,	World Harvest	Organic					1	3
Coffee	New England Coffee Co.	New England Coffee Co.	Regular	X	X			1	1
Coffee	Newman's Own	Newman's Own	FT/Organic		X	X		2	3

Coffee	Proctor and Gamble	Millstone	Regular	X	X			1	1
Coffee	Proctor and Gamble	Millstone	FT	X				1	3
Coffee	Proctor and Gamble	Folgers	Regular	X	X	X		1	1
Coffee	Roger's Family Company	Organic Coffee Co.	Organic					3	3
Coffee	Sara Lee	Chock full o' nuts	Regular	X	X	X		1	1
Coffee	Sara Lee	Hills Bros.	Regular					1	1
Coffee	Seattle's Best	Seattle's Best	FT/Organic		X			1	3
Coffee	Seattle's Best	Seattle's Best	Organic		X			1	3
Coffee	Seattle's Best	Seattle's Best	Regular		X			1	1
Coffee	Shaws	Shaws Brand	Regular	X				1	1
Coffee	Starbucks Corporation	Starbucks	Organic	X	X			2	3
Coffee	Starbucks Corporation	Starbucks	Regular	X	X	X		2	1
Coffee	The Imus Ranch	Imus Ranch	Regular	X	X	X		0	?out of stock
Coffee	VT Coffee Company	VT Coffee Company	FT/Organic		X	X	X	3	3
Chocolate Powder	???	Snowman					X		3
Chocolate Powder	C & S Wholefood Grocers, Inc. (Brattleboro)	Best Yet	Regular						1
Chocolate Powder	ConAgra Foods	Swiss Miss	Regular		X	X		2	1
Chocolate Powder	Dagoba Organic Chocolate Company	Dagoba	Organic				X	3	2
Chocolate Powder	Dean's Beans		FT/Organic				X	3	
Chocolate Powder	Equal Exchange	Equal Exchange	FT/Organic		X			3	3
Chocolate Powder	Ghiradelli Chocolate	Ghiradelli	Regular?				X	0	3

	Company								
Chocolate Powder	Green and Black's Limited	Green and Black's	Organic				X	3	3
Chocolate Powder	Hannaford	Hannaford Brand	Regular		X			2	1
Chocolate Powder	Lake Champlain Chocolates	Lake Champlain	Regular?				X	2	3
Chocolate Powder	Nestle	Nestle	Regular	X	X	X		2	1
Chocolate Powder	nSpired Natural Foods, Inc.	Ah! Laska	Organic		X		X	2	3
Chocolate Powder	Shaws	Shaws Brand	Regular	X				1	1
Chocolate Powder	The Hershey Company	Hershey's/Cadbury	Regular	X	X			1	1
Chocolate Bar	Green and Black's Limited	Green and Black's	Organic		X			3	3
Chocolate Bar	Hannaford	Hannaford Brand	Regular		X			2	1
Chocolate Bar	Nestle	Nestle	Regular	X	X	X		2	1
Chocolate Bar	Newman's Own	Newman's Own	Organic		X			2	3
Chocolate Bar	The Hershey Company	Hershey's/Cadbury	Regular	X	X	X		1	1

Paper Products:

Product Type	Parent Company	Brand Name/ Variety	Specifications	Stores Present?				CSR Score	
				Shaw's	Hannaford's	Greg's	Co-op	Actual	Marketing
Baby Wipes	???	Little Kisses				X			0
Baby Wipes	Canus	Lil' Goat's Milk	Regular		X			1	3
Baby Wipes	Hannaford	Hannaford Brand	Regular		X			2	1
Baby Wipes	Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc.	Huggies	Regular	X	X			1	1
Baby Wipes	Proctor & Gamble	Pampers	Regular	X	X			1	1
Baby Wipes	Proctor & Gamble Seventh Generation	Luvs	Regular		X			1	0
Baby Wipes			NCB		X		X	3	3
Baby Wipes		Shaws	Shaws Brand	Regular	X				1
Baby Wipes	Tender Care International	Tushies Pop-ups				X		0	0
Baby Wipes	Unilever	Pure and Gentle				X		1	0
Disposable Diapers	Disposable Soft Goods Limited	Fitti				X			0
Disposable Diapers	???	Nice N Cozy				X			0
Disposable Diapers	Hannaford	Hannaford Brand	Regular		X			2	1
Disposable Diapers	Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc.	Huggies	Regular		X			1	1
Disposable Diapers	Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc.	Depend				X		1	0
Disposable Diapers	Proctor & Gamble	Luvs	Regular		X			1	1
Disposable Diapers	Proctor & Gamble	Pampers	Regular	X				1	1
Disposable	Seventh		NCB		X		X	3	3

Diapers	Generation								
Disposable Diapers	Shaws	Shaws Brand	Regular	X				1	1
Disposable Diapers	Tender Care International	Tushies					X	0	3
Facial Tissue	Georgia Pacific	Green Forest				X		1	3
Facial Tissue	Kimberly Clark	Scotties	Regular		X	X			1
Facial Tissue	Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc.	Kleenex	boxes recycled		X			1	1
Facial Tissue	Procter and Gamble	Puffs	boxes recycled		X	X		1	2
Facial Tissue	Seventh Generation		R(100, 20); NCB		X		X	3	3
Toilet Tissue	Georgia Pacific	Angel Soft	Regular		X	X		1	1
Toilet Tissue	Georgia Pacific	Quilted Northern	Regular		X	X		1	1
Toilet Tissue	Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc.	Cotonelle	Regular		X	X		1	1
Toilet Tissue	Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc.	Scott	Regular		X	X		1	1
Toilet Tissue	Marcal	Marcal	R(75, 40); NCB		X	X		3	2
Toilet Tissue	Procter and Gamble	Charmin	Regular		X	X		1	1
Toilet Tissue	Seventh Generation	Seventh Generation	R(100, 80); NCB	X	X	X	X	3	3

Cleaning Products:

Product Type	Parent Company	Brand Name/ Variety	Specifications	Stores Present?				Company CSR Score	
				Shaw's	Hannaford's	Greg's	Co-op	Actual	Marketing
Automatic Dish Soap	JohnsonDiversey	Sun-Light	Regular	X	X			3	1
Automatic Dish Soap	Earth-friendly Products	Earth-friendly Products	Natural		X			3	3
Automatic Dish Soap	Ecover	Ecover	Natural		X			3	3
Automatic Dish Soap	Hannaford	Hannaford Brand	Regular		X			2	1
Automatic Dish Soap	Proctor & Gamble	Cascade	Regular	X	X			1	1
Automatic Dish Soap	Reckitt Benckiser, Inc.	Electrosol	Regular	X	X			1	1
Automatic Dish Soap	Seventh Generation	Seventh Generation	Natural		X		X	3	3
Automatic Dish Soap	Shaws	Shaws Brand	Regular	X				1	1
Automatic Dish Soap	Sun and Earth	Sun and Earth	Natural		X			1	3
Dishwashing Gel	Beaumont Products	Citrus Magic	Regular		X			1	3
Dishwashing Gel	Colgate-Palmolive	Ajax	Regular	X	X	X		1	1
Dishwashing Gel	Colgate-Palmolive	Crystal White	Regular	X	X			1	2
Dishwashing Gel	Colgate-Palmolive	Palmolive	Regular	X	X	X		1	1
Dishwashing Gel	Earth-friendly Products	3 types	Natural		X			3	3
Dishwashing Gel	Hannaford	Hannaford Brand	Regular		X			2	1
Dishwashing Gel	Mountain Green	Mountain Green	Natural		X			3	3
Dishwashing Gel	Planet, Inc.	Planet	Natural		X			2	3
Dishwashing Gel	Proctor & Gamble	Dawn	Regular	X	X	X		1	2

Gel									
Dishwashing Gel	Proctor & Gamble	Joy	Regular	X	X	X		1	1
Dishwashing Gel	Seventh Generation	Seventh Generation	Natural		X		X	3	3
Dishwashing Gel	Shaws	Shaws Brand	Regular	X				1	1
Dishwashing Gel	Sun and Earth	Sun and Earth	Natural		X			1	3
Dishwashing Gel	Johnson Diversey	Sun-Light	Regular	X	X	X		3	1
Fabric Softener	Church & Dwight	Arm and Hammer	Regular		X	X		1	1
Fabric Softener	Church & Dwight	Fresh n Soft		X				1	1
Fabric Softener	Church & Dwight	Nice 'n Fluffy	Regular	X	X			1	1
Fabric Softener	NuSoft	NuSoft	Regular		X			0	0
Fabric Softener	Proctor & Gamble	Bounce		X		X		1	1
Fabric Softener	Reckitt Benckiser, Inc.	Cling-Free				X		1	1
Fabric Softener	Seventh Generation	Seventh Generation	Natural		X		X	3	3
Fabric Softener	Sun and Earth	Sun and Earth	Natural	X				1	3
Fabric Softener	The Dial Corporation	Purex	Regular		X			1	1
Fabric Softener	Unilever	Final Touch	Regular		X			1	1
Fabric Softener	Unilever	Snuggle	Regular	X	X			1	1
Laundry Detergent	Church & Dwight	Arm and Hammer	Regular	X	X	X		1	2
Laundry Detergent	Earth-friendly Products	Earth-friendly Products	Natural		X			3	3
Laundry Detergent	Mountain Green	Mountain Green	Natural		X			3	3

Laundry Detergent	Planet, Inc.	Planet	Natural					2	3
Laundry Detergent	Proctor & Gamble	Cheer	Regular	X	X	X		1	1
Laundry Detergent	Proctor & Gamble	Era	Regular	X	X	X		1	1
Laundry Detergent	Proctor & Gamble	Gain	Regular	X	X	X		1	1
Laundry Detergent	Proctor & Gamble	Tide	Regular	X	X	X		1	1
Laundry Detergent	Proctor & Gamble	Downy				X		1	1
Laundry Detergent	Seventh Generation	3 types	Natural		X		X	3	3
Laundry Detergent	Shaws	Shaws Brand	Regular	X				1	1
Laundry Detergent	Sun and Earth	Sun and Earth	Natural					1	3
Laundry Detergent	The Clorox Company	Clorox				X		1	2
Laundry Detergent	Unilever	Wisk	Regular	X	X	X		1	1
Laundry Detergent	Unilever	Snuggle				X		1	1
Laundry Detergent	Unilever	All	Regular	X	X	X		1	1

Dental Hygiene Products:

Product Type	Parent Company	Brand Name/ Variety	Specifications	Stores Present?				Company CSR Score	
				Shaw's	Hannaford's	Greg's	Co-op	Actual	Marketing
Dental Floss	Desert Essence	Desert Essence	Natural				X	2	3
Dental Floss	Hannaford	Hannaford Brand	Regular		X			2	1
Dental Floss	Johnson & Johnson	Johnson & Johnson	Regular		X	X		2	1
Dental Floss	OscO-Albertson's	Equaline	Regular	X				3	1
Dental Floss	Proctor & Gamble	Glide	Regular		X	X		1	1
Dental Floss	Proctor & Gamble	Oral-B	Regular		X			1	1
Dental Floss	Tea Tree Therapy						X	1	3
Dental Floss	Tom's of Maine	Tom's of Maine	natural		X		X	3	3
Toothbrush	Colgate-Palmolive	Colgate	Regular		X	X		1	1
Toothbrush	Fuchs?	Fuchs					X		3
Toothbrush	GlaxoSmithKline	Aquafresh	Regular	X				2	1
Toothbrush	Johnson & Johnson	Reach	Regular		X	X		2	1
Toothbrush	Lotus Brands, Inc.	Eco-dent					X	2	3
Toothbrush	Lotus Brands, Inc.	Eco-Dent: Monte Bianco					X	2	3
Toothbrush	OscO-Albertson's	Equaline	Regular	X				3	1
Toothbrush	Playtex Products, Inc.	Tek Excel	Regular		X			0	1
Toothbrush	Proctor & Gamble	Crest	Regular		X			1	1
Toothbrush	Proctor & Gamble	Oral-B	Regular		X	X	X	1	1
Toothbrush	Radius	Radius					X	1	3
Toothbrush	Recycline	Recycline	recycled plastic					2	3
Toothbrush	Smile Brite?	Smile Brite					X		3
Toothbrush	Sunstar Butler	G.U.M.	Regular	X				0	1
Toothpaste	Auomere	Auomere					X	1	3
Toothpaste	Boiron (French Co.)	Homeodent					X		3
Toothpaste	Burt's Bees, Inc.	Dr. Burt's					X	2	3
Toothpaste	CCA Industries,	Plus-White	Reg/whitening		X			0	1

	Inc.								
Toothpaste	Church & Dwight	Mentadent	Regular		X			1	1
Toothpaste	Church & Dwight	Arm and Hammer	Regular		X	X		1	1
Toothpaste	Colgate-Palmolive	Colgate	Regular	X	X	X		1	1
Toothpaste	Colgate-Palmolive	Ultradent	Regular		X	X		1	1
Toothpaste	Desert Essence	Desert Essence Weleda					X	2	3
Toothpaste	GlaxoSmithKline	Aquafresh	Regular	X	X	X		2	1
Toothpaste	GlaxoSmithKline	Sensodyne	Regular		X			2	1
Toothpaste	JASON, Inc.	Jason (2 types)	Natural		X			2	3
Toothpaste	Kiss my Face	Kiss my Face	Natural/ Organic		X			2	3
Toothpaste	Levlad, Inc.	Nature's Gate	Natural		X		X	2	3
Toothpaste	Proctor & Gamble	Crest	Regular	X	X	X		1	1
Toothpaste	Proctor & Gamble	Gleem	Regular		X			1	1
Toothpaste	Proctor & Gamble	Rembrandt	Reg/whitening		X			1	1
Toothpaste	Tea Tree Therapy?	Tea Tree Therapy					X	1	3
Toothpaste	Tom's of Maine	regular (~5 types)	Natural	X	X	X	X	3	3
Toothpaste	Tom's of Maine	children's	Natural		X			3	3
Toothpaste	Unilever	Pepsodent	Regular		X			1	1
Toothpaste	VICCO Group	Vicco					X	0	3

### Appendix 3: Criteria for Assigning Company Actual-CSR Scores

<b>Company</b>	Name	
<b>Type</b>	Local, Regional, National, or International	
<b>Product</b>	Health and environmental qualities of product itself	
<b>Environment</b>	Energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, including transportation issues	
	Material efficiency (e.g. recycling)	
	Water use	
	Chemical use and pollution	
<b>Labor</b>	Job security and % full-time workforce	
	Wages? Benefits?	
	Safe and healthy working environment	
<b>Social</b>	Equality issues	
	Children's rights	
	Commitment to community (local? or just local social investments)	
	Factory location	
<b>General</b>	CSR infrastructure? Report?	
	Stakeholder involvement?	
	Philanthropy and NGO affiliations?	
<b>Other?</b>		

## Appendix 4: Product Sales Data

Parent Company	Brand Name/ Variety	Sales Ranking by Store				Average Total Sale Rank
		Shaw's	Hannaford's	Greg's	Co-op	
Tender Care International	Tushies Pop-ups			2		2
NuSoft	NuSoft		5			5
Comfort Foods, Inc. (MA)	Harmony Bay		12			12
Eight O' Clock Coffee	Eight O' Clock	7	9	6		7.333333333
Playtex Products, Inc.	Tek Excel		5			5
Sunstar Butler	G.U.M.	X				
CCA Industries, Inc.	Plus-White		8			8
Ghiradelli Chocolate Company	Ghiradelli				2	2
Tender Care International	Tushies				2	2
VICCO Group	Vicco				3	3
Proctor & Gamble	Luvs		4			4
Unilever	Pure and Gentle			1		1
Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc.	Depend			2		2
Don Francisco	Don Francisco	13	13			13
Kraft	Maxwell House	1	1	2		1.333333333
Kraft	Sanka	10	11	8		9.666666667
Kraft	Yuban	14	14			14
New England Coffee Co.	New England Coffee Co.	4	3			3.5
Proctor and Gamble	Millstone	9	8			8.5
Proctor and Gamble	Folgers	3	2	3		2.666666667
Sara Lee	Chock full o' nuts	6	5	4		5
Sara Lee	Hills Bros.					
Seattle's Best	Seattle's Best		18			18
Shaws	Shaws Brand	5				5
Shaws	Shaws Brand	2				2
The Hershey Company	Hershey's/Cadbury	3	4			3.5
The Hershey Company	Hershey's/Cadbury	1	2	1		1.333333333
Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc.	Huggies	X	2			2
Proctor & Gamble	Pampers	X	3			3
Shaws	Shaws Brand	X				
Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc.	Huggies		2			2
Proctor & Gamble	Luvs		1			1
Proctor & Gamble	Pampers	X				
Shaws	Shaws Brand	X				
Kimberly Clark	Scotties		3	2		2.5
Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc.	Kleenex		1			1
Georgia Pacific	Angel Soft		2	5		3.5
Georgia Pacific	Quilted Northern		1	4		2.5
Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc.	Cotonelle		5	3		4
Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc.	Scott		3	2		2.5

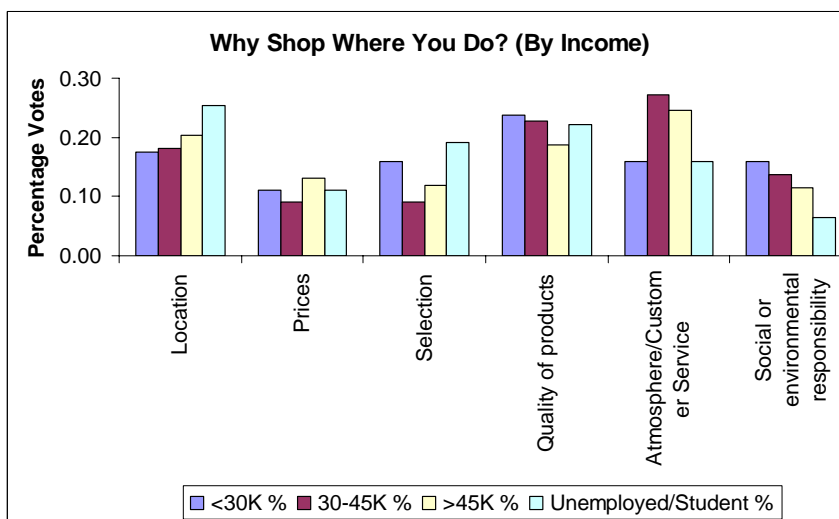
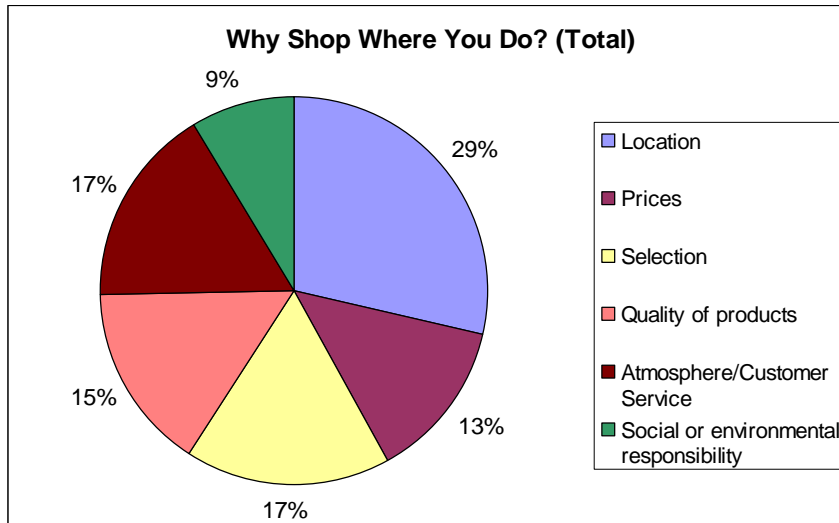
Proctor and Gamble	Charmin		4	1		2.5
Proctor & Gamble	Glide		3	2		2.5
Proctor & Gamble	Oral-B		4			4
Colgate-Palmolive	Colgate		1	1		1
Proctor & Gamble	Crest		2			2
Proctor & Gamble	Oral-B		3	3	2	2.666666667
Church & Dwight	Mentadent		7			7
Church & Dwight	Arm and Hammer		6	5		5.5
Colgate-Palmolive	Colgate	1	1	2		1.333333333
Colgate-Palmolive	Ultrabrite		5	4		4.5
Proctor & Gamble	Crest	2	2	1		1.666666667
Proctor & Gamble	Gleem		13			13
Proctor & Gamble	Rembrandt		9			9
Unilever	Pepsodent		10			10
Proctor & Gamble	Cascade	1	1			1
Reckitt Benckiser, Inc.	Electrosol	2	4			3
Shaws	Shaws Brand	3				3
Colgate-Palmolive	Ajax	3	2	4		3
Colgate-Palmolive	Palmolive	2	6	3		3.666666667
Proctor & Gamble	Joy	5	1	1		2.333333333
Shaws	Shaws Brand	4				4
Church & Dwight	Arm and Hammer		4	3		3.5
Church & Dwight	Fresh n Soft	4				4
Church & Dwight	Nice 'n Fluffy	2	6			4
Proctor & Gamble	Bounce	1		1		1
Reckitt Benckiser, Inc.	Cling-Free			2		2
The Dial Corporation	Purex		3			3
Unilever	Final Touch		2			2
Unilever	Snuggle	3	1			2
Proctor & Gamble	Cheer	6	6	2		4.666666667
Proctor & Gamble	Era	7	5	4		5.333333333
Proctor & Gamble	Gain	8	7	7		7.333333333
Proctor & Gamble	Tide	1	2	1		1.333333333
Proctor & Gamble	Downy			6		6
Shaws	Shaws Brand	5				5
Unilever	Wisk	3	4	3		3.333333333
Unilever	Snuggle			10		10
Unilever	All	4	3	9		5.333333333
Procter and Gamble	Puffs		2	1		1.5
Colgate-Palmolive	Crystal White	7	7			7
Proctor & Gamble	Dawn	1	4	2		2.333333333
Church & Dwight	Arm and Hammer	2	1	8		3.666666667
The Clorox Company	Clorox			5		5
Bud's Beans (Middlebury)	Bud's Beans				5	5
Melitta Coffee, USA	World Harvest					
Proctor and Gamble	Millstone	9				9
Seattle's Best	Seattle's Best		22			22

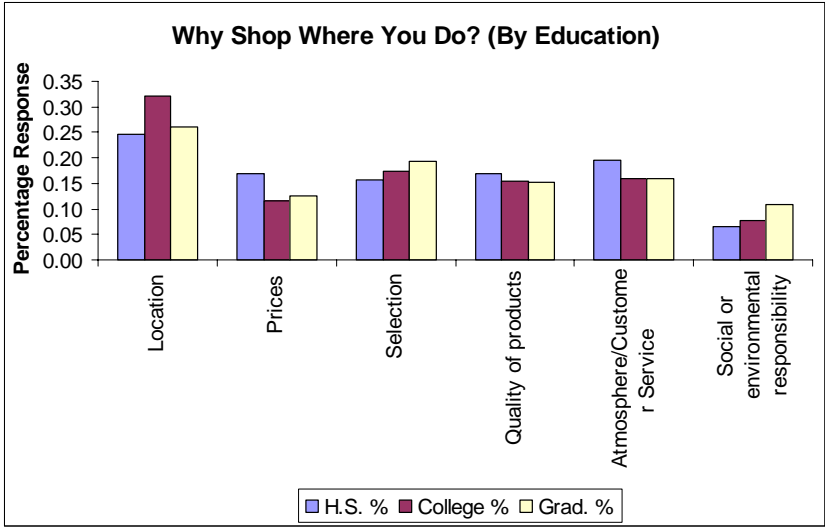
Seattle's Best	Seattle's Best		21			21
Canus	Lil' Goat's Milk		6			6
Georgia Pacific	Green Forest			3		3
Tea Tree Therapy					3	3
Radius	Radius				2	2
Auromere	Auromere				3	3
Tea Tree Therapy?	Tea Tree Therapy				3	3
Sun and Earth	Sun and Earth		5			5
Beaumont Products	Citrus Magic		13			13
Sun and Earth	Sun and Earth		9			9
Sun and Earth	Sun and Earth	5				5
Sun and Earth	Sun and Earth					
Green Mountain Coffee	Green Mountain Coffee	2	6	1		3
Hannaford	Hannaford Brand		4			4
Starbucks Corporation	Starbucks	11	16	9		12
ConAgra Foods	Swiss Miss		1	1		1
Hannaford	Hannaford Brand		2			2
Nestle	Nestle	1	3	2		2
Hannaford	Hannaford Brand		3			3
Nestle	Nestle	2	1	2		1.666666667
Hannaford	Hannaford Brand		1			1
Hannaford	Hannaford Brand		3			3
Hannaford	Hannaford Brand		1			1
Johnson & Johnson	Johnson & Johnson		2	1		1.5
GlaxoSmithKline	Aquafresh	X				
Johnson & Johnson	Reach		4	2		3
GlaxoSmithKline	Aquafresh	3	3	3		3
GlaxoSmithKline	Sensodyne		4			4
Hannaford	Hannaford Brand		3			3
Hannaford	Hannaford Brand		5			5
Autocrat Premium Coffee and Syrup	NewPort	15				15
Green Mountain Coffee	Green Mountain Coffee	2	19	12		11
Green Mountain Coffee	Green Mountain Coffee	2	7	11		6.666666667
Newman's Own	Newman's Own		17	7		12
Starbucks Corporation	Starbucks	11	20			15.5
Lake Champlain Chocolates	Lake Champlain				2	2
nSpired Natural Foods, Inc.	Ah! Laska		6		2	4
Newman's Own	Newman's Own		4			4
Desert Essence	Desert Essence				2	2
Lotus Brands, Inc.	Eco-dent				1	1
Lotus Brands, Inc.	Eco-Dent: Monte Bianco				2	2
Recycline	Recycline					
Burt's Bees, Inc.	Dr. Burt's				3	3
Desert Essence	Desert Essence Weleda				3	3
JASON, Inc.	Jason (2 types)		15			15

Kiss my Face	Kiss my Face		16			16
Levlad, Inc.	Nature's Gate		14		2	8
Planet, Inc.	Planet		8			8
Planet, Inc.	Planet					
Oscos-Albertson's	Equaline	X				
Oscos-Albertson's	Equaline	X				
JohnsonDiversey	Sun-Light	4	2			3
Johnson Diversey	Sun-Light	6	3	5		4.666666667
Dagoba Organic Chocolate Company	Dagoba				2	2
Marcal	Marcal		6	6		6
Cameroon-Boyo	Boyo Coffee				6	6
Dean's Beans					1	1
Equal Exchange	Equal Exchange	8	23		4	11.66666667
Internatural Foods, LLC	Mount Hagen Organic Café				7	7
Jim's Organic Coffee	Jim's Organic Coffee				3	3
Roger's Family Company	Organic Coffee Co.					
VT Coffee Company	VT Coffee Company		15	5	2	7.333333333
Dean's Beans					1	1
Equal Exchange	Equal Exchange		5			5
Green and Black's Limited	Green and Black's				2	2
Green and Black's Limited	Green and Black's		5			5
Seventh Generation			5		1	3
Seventh Generation			4		1	2.5
Seventh Generation			4		1	2.5
Seventh Generation	Seventh Generation	X	7	7	1	5
Tom's of Maine	Tom's of Maine		5		1	3
Tom's of Maine	regular (~5 types)	4	11	6	1	5.5
Tom's of Maine	children's		12			12
Earth-friendly Products	Earth-friendly Products		8			8
Ecover	Ecover		7			7
Seventh Generation	Seventh Generation		6		1	3.5
Earth-friendly Products	3 types		12			12
Mountain Green	Mountain Green		11			11
Seventh Generation	Seventh Generation		10		1	5.5
Seventh Generation	Seventh Generation		7		1	4
Earth-friendly Products	Earth-friendly Products		10			10
Mountain Green	Mountain Green		9			9
Seventh Generation	3 types		8		1	4.5

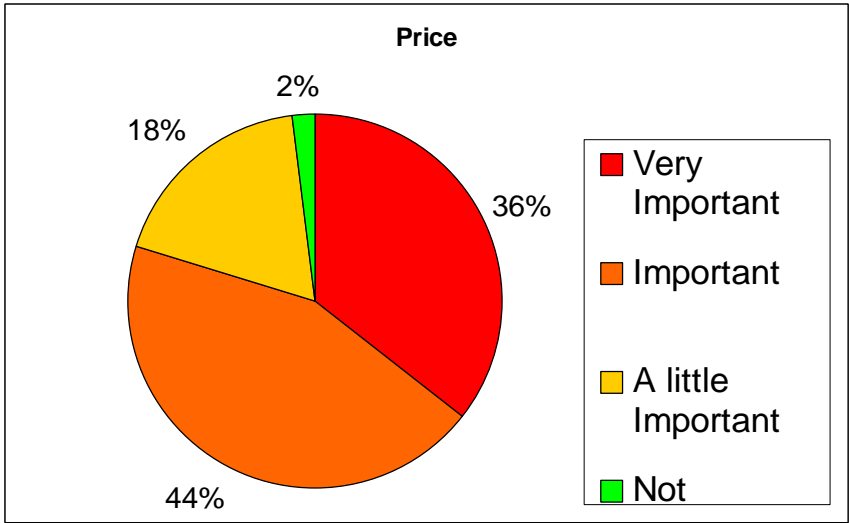
## Appendix 5: Survey Results

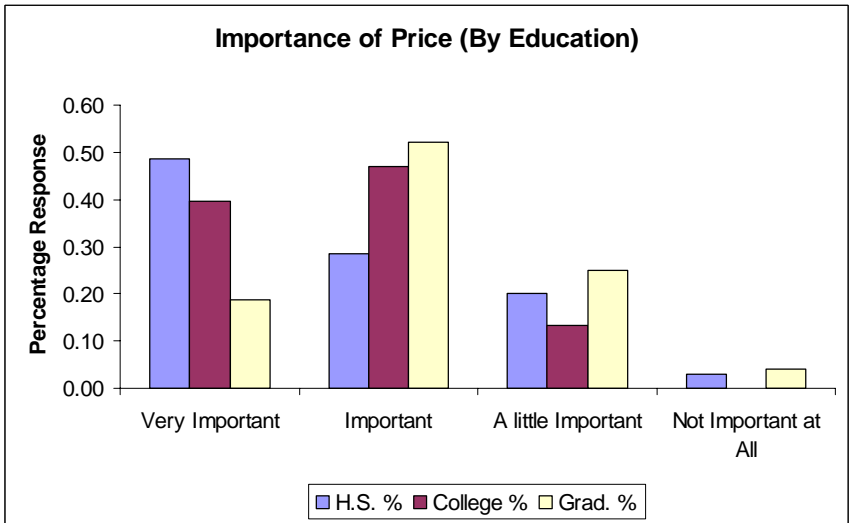
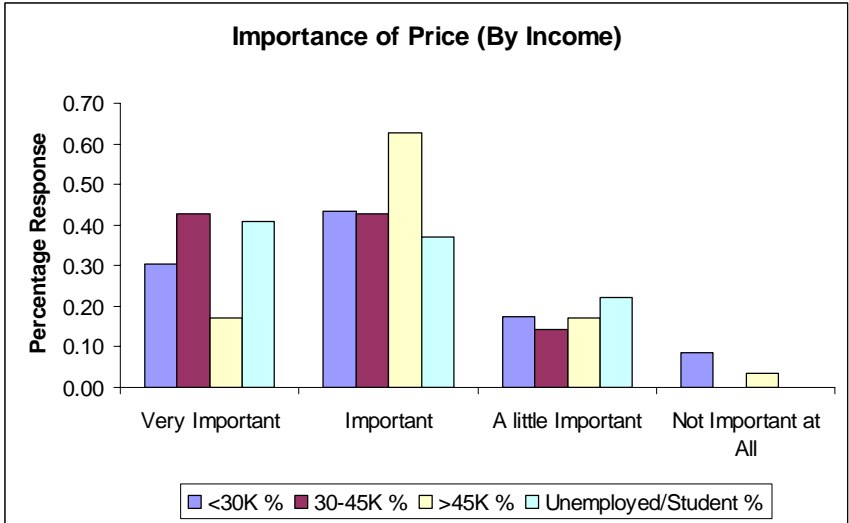
### Question 1:



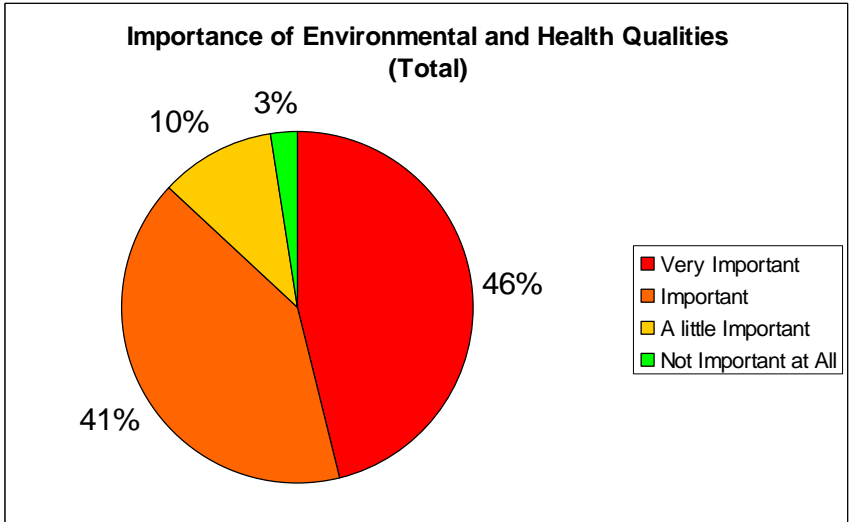


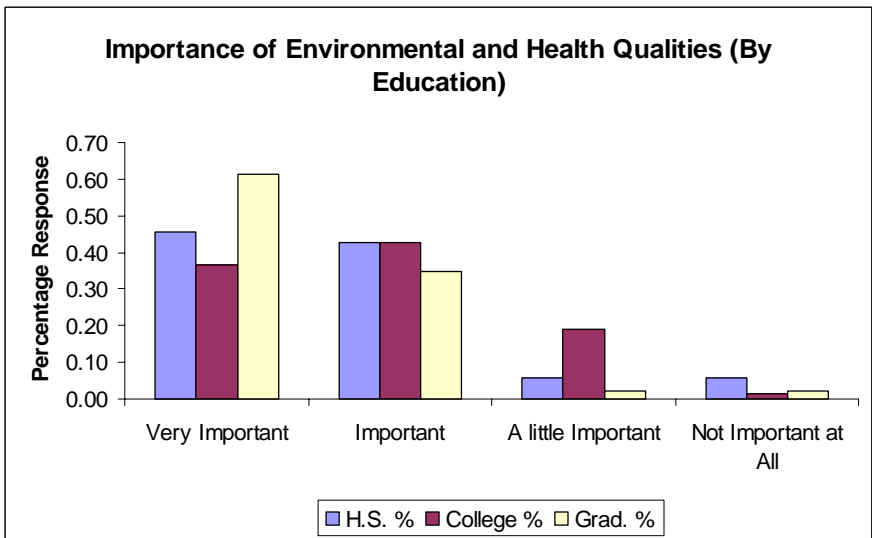
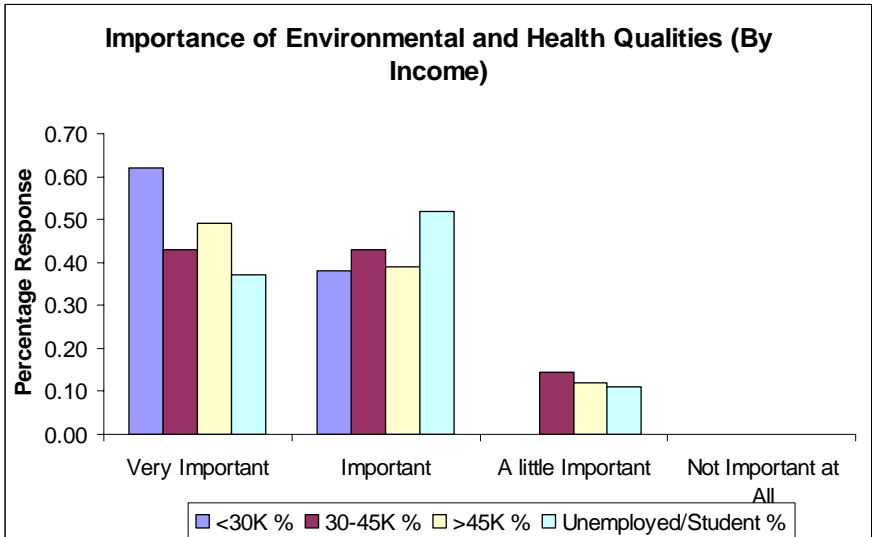
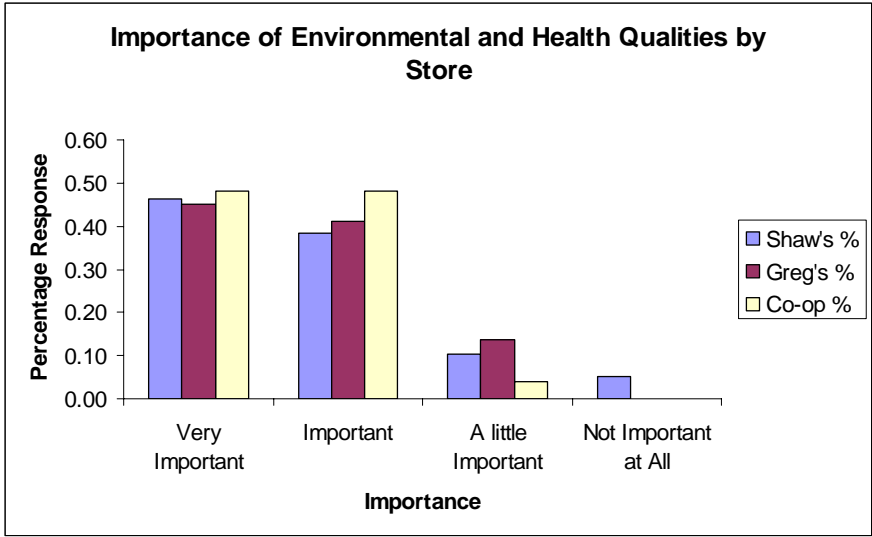
Question 4A:



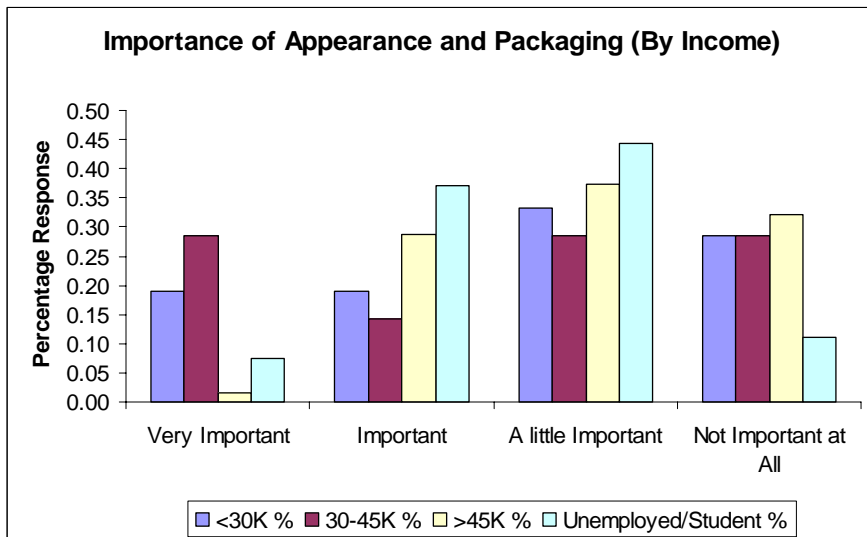
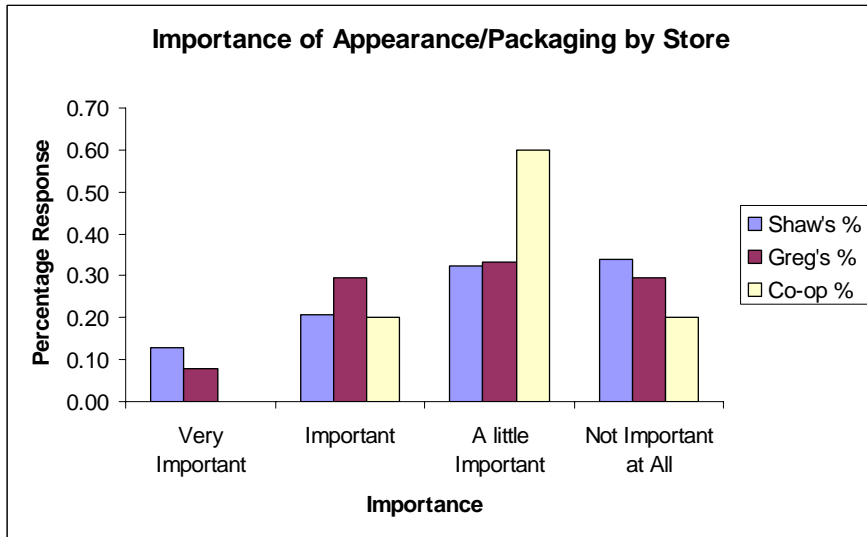
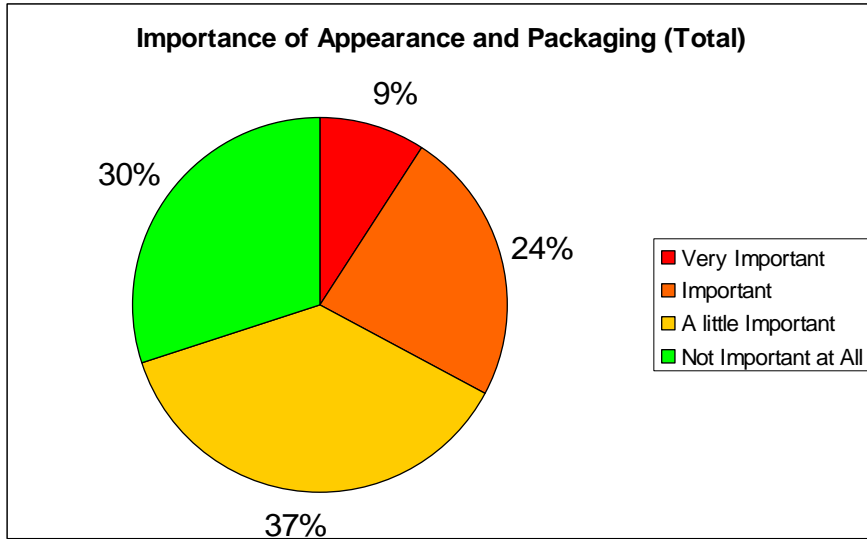


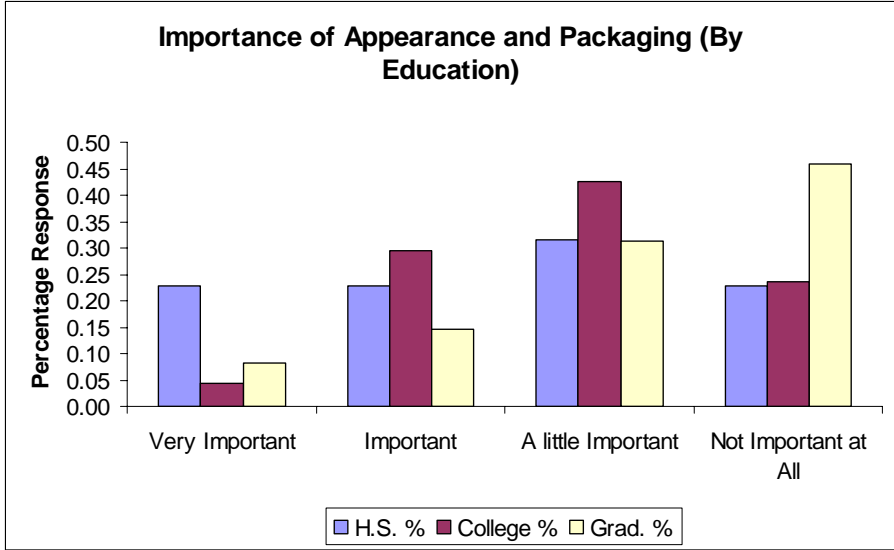
Question 4B:



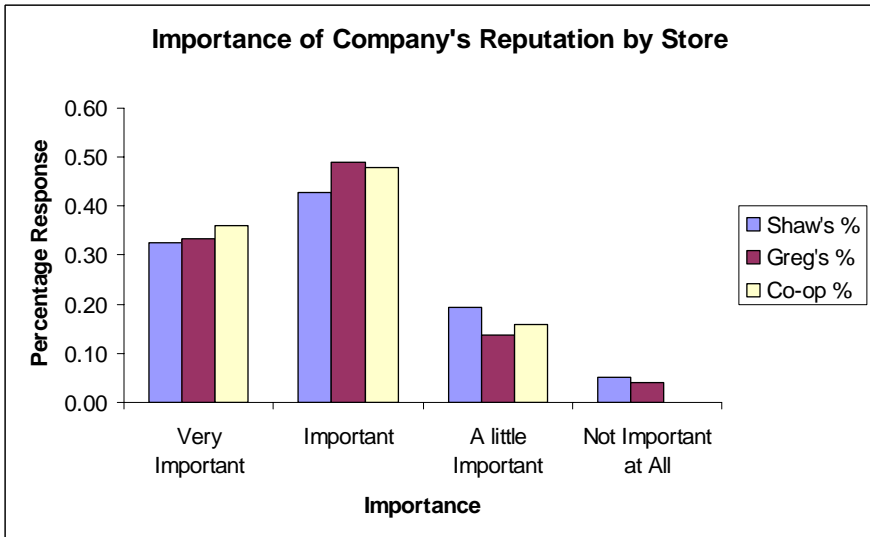
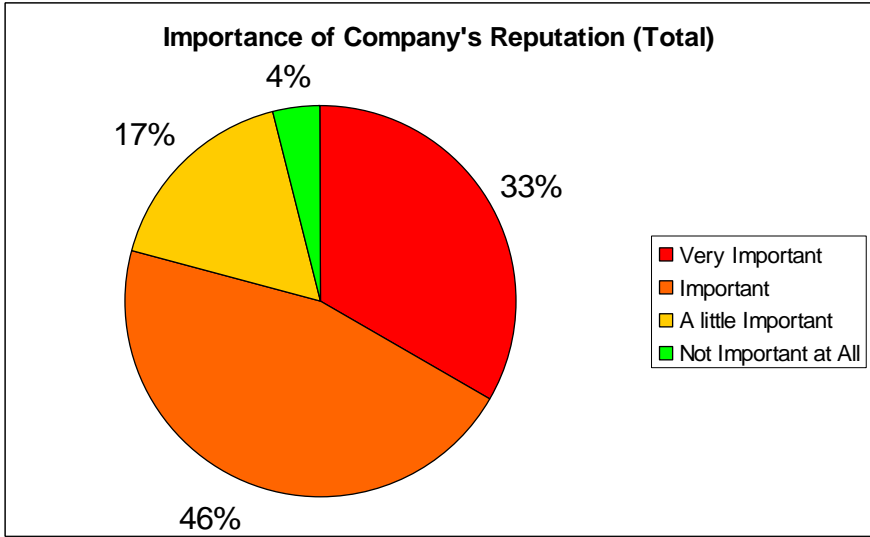


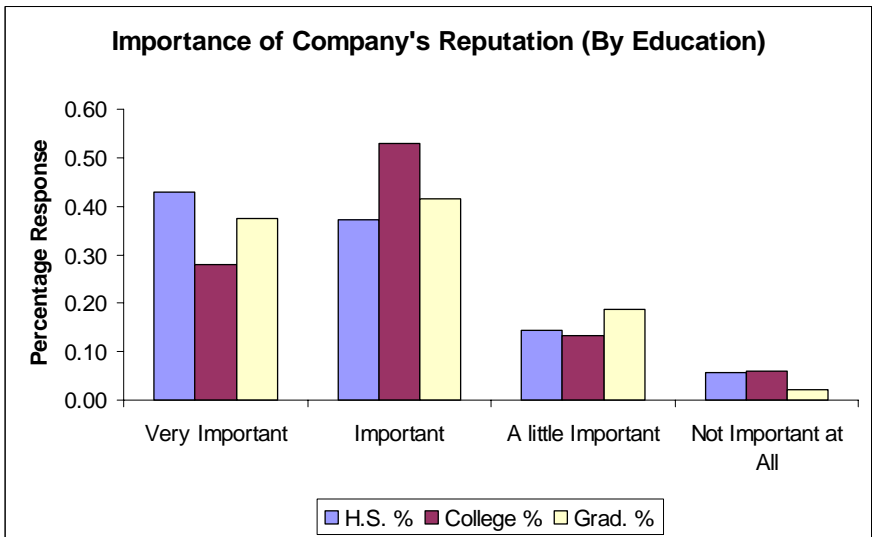
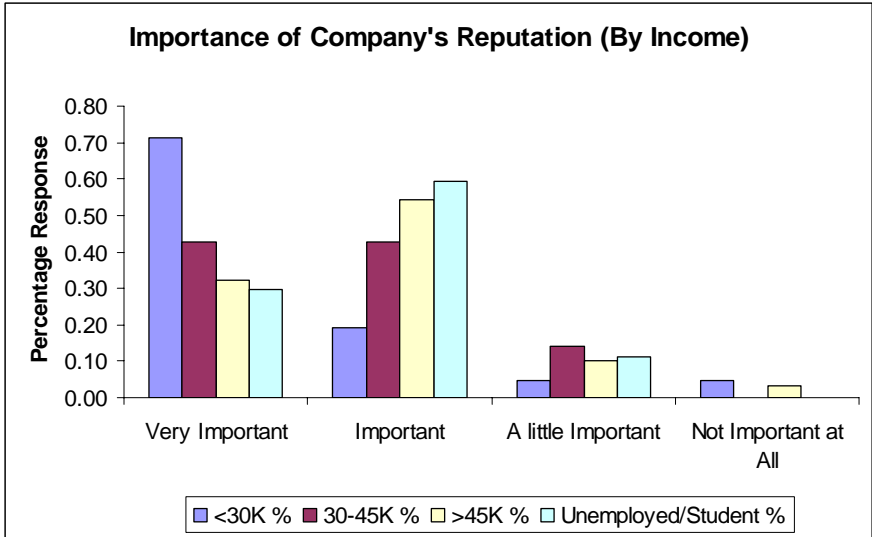
Question 4C:



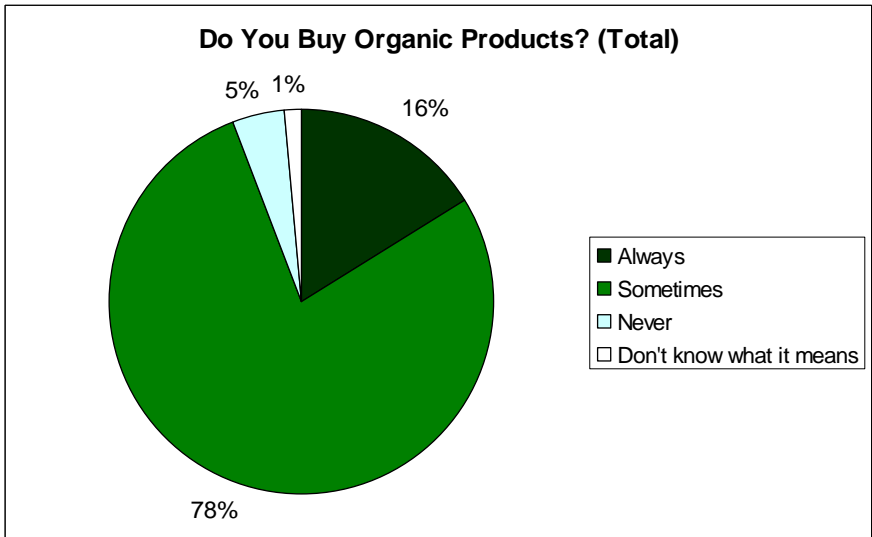


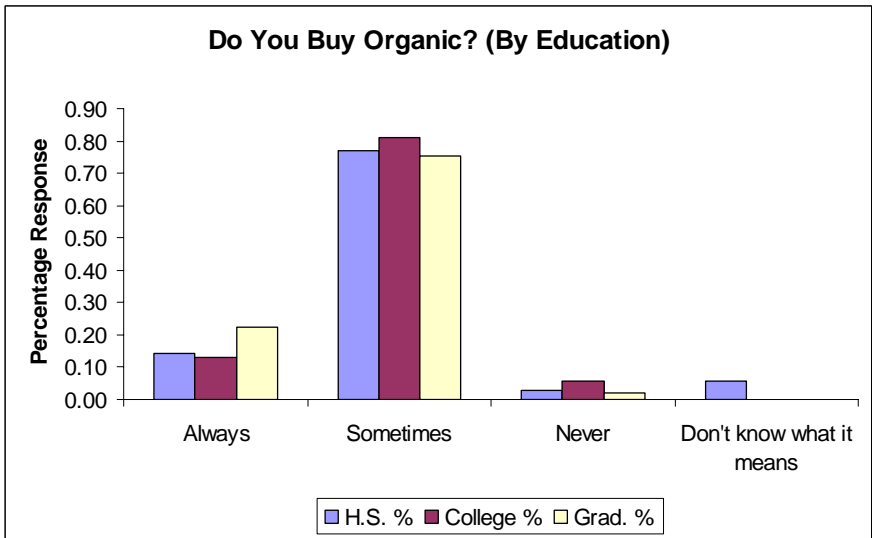
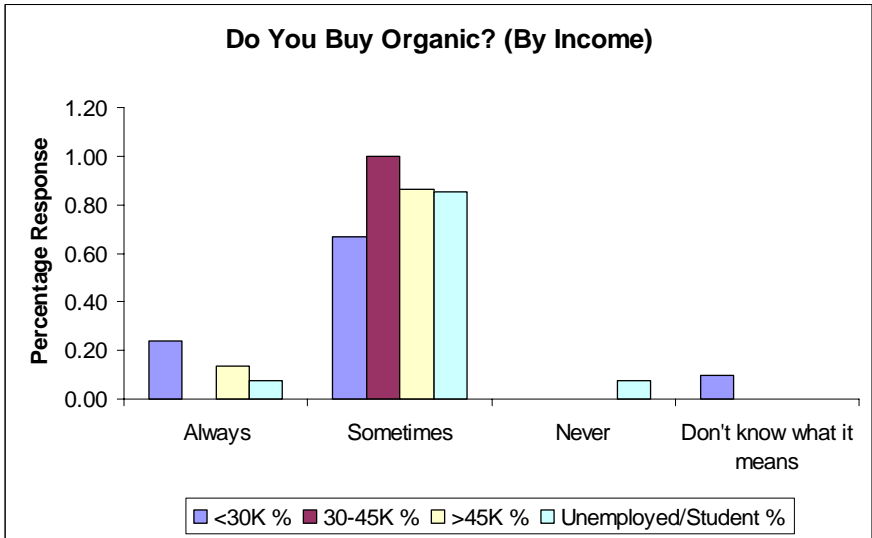
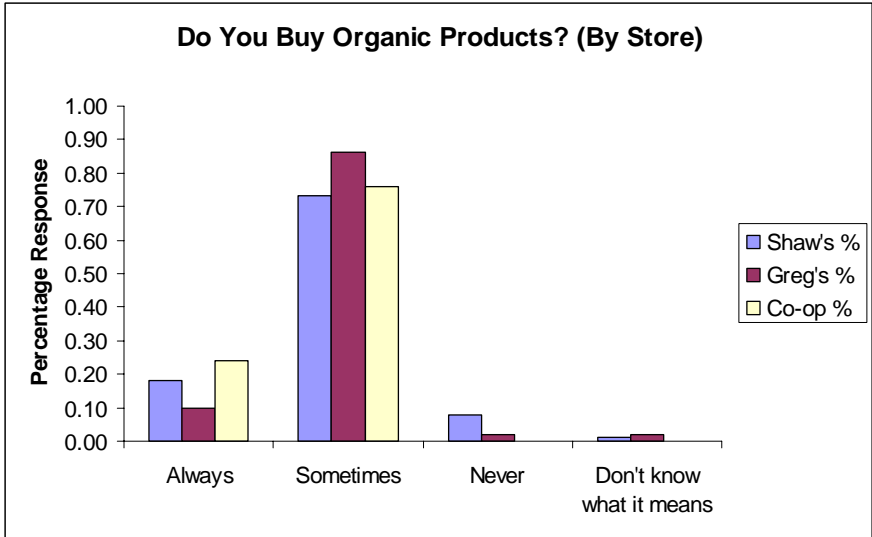
Question 4D:



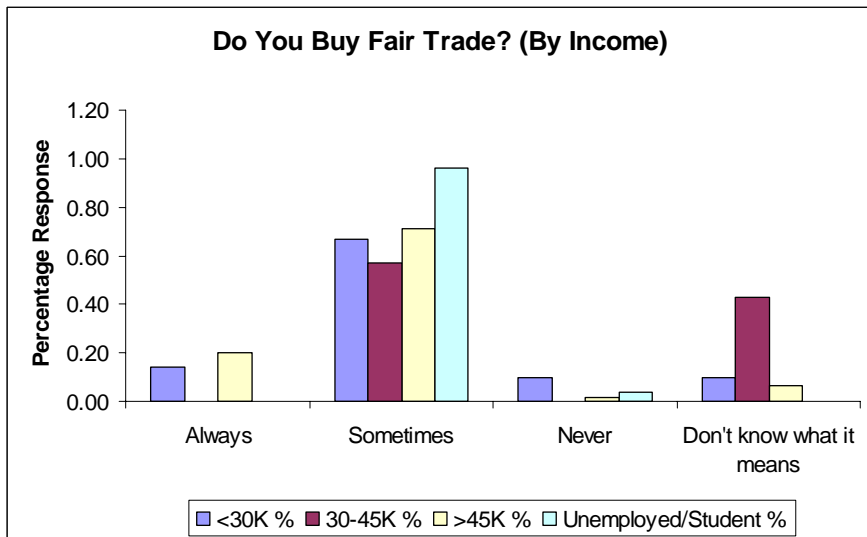
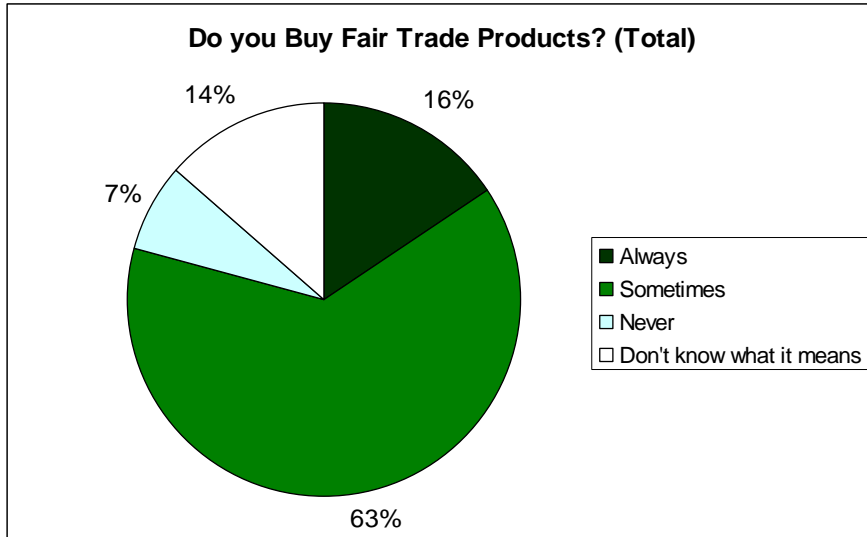


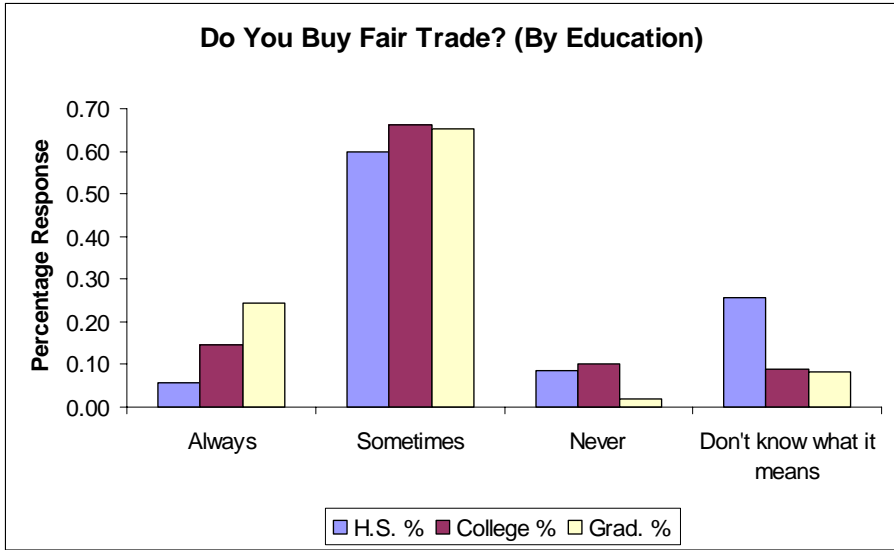
Question 5:



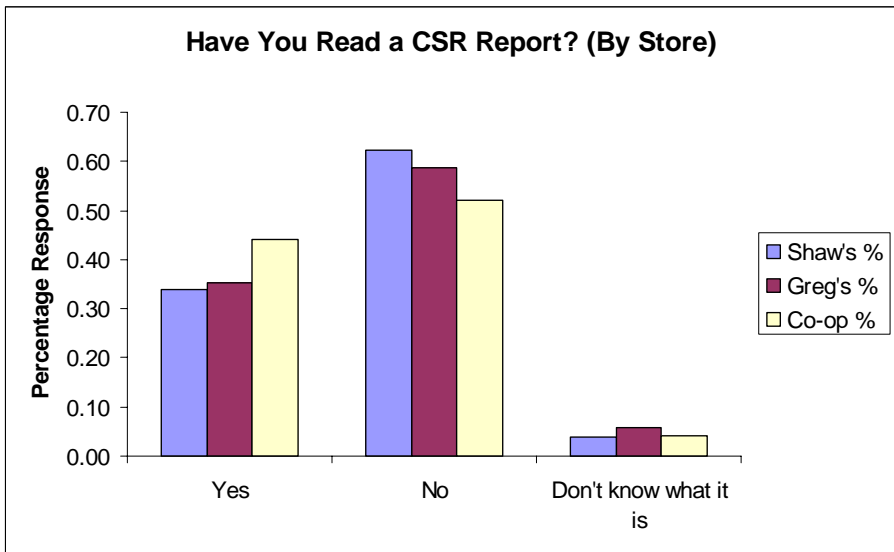
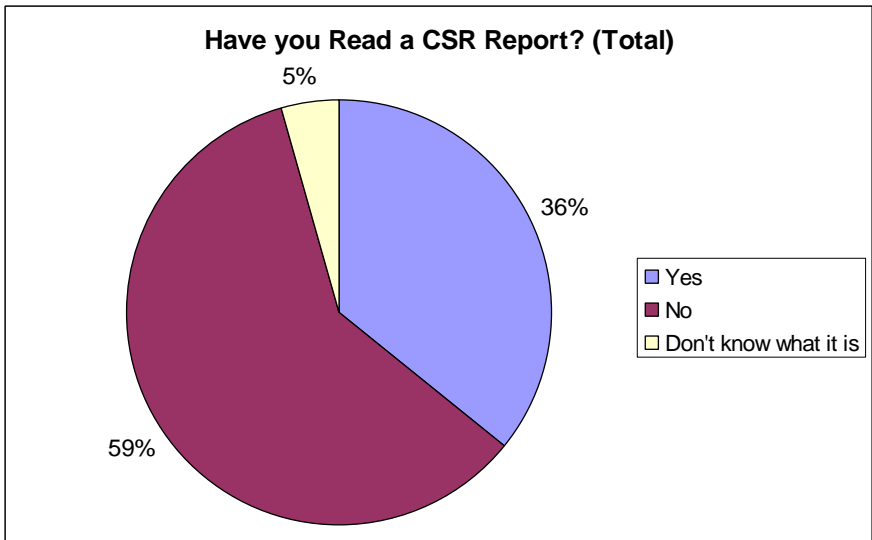


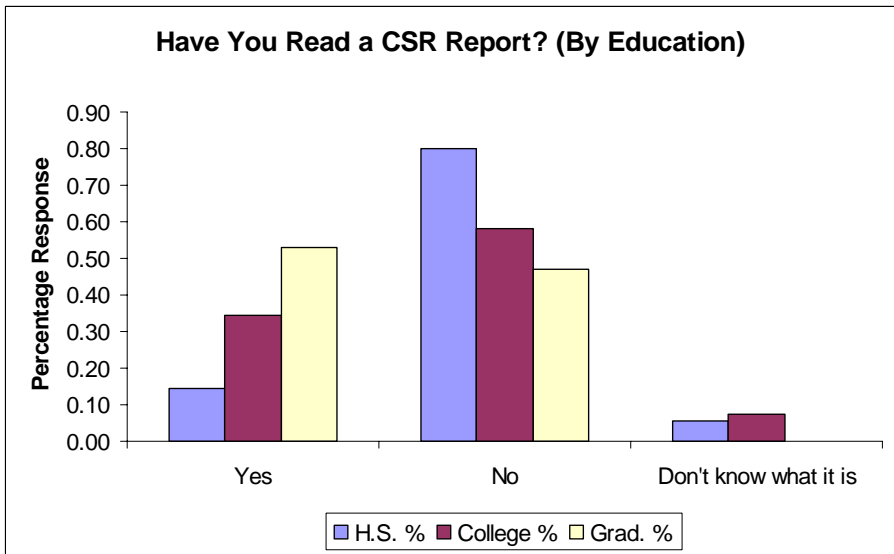
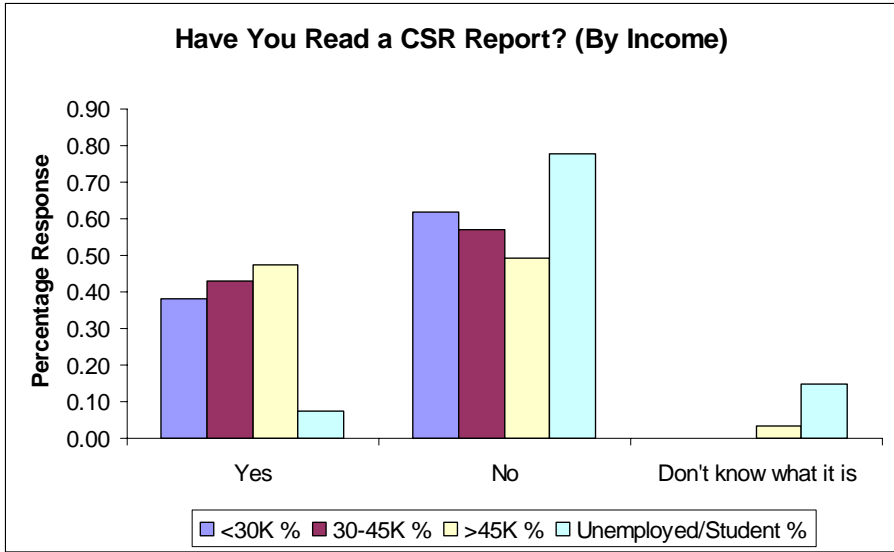
Question 6:



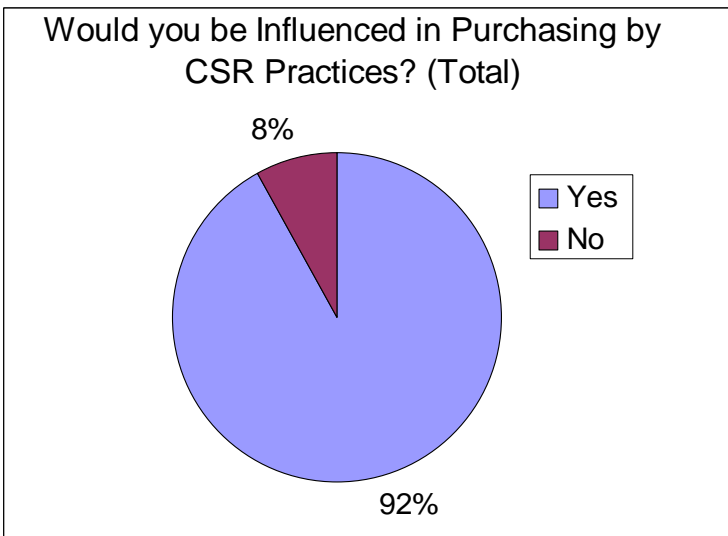


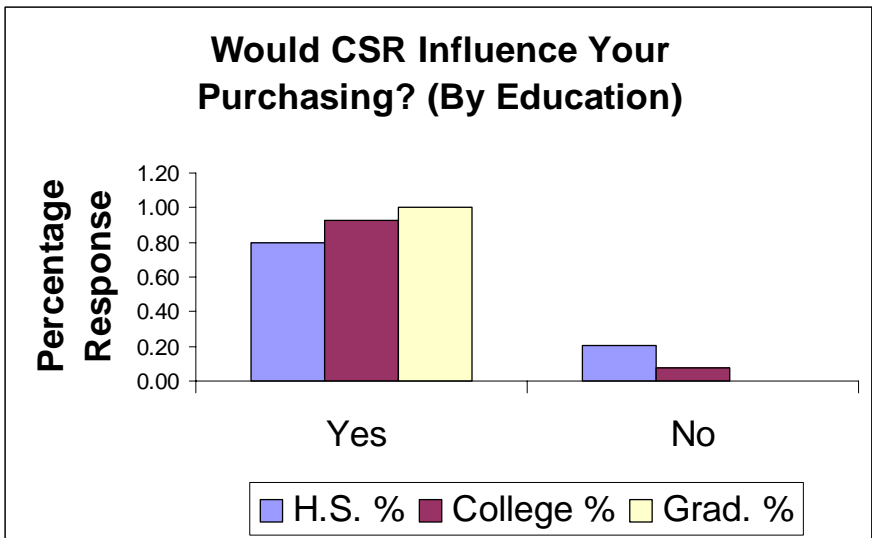
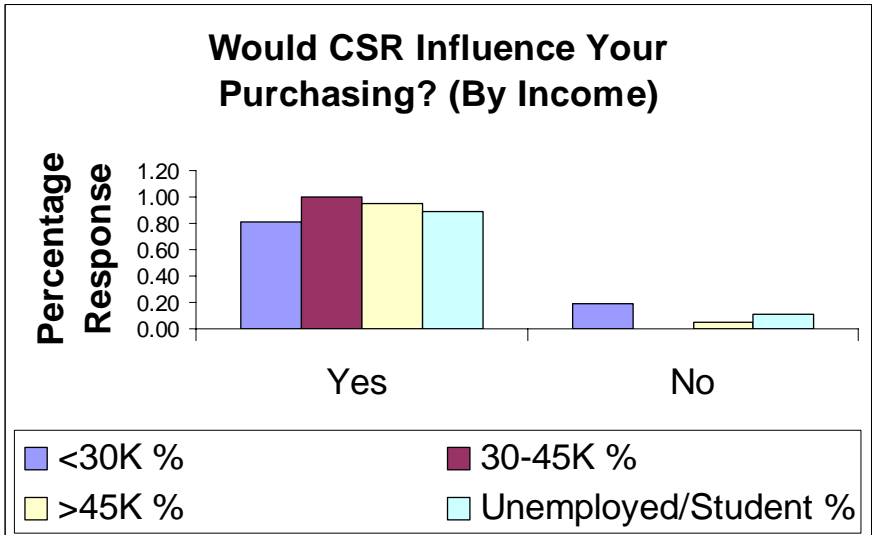
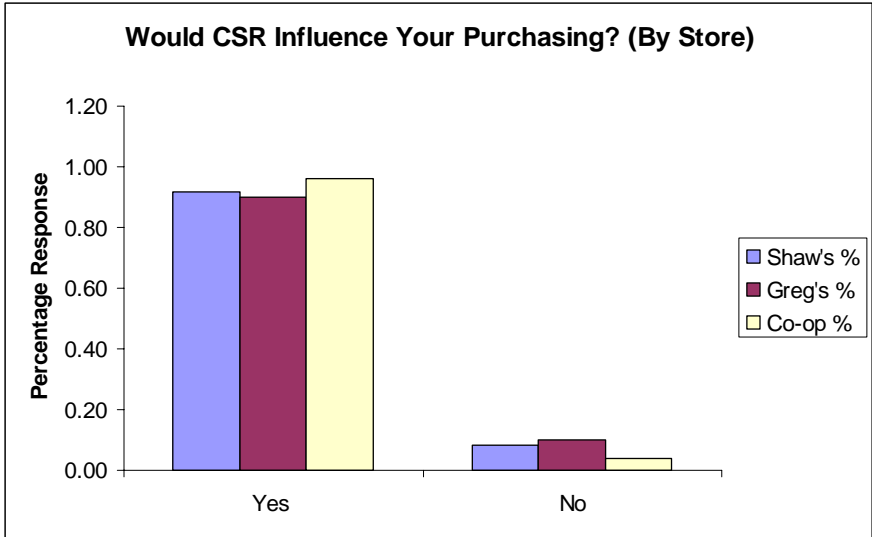
Question 7:





Question 8:





Question 9:

