Corporate Social Responsibility in Branding
A study of The Body Shop’s visitors’ attitudes and purchase decisions

Authors: Amanda Lundmark
Sara Lundgren Elsalhy

Tutor: Malin Näsholm

Umeå School of Business and Economics
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Authors: Sara Lundgren El-Salhy & Amanda Lundmark

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Problem: Previous research suggests that by using well known CSR as a branding tool, companies can create positive consumer attitudes, and these attitudes are assumed to lead to positive purchase decisions. This study aims to test this connection, when CSR is well known, by answering the following problem question: What are the opinions and attitudes among The Body Shop Umeå’s visitors towards The Body Shop and CSR, and how do they perceive the company regarding CSR? Are their purchase decisions affected by these opinions and attitudes?

Purpose: To explore the importance of a well-known CSR; to find what attitudes consumers have towards CSR and a company with well-known CSR, and to look at these attitudes’ relation to the consumers’ purchase decision.

Methodology: A quantitative, deductive study is conducted, where the theory is tested. The data is collected by handing out self-completion questionnaires to The Body Shop visitors in Umeå.

Results & Conclusion: This study shows that The Body Shop visitors in Umeå think that CSR is important when buying cosmetics. The respondents have positive attitudes towards The Body Shop and these positive attitudes can be connected to The Body Shop’s CSR. The positive attitudes can also be connected to positive purchase decisions. A conclusion that can be drawn from these findings is that well known CSR can be connected to positive purchase decisions, if the CSR is trustworthy. This conclusion can, however, only be generalized to the population for this study; the visitors to The Body Shop’s store in Umeå.
SUMMARY

As the globalization makes the world come closer, it has become increasingly important for companies and organisations to engage in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Information travels fast, and any company can get scrutinized on working conditions, pollution, animal-testing etc. at anytime. Most companies declare their CSR activities and commitments in reports and other corporate information. Some companies, such as The Body Shop, however, also use CSR as a branding tool. Whether or not CSR is an effective tool in branding is a question that is of high interest in the current branding debate.

Since The Body Shop is considered to be a pioneer in using CSR in branding, the question arises how this is perceived by the consumers – are the motives behind the company’s CSR believed to be genuine and honest or is it only thought of as a marketing trick? Is the company and the CSR looked upon with positive attitudes? And are these attitudes related to purchase frequency of The Body Shop’s products?

The purpose of this study is to find answers to those questions. In order to do so, a quantitative study is conducted, focusing on the visitors to The Body Shop store in Umeå, who constitutes the population. Data is collected with questionnaires, handed out and collected outside the store by the researchers. The findings are then presented descriptively with help from charts and tables, and analyzed in relation to the theory.

The subjects of CSR, branding and consumer behaviour are very broad. Hence, the theory has been narrowed down to what is important for this study. The theoretical areas chosen include corporate identity, corporate image, attitude formation and consumer decision making process.

The analysis of the findings show that the respondents have positive attitudes towards The Body Shop, and that CSR is looked upon as important by the majority. Further, The Body Shop is perceived to be socially responsible, also in relation to other attributes. A correlation could also be found between positive attitudes towards The Body Shop and purchase frequency of its products.

In conclusion, the researchers of this study found that well-known CSR can be connected to positive attitudes, and these attitudes correlates with positive purchase decisions. This can be generalized on the population of the study; visitors to The Body Shop Umeå.
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1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the background of the study will be presented. The background will then lead to the problem discussion that will serve as a basis to the purpose and problem formulation.

1.1 Problem Background & Discussion

CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) is a topic that has become increasingly important over the last couple of years.\(^1\) As information about third world working conditions and environmental issues reaches the consumers much faster today, consumers are starting to put pressure on companies. Consequently, the marketplace is becoming increasingly conscience-focused and the demand for more ethical businesses is increasing. This means that companies need to take more responsibility now than in the past to keep the trust and loyalty of the consumers.

CSR is a very broad concept and it can be defined in many different ways. For the purpose of this research, the definition made by The European Commission will be used. They define CSR as:

"A concept whereby companies decide voluntarily to contribute to a better society and a cleaner environment. This is done by integrating social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis."\(^2\)

CSR is not a new concept, however. The question of whether or not firms should be concerned with CSR has been widely debated since the 1950’s. It has previously been argued by some, such as Friedman, that businesses should limit their actions only to profit maximization.\(^3\) But, while the goal of firms may be to gain profit, more recent research has shown that CSR can actually be a way of raising profit for a company, as CSR can serve as a powerful tool in creating competitive advantage.\(^4\)

To survive in today’s fierce competition, companies need to establish some kind of competitive advantage, and there are two ways of doing this: through differentiation or cost leadership. Differentiation is considered to be a more secure basis for competitive advantage, since it will not be as vulnerable to innovation as cost leadership.\(^5\) The differentiation strategy has to exploit the uniqueness of the each individual company’s resources and capabilities, and build upon the company’s key strengths and core competencies.\(^6\) This is where CSR can play a crucial role, as it may be used as a basis to differentiate the brand by incorporating it in the corporate image. This may lead to positive brand attitudes, positive purchase decisions and eventually competitive advantage in the form of brand loyalty.\(^7\) Loyal customers will create barriers for competitors who

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\(^1\) I. Papasolomou-Doukakis, M. Krambia-Kapardis and M. Katsioloudes, "Corporate social responsibility: the way
\(^5\) Robert M. Grant, Contemporary Strategy Analysis (Cornwall: Blackwell Publishing, 2008): 218
\(^6\) Grant: 125-126
\(^7\) Mohr et al (2001): 66
try to take over the company’s customers, and this will allow the company to mark up the prices of their products.\textsuperscript{8}

These days, most companies present their CSR on the website or in information brochures, but few base their competitive advantage on being socially responsible. One example of a company known for their extensive CSR is, however, The Body Shop. The company was regarded a pioneer when it comes to using CSR as a major tool in their marketing strategy, and is still a company that many people associate with strong CSR.\textsuperscript{9}

The Body Shop is a multinational company, producing and selling beauty and cosmetic products. The brand was founded in the UK by Dame Anita Roddick in 1976, and has grown significantly since. The shops can now be found in 61 countries, including Sweden.\textsuperscript{10} The five core values expressed on The Body Shop’s home page are the following:

- Support Community Trade
- Defend Human Rights
- Against Animal Testing
- Activate Self-Esteem
- Protect Our Planet\textsuperscript{11}

These core values serve as a foundation to The Body Shop’s mission statement, as it relies heavily upon social responsibility, it does not even mention products or any financial expectations or goals. It reads:

“To dedicate our business to the pursuit of social and environmental change.”\textsuperscript{12}

A quote from Anita Roddick herself strengthens this even more:

“I'd rather promise human rights, environmental concerns, indigenous rights, than promote a bubble bath.”\textsuperscript{13}

The company clearly bases its core values on CSR and then uses these core values as a basis for their differentiation and branding. In this way they hope to build a strong brand that will create positive consumer attitudes, which will lead to positive purchase decisions.\textsuperscript{14}

In order for social responsibility to lead to positive attitudes, the CSR has to be perceived as trustworthy by the consumers.\textsuperscript{15}

Using CSR as a core value means that CSR becomes more a way of running the business, instead of just a separate project. Apart from The Body Shop’s social activism, it was also among the first firms in the world to publish a report on its social responsibility initiatives. In 1991, it issued

\textsuperscript{8} Grant (2008): 209
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid
\textsuperscript{14} David A. Aaker, Managing Brand Equity (New York: Free Press, 1991): preface
the EU Eco-Management and Audit Regulation, and the company also developed internal audit programs to ensure environmental protection, health and safety at work, and monitoring of the company’s “Against Animal Testing Policy”. During the writing process of this thesis, The Body Shop is running a campaign with MTV named “YesYesYes to Safe Sex”. The aim is to increase the awareness of how fast HIV is spread in the world, and to encourage people to always have safe sex.

The trustworthiness of The Body Shop’s CSR efforts can be questioned. Is the CSR in the marketing campaigns based on honest care and concerns for the nature and the workers – or is it a smart façade that makes the brand look good? This is a question that has been discussed by cynics and critical thinkers.

In March 2006, The Body Shop was taken over by the cosmetic manufacturer L’Oréal. The French company, that also owns several other cosmetic brands, paid £652m (8.8 billion SEK) for the acquisition. There was some scepticism, mostly concerning the animal-testing, when people were afraid that what The Body Shop had been representing would now disappear. Ruth Rosselson, a writer for Ethical Consumer Magazine, wrote that

“It’s ironic that a company well known for its anti-animal-testing stance should sell out to one that tests on animals and has yet to show its commitment to any ethical issues at all.”

Catherine Robens has in her master thesis found that even though there were negative attitudes towards the acquisition, the buying behaviour of the consumers did not change dramatically.

Using CSR in branding is based on the assumption that CSR, as a branding tool, will evoke positive consumer attitudes towards the brand, and that these attitudes will create a positive corporate image, which will lead to positive purchase decisions and loyal customers. But what lies behind this assumption, and is this a safe assumption to make? How strong is the link between CSR and positive consumer attitudes? And will these positive brand attitudes actually affect the consumer’s purchase decision?

Whether or not CSR is an effective tool in branding, and if there is an obvious connection between well communicated CSR and purchase decisions are topics that are of high interest in the current branding debate. As the marketplace is becoming increasingly competitive, and the importance of having a strong brand to survive grows, the question of CSR is now put in a branding context. A shift in focus of the CSR debate becomes visible; it is no longer about whether or not companies should use CSR, but more a question of how it should be used, and how effective it can be as a branding tool.

Consumer behaviour theory, especially theory regarding attitude formation and purchase decisions, suggest that the use of trustworthy, strategic CSR should have positive effects on the consumer’s purchase decisions. A number of researchers have been trying to confirm this link,

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16 Debapratim and Fernando (2006): 1
20 C. Robens, “Consumer perceptions on the incorporation of established brands: The acquisition of Body Shop by L’Oréal” (2007): 49
21 Smith (2003): 55
where the most common finding seem to be that it is difficult to prove a strong connection
between CSR and positive purchase decisions in reality. Mohr et al state that consumers’ beliefs
about CSR are often inconsistent with their behaviours.  

Much of the previous research has been conducted on companies where the CSR may not be
widely known. In these studies, the consumers claim that they would switch brands to support
social responsibility and that they have more positive attitudes towards socially responsible
brands. But, in practice, some of these studies show that CSR is not a dominant criterion in the
purchase decision. Where no clear connection between CSR and purchase decision can be
proved, the explanation provided is the consumers’ lack of knowledge regarding the companies’
social responsibility. It is argued that if the consumers were more aware of the CSR of the
companies, their purchase decisions would look different. Previous research also concludes that
the relationship between beliefs and behaviour will be stronger the more important the
consumers judge these issues to be. Furthermore, much of the research that has been conducted
trying to link CSR to purchase behaviour has focused on knowledge of CSR, by measuring to
what extent the social responsibility is known to the consumers.

Thus, a gap in the research becomes visible. Is it possible to, with regard to the gap between
attitudes and purchase behaviour that previous studies have found, draw the conclusion that this
is a general principle? Or is there a stronger link between CSR and buying behaviour if the CSR
of the company is well known? What this study aims to do is to explore branding and consumer
behaviour theories and test the suggested connection between CSR and positive purchase
decisions, but adding the factor of well known CSR. By doing this, the researchers will approach
the gap in the previous research by investigating whether or not the conclusions come to by other
researchers are true: that there might be a connection between CSR and purchase decisions if the
CSR is well known.

The authors consider this research important because it will test the conclusions that previous
research have come to, and will thus provide new, valuable information to the branding debate.
This contribution is done by providing some answers to the question of whether CSR should be
used in branding by companies, which is a widely discussed topic in the current marketing
debate.

1.2 Purpose
This study aims to explore the importance of a well-known CSR. What does the general visitor
to a certain store think about CSR? Companies claim to be socially responsible and take actions,
for example against animal testing. But do the visitors believe in it? Does it create positive
attitudes or suspicion?

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22 Mohr et al (2001): 69
23 E. Boulstridge and M. Carrigan, “Do consumers really care about corporate responsibility? Highlighting the
24 Ibid
26 Boulstridge and Carrigan (2000): 359-360
The purpose of the study is accordingly to find what attitudes consumers have towards CSR and a company with well-known CSR, and to look at these attitudes’ relation to the consumers’ purchase decision.

### 1.3 Problem

Based on the purpose, the problem that creates the basis for the study is formulated:

**What are the opinions and attitudes among The Body Shop Umeå’s visitors towards The Body Shop and CSR, and how do they perceive the company regarding CSR? Are their purchase decisions affected by these opinions and attitudes?**

In order to find an answer to the problem, a quantitative study will be conducted, focusing on visitors to The Body Shop, a company with well-known CSR. The findings, based on data collected through questionnaires, will be described, explained and analyzed by using sub questions, introduced in the findings chapter.

### 1.4 Delimitations

The Body Shop stores can be found all over the world. In this study, the population and sample are narrowed down to cover visitors to the Body Shop store in Umeå. Furthermore, since the questionnaires are in Swedish, The Body Shop’s visitors that do not speak Swedish are excluded from the sample and thus from the population.

### 1.5 Key Concepts

Many of the concepts used in this research can be ascribed a wide variation of definitions. Below follows a list of key concepts and words that will be used frequently throughout the thesis. This will ensure that the reader will interpret the concepts in the same way the researchers have done while conducting the study.

**CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility):** The European Commission defines CSR as: when companies decide to voluntarily contribute to a better society and a cleaner environment, by integrating social and environmental concerns in their business operations and interactions with stakeholders.\(^{27}\) This definition was selected for the purpose of this thesis because it gives a clear explanation of the concept and fits well with the CSR undertaken by The Body Shop.

**Well-known CSR:** By “well-known CSR”, the authors refer to CSR that is widely known by the consumers.

**The Body Shop:** When the Body Shop is mentioned in this study it is referred to both as a company and brand. This because the authors believe that the consumers see little difference between The Body Shop as a brand and as a company, since the company and the products the company sell go under the same name (The Body Shop).

**Visitor (to The Body Shop store):** A person entering through the doors of The Body Shop store in Umeå.

Cosmetics: The US Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act defines cosmetics as “articles intended to be rubbed, poured, sprinkled or sprayed on, introduced into or otherwise applied to the human body or any part thereof for cleaning, beautifying, promoting attractiveness or altering the appearance”. \(^{28}\) This definition has been used in this study because it includes all of the products in The Body Shop product range.

**Brand:** A name, term, sign, symbol or a combination of these, that identifies the maker or seller of the product, designed to enhance the identity of the product. \(^{29}\)

**Competitive Advantage:** A firm has a competitive advantage over its competitors when it earns, or has the potential to earn, a continually higher rate of profit. This can be due to higher market share, customer loyalty etc. \(^{30}\)

**Corporate Identity:** A step in the branding process, the picture that the company is trying to create about who they are in the minds of the consumers. \(^{31}\)

**Corporate Image:** The picture that the consumers *actually have* of a company. \(^{32}\)

**Attitude:** An individual's evaluation of people, objects or issues, generally positive or negative. \(^{33}\)

**Attitude Object:** The object which a person has the attitude towards. \(^{34}\) In this study, the attitude object referred to will be The Body Shop.

**Consumer:** A person who consumes, or uses a certain category of products (i.e. cosmetics).

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\(^{30}\) Grant (2008): 205

\(^{31}\) Aaker (1991): 110


\(^{34}\) Ibid
1.6 Disposition

The disposition of the thesis looks as follows:

- The problem background and formulation are presented in the first chapter. This chapter will serve as a basis for the remainder of the thesis.

- The methodology is divided into two different chapters; the first part, the theoretical method, is presented before the theoretical framework. In this chapter, the method related to the theory will be presented. The second part, the practical method chapter, includes research method and explains how the survey was conducted. Hence, this is presented just before the findings chapter. The authors chose to divide the methodology into two different parts because they believe it will make more sense to the readers if they are provided with the relevant method in connection to the part of the thesis it relates to, rather than reading it all at once.

- The presentation of the content in the theoretical framework, findings and analysis chapters will follow the same order. The order in which the content is presented will be based on the following model:

![Diagram of Disposition of Theoretical Framework, Findings and Analysis Chapters](image)

Figure 1.1: Disposition of Theoretical Framework, Findings and Analysis Chapters

This model was developed by the authors and summarizes the basic connection between CSR and purchase decisions.

- The conclusion, implications and suggestions for future research sections have all been merged under the end discussion heading. This because the authors consider these sections to be closely linked as they all build upon reflections of the analysis.
2 THEORETICAL METHODOLOGY

This section will explain the theoretical methodology, such as the authors view upon knowledge and preconceptions. These are crucial subjects since they will influence the content and how the content is selected and used in the study. The authors’ choice of sources and theory will also be discussed.

2.1 Choice of Subject

The area of marketing was chosen by the authors a long time before the actual work of the thesis begun. This because it is the main focus of study for both of the authors, hence it seemed logical to limit the study to this area. There are many different subjects to study within the area of marketing, and this study will be narrowed down to the subjects of consumer behavior and branding. These are subjects that the authors are very interested in. The concept of how branding tools are used to affect consumer behavior is something that the authors find especially interesting.

When deciding what part of branding to focus upon, the authors came across the concept of CSR. Since the authors did not know a lot about CSR they decided that it would be interesting to focus their study upon this subject. After reading up on the subject, it was decided to examine what effect the use of CSR in branding has on the consumers’ attitudes and behavior. CSR is a topic that has been strongly emphasized and widely researched, but not a lot is known about the effects that CSR has on consumers.  

2.1.1 Preconceptions about the subject

The authors have taken one course in marketing at Umeå University. In addition to this, the authors have also studied Marketing at the University of Wollongong in Australia and University of Northern British Columbia in Canada. Branding is something that has been very briefly touched upon during these marketing courses. The authors have, however, done research on branding and consumer behavior in the past, concerning how celebrity endorsement is used in branding. This means that the authors have some previous knowledge about basic branding and consumer behavior theories, which helps in the selection of relevant theory.

The concept of CSR was, as already mentioned, new to the authors before the writing of this thesis. After researching the subject, the authors formed positive attitudes towards CSR, and a basic belief that using CSR in branding can be a good thing. Both authors consider themselves to be interested in environmental issues, although they are not members of any environment organizations. The authors have tried not to let their preconceptions and opinions regarding CSR affect the content of the study.

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36 Ljung, Lundgren, Lundmark and Löfgren "Celebrity Endorsement and The Ideal Self – a View of Teenagers’ Perceptions" (Umeå 2008)
2.2 View of Knowledge

In this section, the researchers’ view upon knowledge and how that affects this study will be clarified. This includes view upon reality and view upon understandability. The first concept concerns the way in which the researchers think of the reality that will be studied, whereas the second refers to the way the reality in question is actually studied. A brief description of the two concepts will now be provided, starting with view upon reality.

With an objective view upon reality, the main focus is on physical phenomena that can be objectified, and on social facts. This is related to positivism, which will be discussed later. A subjective view upon reality is related to hermeneutics, and focuses on social phenomena or social definitions.

The authors of this thesis have an objective view, and consider the study of The Body Shop, CSR, and the visitors’ opinions to be a rather physical than social phenomena. Also, they are not looking for definitions, but for facts. Even though the researchers aim to be as objective as possible, the problem and the purpose of the study, and the theories it is based on, are chosen by the researchers. Consequently, the data presented is based on a subjectively chosen topic, but the study has been conducted with an objective view, and an objective way of analyzing the data collected in the survey. By “an objective way”, the researchers refer to that they have been actively thinking about not letting their own values and opinions affect the study.

Understandability is by Maj-Britt Johansson explained as “how the world is made knowledgeable.” Researchers either choose to show (describe what the world looks like), or to interpret (find meanings behind why the world looks the way it does). To show is related to positivism, and to interpret to hermeneutics. This study aims to describe the attitudes, actions and opinions of people. Thus the purpose is to show rather than to interpret, and the researchers stay positivistic.

In addition to having different views, a study can have different purposes. The hermeneutic researcher searches for understanding, hopes to find meaning and does not need to generalize. The positivistic researcher, on the other hand, hopes to find causal links by making empirical observations, and aims at being able to generalize the result. An explanation is the desired result for a positivistic researcher, and also for this study.

A research has either a deductive or an inductive approach. Deductive research is testing a theory, using observations and/or hypotheses to find whether the theory is valid or not. This study aims at testing theories, with help from questionnaire responses, in order to find an answer to the research question, thus a deductive research is being carried out. Also, a deductive study is related to positivism and to an objective reality view. The way of finding empirics is affected by the views the researchers have on reality and on knowledge.

2.3 Literature Search and Criticism

The main sources of information used for this research are articles, literature and electronic sources.

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38 Ibid: 42-43
39 Ibid: 44
40 Ibid: 46
For information regarding CSR, the main sources of information have been articles. This because there are few books written on the subject, especially when it is to be linked to branding. When using articles and recent research, the authors can make sure that they use only the latest information regarding this.

Most articles used have been found through searches in databases, such as Business Source Premier and EBSCO. Keywords, such as “CSR” and “branding”, were typed in to find appropriate articles. The majority of the articles used have been published in recognized scientific journals such as Journal of Marketing Research and European Business Review, which is another indication of the quality of the articles.

Literature has been selected through a search in the Umeå University Library’s database. This search was very similar to the search for articles; key words such as “consumer behavior” and “CSR” were typed in the search window. Literature has been used mainly for consumer behavior theory and in the method chapters. The works of Michael R. Solomon serve as the main source of information regarding consumer behavior. Solomon is an expert in consumer behavior and he has made numerous awarded studies regarding the relationship between marketing strategies and consumers’ preferences. Therefore, his works are considered to be trustworthy sources in this study.

Most of the information regarding The Body Shop comes from the company itself and was collected from their website and through interviews. To avoid bias, information about the company has also been collected from other, independent, sources, such as The Center for Management Research.

When electronic sources are used, most of them refer to organizations’ web pages, such as the European Commission. The researchers are aware of the risk that electronic sources are of a lower quality than other sources. For this reason, the researchers have tried to limit the use of electronic sources as much as possible.

A factor that could lower the quality of the sources is the use of old articles and materials. To avoid this, the researchers have tried to limit their use of articles to those written within the last ten years. In some occasions, where the authors believe it is justified, older sources have been used. The works of Milton Friedman, for instance, has been cited in the thesis even though this information dates back to 1962. Because Friedman was an important actor in the CSR debate during that period, some of his arguments are still considered to be important background information for this thesis.

2.4 Choice of Theory

The subjects of CSR, branding and consumer behaviour are very broad, and a huge amount of theories and information can be found regarding this. For this reason, the authors have tried to select the theories most important for this study. In this process, the research questions were used as a starting point. To be able to select appropriate theories, the researchers asked the question “What information and models are needed to be able to analyze our problem question?”

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The authors decided that theories regarding CSR will be used more as a theoretical background, since those are theories necessary as a basis for testing the other theories regarding corporate identity and image, attitudes and behaviour. Hence, the reason for including CSR theories as well is because they serve as a background and pre-requisite to the theories that are to be tested.

The theories included regarding corporate identity and image are based on the reasoning of David A. Aaker. Aaker is highly respected and considered a marketing guru. He has won several awards, such as best article awards by the Journal of Marketing and the California Management Review, and the 1996 Paul D. Converse Award for outstanding contributions to the development of marketing. Aaker’s Brand Equity Model is used in this thesis, even though it dates back to before 1991. Since it is still used to explain brand equity today, the authors decided that the model is still valid to use in his thesis. Aaker’s Brand Equity Model is the most cited model regarding brand equity, although it has sometimes been criticised for not being consistent. The main criticism concerns the fact that the internal relationship between the structural elements (perceived quality, brand associations etc) is missing. This criticism has somewhat been avoided by the authors, since they chose to only use a part of the model. This will be further explained when the model appears in the next section.

The ABC model is used as a way of explaining how attitudes are formed. The authors included this model because they consider it to give a clear description of this process. This model has sometimes been criticized for the order in which the different components appear in the model, with the result that other models explaining attitude creation have been developed. This criticism was considered by the authors and other models were examined, with the conclusion that the ABC model best fitted the purpose for this study.

The decision making process is illustrated by five different steps explained by Solomon and de Chernatary and McDonald. This process was regarded a crucial element in this study which is the reason to why it was included as the as part of the theory chapter.

44 Frans Melin, Varumärkesstrategi (Malmö: Liber ekonomi, 1999): 46
47 de Chernatony and McDonald (1992): 70-75
3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter will present to the reader the theory that is relevant for the study. This theoretical framework creates a useful basis for discussion, and gives the reader a foundation for the understanding of how CSR is used in branding to affect consumer attitudes, and how these attitudes influence buying behaviour. In the analysis, the theory will be tested by comparing and connecting it to the empirical findings.

3.1 Disposition of the Theoretical Framework Chapter

The theory chapter will be divided into three different parts, as made visible in the model below.

![Figure 3.1: Disposition of the Theory Chapter](image)

The first part of the theory chapter consists of CSR, the second part includes theories regarding branding and the third part deals with consumer behaviour. The first part, the theories regarding CSR, will be used as a theoretical background. Those theories will serve as a pre-requisite for the testing of identity and image congruency, and the theories regarding attitudes and purchase decisions.

In the beginning of each of the theory parts the model above will be presented again, highlighting the section of the theory that is to be presented. A section linking all these theories together will also be presented in the end.

3.2 CSR

The question of how CSR can be used to strengthen a company’s identity is a hot topic in today’s branding debate. To understand how CSR is used in branding, it is important to first acknowledge that there are different forms and levels of social responsibility that companies can take on.\(^\text{48}\)

Lantos identifies four faces of CSR, which a company should fulfil in order to have a good corporate citizen role:

- Economic: To earn a fair return on capital to satisfy the shareholders, deliver value for the customers, create new jobs and wealth for the business and promote innovation
- Legal: To comply with the law
- Ethical: To be moral and fair, respect people’s rights, avoid harm and social injury

\(^\text{48}\) Smith (2003): 55
- Philantropic: To perform activities that are beneficial for society
  - Altruistic CSR
  - Strategic CSR.\(^{49}\)

Lantos argues that economic, legal and ethical CSR are mandatory for all businesses. He also divides philanthropic CSR into two categories; altruistic and strategic, where altruistic CSR is genuine optional caring, even at possible organizational sacrifice. Hence, he argues that altruistic CSR is not a legitimate role of business. Strategic CSR, on the other hand, is CSR that is good for business as well as for society. It is used to accomplish strategic business goals, when corporations give back to society because they believe it is in their best financial interest to do so. Since market forces are assumed to provide financial advantages for businesses that are perceived to be socially responsible, social goals might be profitable in the long run. Strategic CSR will also make others look more favorably upon the firm, thus expenditures in CRS can be viewed as investment in the brand.\(^{50}\)

In strategic CSR, the company tries to make the CSR values the core value in the company, which makes strategic CSR more of a branding issue. Hence, when companies not only use CSR because they have to, but also base their branding on social responsibility, they use strategic CSR. Since CSR is used by The Body Shop in the marketing of its brand, the company can be considered to be using strategic CSR.

Just because a company uses strategic CSR in the branding strategy, it does not automatically mean that they will have a competitive advantage. Often, the real motive behind a company’s CSR is questioned, and many companies encounter problems regarding their trustworthiness. If companies are to use social responsibility as a strategic tool to strengthen their brand there are several factors that need to be considered:

- The CSR strategy has to be genuine: It is important that the consumers feel that the motives behind the CSR efforts are honest, and not just something that the company does to increase sales.
- The strategy has to be unique and carefully thought through: It has to differ from the CSR strategies that the competitors have in order to provide competitive advantage.
- The strategy has to be a reflection of the company’s mission and vision, and fit the type of business that the company is in.\(^{51}\)

In other words, it is very important that there is a fit between the company and their CSR strategy. If there is a good fit, the CSR strategy will affect the corporate identity positively.\(^{52}\) The next part will take this line of thought one step further to look at branding theories and how CSR can be used to create a strong corporate identity.

\(^{49}\) G. P. Lantos, “The boundaries of strategic corporate social responsibility” *Journal of Consumer Marketing* (2001): 8-10
\(^{50}\) Ibid: 8 - 17
\(^{51}\) Smith (2003): 67-68
\(^{52}\) Ibid: 68
3.3 Branding

“A product is something that is made in a factory; a brand is something that is bought by a customer. A product can be copied by a competitor; a brand is unique. A product can be quickly outdated; a successful brand is timeless.”

This quote illustrates the importance of a strong brand when trying to create sustainable competitive advantage and a good CSR strategy can serve as a basis for doing so.

For today’s consumers, the brand is of significant importance in the choice of product. It is no longer enough that a product satisfies a basic need; in order for the product to be considered unique it also has to offer some kind of added value. From the company’s perspective, this means that the basic consumer need is satisfied with a generic product, but to provide added value the product has to be differentiated. Companies will want to offer a differentiated brand that provides a unique, attractive and sustainable added value that will satisfy the consumers’ wants and needs. This is where a good SCR strategy can be used to differentiate the brand and provide extra value to the consumer. CSR will then be the “differentiating attribute” used to create a strong corporate identity, which will hopefully give the company a positive brand image among its consumers, which will lead to positive attitudes and influence the buying behaviour.

The figure below, developed by the authors, shows two important steps in brand building:

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Figure 3.2: Connection between Corporate Identity & Corporate Image

Corporate image and corporate identity are core concepts in branding. As they are closely linked and frequently confused, the authors try to explain and separate the two concepts in this figure. Corporate identity has a company perspective; a company uses positioning to communicate its identity to the consumers. Corporate image has a consumer perspective, where associations are used to transfer the corporate identity to the image.

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54 Melin (1999): 80
55 Ibid: 49
Corporate identity and corporate image will now be further examined and the link between them and how they can be created will be studied.

3.3.1 Corporate Identity

“The identity is the brand’s unique fingerprint which makes it one of a kind.”

Corporate identity refers to the picture that the company is trying to create about who they are in the minds of the consumers. It involves the way a company presents, or positions, itself to the target consumers. Companies use positioning in order to create a corporate identity. Consequently, brand identity mainly deals with how a company is trying to be perceived. CSR can be an important tool in creating a positive corporate identity, as an organization can link its behaviour with social responsibility to build a strong corporate identity.

A positive corporate identity is the basis for creating a strong brand as it will protect the company from competitors trying to provide identical products.

When creating a corporate identity, a company will have to evaluate its resources and capabilities to decide on a core value which will serve as a basis in the identity creation. The core value has to be carefully selected. De Chernatony and McDonald state that consumers use the same criterions when they pick brands as they do when they choose their friends, and that brands are used as a non-verbal way to communicate with peer groups. Therefore the corporate identity has to be a reflection of how the consumer wants to be perceived; it has to be congruent with the consumer’s self image. It is also crucial that the selected core value is considered to be important, relevant and attractive by the target consumers. Hence, a company that uses CSR as a core value when creating a corporate identity has to make sure that their target consumers find this attribute important.

When a brand identity is successfully created, this picture has to be transferred to the consumer. This is done through careful positioning. The goal with positioning is to place the brand in the minds of the consumers, which will hopefully lead to brand loyalty.

Being the first company to hold a certain position on the market has its obvious advantages, as consumers always tend to remember companies that are first in something and view the followers as copies. The first company to hold a certain position will in most cases be intimately associated with the selected core value.

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57 Aaker (1991): 110
58 Papasolomou-Doukakis et al (2005): 267
61 Ibid: 86
62 Melin (1999): 75
63 Ibid: 98
3.3.2 Corporate Image

Corporate image can be described as the picture that the consumers actually have of a company, where associations play an important role in creating this image. Consequently, the corporate image will be a reflection of the corporate identity since a company’s reputation depends on the signals they send out about who they are. There is, however, no guarantee that a positive image will actually be created in the minds of the public, even though a company tries to send out positive signals. The more homogenous the corporate identity and the corporate image are, the more integrated the company’s self image is with the consumers’ view of the company. This means that the only thing a corporation can change is its corporate identity, to try to influence its corporate image.

When buying exclusive brand products, consumers use the brand as a tool for self-expression and to be socially accepted; they will use the brand to enhance their self image and the image they want to communicate to others. This makes brand image especially important for exclusive brands. A positive corporate image is the foundation for building successful commercial relationships with the target consumers. Having a positive corporate image leads to positive attitudes, which will affect the customer’s behaviour towards the company.

Brand associations are very powerful to create a positive corporate image, as associations often serve as a basis for purchase decisions and brand loyalty. Aaker’s brand equity model below highlights the importance of associations in brand equity:

![Diagram of Aaker’s Brand Equity Model]

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64 Van Riel and Balmer (1997): 348
65 Melin (1999): 41
The researchers have chosen to highlight the link of brand equity that relates to brand associations, since this is most relevant for this study. Consequently, the other parts of brand equity (brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality and other proprietary brand assets) have been faded in the model above. Most of the criticisms towards this model claim that brand loyalty should not be presented as a structural element of brand equity, since it should be seen a result of the created customer value, rather than a contributing factor to said customer value. The researchers agree with these criticisms, and this weakness of the model is somewhat avoided by only focusing on the brand associations link in the model presented in this study.

As made visible by the model presented above, brand associations are part of brand equity, which compile a set of assets that are linked to the brand and add value to the product. The model shows how positive brand associations lead to positive attitudes, which (among other factors) lead to brand loyalty and competitive advantage.

But how do associations really work? The underlying value of a brand name is often built on what the consumers associate the brand with. A brand association is anything that is linked in memory to a brand. There are a number of different associations linked to a brand, and these are organized into groups in the consumer’s mind. An association can also vary in strength depending on the consumer’s level of exposure to the company’s communication, and if the association is supported by a network of links.

Associations can either be based on intangible assets (e.g. CSR) or on a product specification (e.g. technology leader). It is no longer enough to base market success on product superiority, since high speed technological advantages make technological lead vulnerable to innovation. For this reason intangible factors are generally perceived to be more effective associations since they will be more sustainable and harder for competitors to copy or outperform. When associations provide customer benefits, these benefits can either be rational or psychological. A rational benefit is closely linked with the product attribute and is part of a rational decision process, whereas a psychological benefit relates to what feelings are provoked when buying the brand. Psychological benefits are often very significant in the attitude formation process, and very powerful associations.

Associations and brand image are essential factors when consumers form attitudes regarding a brand. These attitudes will then serve as a basis in the consumers’ decision-making process. The next part will look more closely at how attitudes are formed and how these attitudes affect the decision-making process.

### 3.4 Consumer Behaviour

![Diagram of Consumer Behaviour](image)

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67 Melin (1999): 46
68 Aaker (1991): preface
69 Ibid: 110
70 Melin (1999): 19
72 Ibid: 120
The previous part treated theory regarding how strong corporate images are created in order to evoke positive consumer attitudes towards a brand. This part will bring up theory that can be used as a basis for analyzing how positive attitudes are created and whether positive attitudes towards a brand will lead to positive purchase behaviour. Hence, this chapter has more of a consumer behaviour perspective.

3.4.1 Involvement

Before analyzing consumers’ attitude formation and decision process, their level of involvement in the decision has to be decided. The level of involvement decides how motivated the consumer is to process information. According to de Chernatony and McDonald, consumers are often highly involved when buying products that are used to reflect the buyers’ self image, such as cosmetics. When consumers are highly involved in the purchase and perceive significant differences between brands they will use an extended problem solving process. In this process, consumers will seek information more actively. For this reason, companies targeting high involvement consumers need to reinforce their brands’ unique differential position in the market, and identify the attributes that are perceived as important by the consumers, to be able to communicate those as strongly as possible. Hence, for high involvement products, differentiation through the use of CSR can be an effective strategy to implement. When consumers are highly involved, the attitudes they create about certain brands are deep-seated and become part of the consumer’s value system. These attitudes are very important to the consumer and this makes them hard to change.

3.4.2 Attitudes

An attitude is an individual's evaluation of people, objects or issues, generally positive or negative. An attitude object is the object that a person has the attitude towards. Attitudes towards brands are formed in many different ways. In order to understand why consumers perceive certain brands in certain ways, it is important to understand how attitudes are created and what they consist of. The ABC model tries to describe this process.

3.4.2.1 The ABC Model of Attitudes

The ABC model emphasizes the interrelationship between feeling, doing and knowing. In this model, there are three components which together form an attitude:

- **Affect** refers to the feeling that the consumer has towards the attitude object
- **Behaviour** involves the intention that the consumer has to do something in regard to the attitude object
- **Cognition** refers to the beliefs the consumer has about the attitude object

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73 de Chernatony and McDonald (1992): 70
74 Ibid: 72
75 Solomon et al (1999): 127
76 Ibid: 121
Even though all three components are important, the relative importance of each of these will be decided by the consumer’s level of involvement in regard to an attitude object.77

The ABC model uses a hierarchy of effects to explain the relative impact these three concepts will have in the formation of an attitude. The different hierarchies described are standard involvement hierarchy, low involvement hierarchy and experiential hierarchy.78 When consumers are highly involved in the purchase decision, they are more likely to use the standard involvement hierarchy. As already established in the previous part, buying cosmetics is often characterized by high involvement, which is why The Body Shop’s consumers are most likely to use a standard involvement hierarchy. The two other hierarchy models are therefore considered to be of less relevance to this research, which is why they will not be further examined.

![Figure 3.4: Standard Involvement Hierarchy](image)

*Figure 3.4: Standard Involvement Hierarchy*

In the standard involvement hierarchy process, the consumer will initially collect knowledge about certain objects with regard to several attributes, and then form their own beliefs about those objects. When these beliefs are formed, feelings regarding the object are created, and finally the consumer’s behavior is based on these feelings. This means that the attitudes consumers develop in the standard involvement hierarchy are based on cognitive information processing. This way of creating attitudes will often lead to brand loyalty.79

The ABC model explains how attitudes are created in general. The next section will focus on how consumer attitudes are created with the use of CSR.

### 3.4.2.2 Using CSR to Create Positive Consumer Attitudes

The theory presented so far has shown how CSR can be used as a branding tool to create a positive corporate image, which will lead to positive consumer attitudes. Being socially responsible will not automatically lead to positive consumer attitudes, however. When consumers form attitudes towards a brand in regard to CSR, the perceived motive behind the company’s CSR is a crucial factor. These perceived underlying motives for the CSR will affect the consumer’s evaluation of the brand and thus affect beliefs, attitudes, and purchase decisions.80

Prior research shows that it is very unusual that consumers unconditionally accept CSR efforts as honest actions. When they are exposed to a company’s CSR, they will question the trustworthiness of the social responsibility and then try to assign one of two main types of motives to the company:

77 Solomon et al (1999): 123
78 Ibid
79 Solomon et al: 123-125
Self serving, where the goal, or underlying motive, is to increase profits and sales,

Public serving, where the goal, or underlying motive, is to help citizens in need, save the environment or raise awareness for a specific issue.

This scepticism regarding CSR and the true motives behind it arises because consumers instinctively believe social responsibility to be motivated by company self-interest.\(^81\)

Consumer attitudes stemming from social responsibility not only depend on the socially responsible act itself or the perceived motives behind it, but also on how well the consumers believe that the CSR actions fit with the company. In other words, the consumer must believe that the CSR activities that the company engages in fit the company’s purpose in order for positive attitudes to arise. If the CSR activities of a company are inconsistent with prior expectations and actions of a company, it is much more difficult for the consumer to integrate this new information into existing memory structures. Consumers who develop such an incongruency will most likely have negative attitudes towards the company and its CSR.\(^82\)

Another interesting aspect of CSR and the creation of consumer attitudes is that some CSR strategies may even affect the perceived quality of a specific brand’s products.\(^83\)

Consumer attitudes and the formation of these have now been explored. The next chapter will focus on the consumer’s decision making process and the role these attitudes play in the evaluation of brands.

### 3.4.3 Decision-Making Process

Consumer attitudes towards a brand will serve as a basis in their decision making process. The stages in the consumer’s decision making process are also influenced by many other factors, such as time pressure, previous experience and advices from friends. Two other important issues are the extent of involvement in the decision and perceptions of differences between competing brands. As already discussed, consumers buying cosmetics can be assumed to be highly involved. The following decision making process applies to highly involved consumers (where step two, three and four are most relevant to this research):

1. **Awareness of a need.** A purchase is something a consumer does in response to a need. When a consumer realizes that there is a significant difference between his/her current state and desired state, a need arises.\(^84\)

2. **Information search.** To satisfy this need, the consumer starts to look for information. When consumers are highly involved they seek information more actively, which is why it is extra important for the company to reinforce the brands unique differentiated position. It is also important that they are reinforcing the attributes that the customers actually believe are important.\(^85\)

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82 Ibid: 46
84 Solomon et al (1999): 211
85 de Chernatony and McDonald (1992): 72
3. **Evaluating competing brands.** After the information is gathered, the consumer will evaluate competing brands against the criteria that they find most important. Evaluation is done by considering the attributes of the different brands and examining how each brand attribute measures up to the desired characteristics. In this brand evaluation procedure, negative CSR associations can have a harmful effect, whereas positive CSR associations can improve brand evaluations. The knowledge that the consumer has about different brands is represented by beliefs, and the way these beliefs are organized in people’s minds (step one in the ABC model). Using this knowledge, the consumer then creates an *evoked set* of alternatives, which consists of the brands already in memory and those that stand out in the evaluating process. The brands in the evoked set are those that share similar features. Brand evaluation is also done through categorization. Consumers use what they already know about a brand and those things to which it is similar to put the brand in a certain category. Good brand positioning is crucial in this step, since the marketer can influence which other brands they will be compared to. Hence, if a brand is positioned on CSR, it will most likely be compared to other socially responsible brands (if the consumer considers this to be an important attribute). The way a product is grouped with others is very important in determining its competitors and what criteria that are used in making a brand choice. In this step, brand beliefs are formed. These beliefs create attitudes, and if positive attitudes evolve, the consumer is more likely to develop a positive purchase intention in the next step.

4. **Purchase decision.** Once a category of appealing brands is created, a selection must be made. Consumers use certain dimensions, called evaluative criteria, when they decide between competing options. They also look at how products differ from one another, and the attributes used to differentiate among choices are determinant attributes.

5. **Post purchase evaluation.** If a consumer is satisfied after the purchase, the positive attitudes will be strengthened and this will make the consumer look favourably upon the brand in future purchase situations. This is how brand loyalty is created. Thus, in industries where consumers are highly involved (such as in the cosmetic industry), using CSR as a differentiating tool can create brand loyalty.

### 3.4.3.1 Important Factors When Buying Cosmetics

Previous studies, such as that by Nair and Pillai, have shown that the majority of the consumers perceive quality to be the most important criterion for selecting cosmetics, followed by price as second most important and brand as third most important.

Many consumer behaviour experts have used self-theory to explain how consumers evaluate brand differences. Self-theory suggests that a consumer will buy a brand because he/she feels

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86 Solomon et al (1999): 210
89 de Chernatony and McDonald (1992): 70-75
90 Ibid
91 Ibid
92 Dr. N. Vinith Kumar and P. R. Pillai, “A study on Purchase Pattern of Cosmetics among Consumers in Kerala” (2007): 591
that the particular brand enhanced his/her own self image. Consequently, a consumer may decide not to buy a brand because he/she considers the brand or company to be engaged in activities that are not congruent with his/her own self image.  

### 3.5 Summary of the Theoretical Framework

This is the same model presented in the beginning of this chapter, with a summary of the different theories added onto it. The basic logic behind how the theory is connected can also be explained through this figure. CSR can be used as a way of differentiating a brand. By focusing on CSR as a core value, the brand’s identity will build upon this concept. If the company succeeds in positioning the brand on CSR, the corporate image will build upon this concept as well. Associations are important in this process. A corporate image that builds upon CSR may lead to positive attitudes, and positive attitudes are assumed to influence purchase decisions positively as well.

With this theoretical framework, the authors hope to draw conclusions by connecting it to the empirical findings. The next chapter will explain to the reader the method used when collecting the empirical findings.

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4  PRACTICAL METHODOLOGY

In this chapter the practical method used when collecting the data will be presented. This will help the reader understand where the data comes from and how it was generated, which will be good background knowledge when interpreting the findings in the next chapter.

4.1 Research Method

As mentioned previously, the researchers have an objective view upon reality and a positivistic view upon understandability, and the study conducted is of a deductive type. These views affect the thesis in various ways, including the choice of method. The features just mentioned are typical for a quantitative study.94

The researchers discussed whether a quantitative or a qualitative method was more appropriate. A qualitative method would have resulted in more thorough information and deeper knowledge about a few customers’ attitude towards The Body Shop, CSR and the purchase decision. However, that would only show the thoughts of the specific group of people that were interviewed. The researchers were more interested in analyzing a larger amount of data that could provide a result that could be generalized to the population. This is possible using a quantitative method, where data is collected from a sample that mirrors the population. The researchers believe that the world can be studied from the “outside” (objective reality), and that asking a smaller amount of people can generate information about a large group.

The final decision was accordingly to use a questionnaire, with a goal to describe The Body Shop’s visitors’ perception and opinions of The Body Shop and CSR, and their relations to purchase frequency.

In order to find answers to questions beginning with “who”, “what”, “where”, “how much” or “how many”, a survey strategy is most often used when collecting data, and then used in exploratory and descriptive research. By using descriptive strategies, the researchers hope to show relationships between variables, which by Saunders et al is suggested appropriate.95

4.2 Choice of Company

Most companies have their CSR declared on web pages and in other information media about the company and its activities. However, not all corporations use CSR as a major part in positioning and marketing. In order to fill the gap in the existing research, the authors wanted to base their study on a company with a well known CSR. According to the Center for Management Research, The Body Shop is a company that many people associate with strong CSR, and the company is regarded a pioneer when it comes to using CSR as a major tool in their marketing.96

The Body Shop is also the brand that both authors associate the most with what they had learned about CSR after reading about the concept, and thus it felt like a natural choice to focus the research upon The Body Shop. There are 58 Body Shop stores on the Swedish market, of which one is located in Umeå. Since this research will be narrowed down to The Body Shop’ store in

94 Bryman and Bell (2007): 28
96 Debapratim and Fernando (2006): 1
Umeå, the researchers needed some background information about this particular store, which is why a short interview with one of the store owners was conducted.

4.2.1 Interview

A lot of information about The Body Shop can be found on the company’s website, but not much can be read about the local stores. In order to obtain information about The Body Shop in Umeå, the co-owner Agnetha Persson was interviewed. Since she is occupied with customers most of her working time, the researchers agreed with her to conduct the interview in writing over e-mail. It was done in Swedish, to make it easier since Swedish is the native language for everyone involved. A number of questions were sent via e-mail, and Agnetha replied with short answers. The questions and the answers can be found in appendix 1a (in Swedish) and 1b (translated to English).

4.2.2 The Body Shop Umeå

The Body Shop opened its store in Umeå in 1986 and has seven employees today, including extra workers. Two partners share the ownership; Agnetha Persson, who has been an owner since 1999 and Johanna Östensson, who is new since February. The store is a franchise, operated locally but following rules of the central management. The main office gives directions and guidelines for all The Body Shop stores to follow, concerning events, prices and displays. However, Umeå’s management sets the personal atmosphere of their store, and the employees are of course the representatives of it. In 2002 the store moved from its old location into the mall Kungsparapassagen, and thus gained better accessibility. The mall not only has many stores and shops which attract a lot of people, it is also a walk-through passage for many people coming from or going to the bus station.

According to Agnetha Persson, The Body Shop Umeå’s average customer is a woman between 25 and 34 years of age. However, there are products for both men and women, and the product supply for men is increasing rapidly.97

4.2.3 Preconceptions about The Body Shop

The researchers had some knowledge about The Body Shop prior to the study. They have visited the store in different cities and countries, and know about their social responsibility, through the company’s marketing campaigns.

The Body Shop is a company that both of the authors associate with social responsibility, and this knowledge affected the choice of company in focus in the study. The researchers also believe in the good actions taken by The Body Shop, and in that Anita Roddick had good intentions when initiating the company. However, university studies have taught to think critically, and the fact that many companies want profit maximization cannot be ignored. Thus, the researchers are sceptical to the motive for the company’s CSR being only genuine care, and no economic factors.

The authors have tried their best not to let the study be affected by their previous knowledge and opinions regarding The Body Shop.

97 Agnetha Persson, The Body Shop Umeå (interview in Appendix 1)
4.3 Choice of Data Collection Method

When conducting a quantitative study, there are two main ways of collecting data (apart from literature study): Asking the respondents face to face or letting them fill out self-completion questionnaires. 98 Both strategies were discussed between the researchers when deciding which one to use. According to Ejvegård, interviews are more suitable when specific information from experts is of interest, while questionnaires are better when looking for opinions, attitudes and tastes of ordinary people. 99

The main positive features of a questionnaire are low costs, lack of interviewer effects (such as tone in the interviewer’s voice, or body language) and no interviewer variability. Researcher effect, for example the age and gender of the researchers, may still exist since a questionnaire is used (discussed under 4.8.2). However, researcher effect affects all respondents more generally, while interviewer effects may affect each respondent individually and differently. Questionnaires are also relatively easy to administer and easy to complete for the respondents. 100 Additionally, since the researchers will hand out the questionnaires in person, the respondents have a chance to ask about questions if clarification is needed.

There are, however, disadvantages with questionnaires as well. Due to the anonymity of the questionnaire, the researchers cannot complement the data additionally afterwards (in a structured interview face to face or over the phone, the respondent can be contacted again). Furthermore, it is difficult to ask a large amount of questions and ones that the respondents do not find important, and a risk of low response rate. 101

The positive features were considered by the authors to outweigh the negative aspects, hence self completion questionnaire was chosen as a method of collecting data in this study. The main reason for this choice was the fact that the researchers were interested in knowing the attitudes of the respondents, the time frame for the study, the sample size, and the absence of a population frame (which will be further discussed in the sampling section).

Self-completion can be implemented in various ways and through different media, such as voluntary surveys on internet sites and shop desks, or questionnaires distributed via e-mail, mail or handed out in person. There was no population frame available in this study, thus e-mail and mail were not options. Voluntary participation would not guarantee to include all visitors, because of the risk of not seeing the questionnaires. Consequently, the method chosen was to hand out questionnaires in person, and collect them on the spot.

4.4 Questionnaire Design

In order to study The Body Shop visitors’ opinions about The Body Shop, their perception about CSR, and their purchase decisions, ten sub questions related to the problem question of the study were created. These will be introduced in the findings chapter.

Those questions served as a basis when developing the questionnaire, which constitutes of 13 statements or questions for the respondents to answer. The researchers wanted to keep the

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98 Bryman and Bell (2007): 209
99 Rolf Ejvegård, Vetenskaplig Metod (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 1996)
100 Bryman and Bell (2007): 241-242
101 Ibid: 242-243
questionnaire limited to one paper with text on both sides, so it would seem short and quick to complete for the respondents, who most likely wanted to keep shopping. By keeping the questionnaire short, the authors hoped to improve the response rate. The questionnaire can be found in appendix 2.

A brief introduction with information about the study and the researchers was written on top of the first sheet, including an assurance of the respondents’ confidentiality. To make sure all respondents would interpret “social responsibility” equally, a clear explanation was given.

All questions (henceforth question numbers are referred to as [q#]) were closed, with two exceptions: Age [q2] and Occupation [q3]. Those, together with Gender [q1] and Reason for entering the store [q4] (both closed ones), were used as introduction questions, easy ones that the respondents hopefully feel comfortable about answering. The remaining ten were closed questions, since that format fitted the questions asked, and the researches did not believe that open questions would improve the quality of the research. Using closed questions also makes it easier to administer the data, and less time consuming for respondents, when they can tick a box or circle one given alternative instead of coming up with their own answers. The closed questions were of various designs, and the researchers found that being a positive feature of the questionnaire, since respondents must pay more attention to each question to be sure that they perceive it right, when not all questions look alike. The risk of confusion was considered, and also evaluated from the pre-test of the questionnaires, but found to be very small. Only one question was misunderstood, by one pre-test respondent out of 25. A few questions were changed or removed from the questionnaire. The reasoning behind each design choice is explained in the following paragraphs. The underlying theoretical reasoning behind each question will briefly be mentioned in regard to each question as it influenced the design of the questionnaire.

Likert scale [q9; q10; q11]: In order to find the respondents’ opinion about CSR and their attitude towards The Body Shop, they were asked to indicate to what extent they agreed on three different statements. The three questions were sequential, to avoid unnecessary confusion among respondents.

Yes or No [q12]: All respondents were asked to take a stand regarding their own involvement in societal questions (samhällsfrågor). Since the researchers wanted them to take a stand, only yes and no were given as options. There were discussions whether a “Do not know” alternative should be given. If so, the risk that many respondents would choose to tick that box was considered to be very high. It is not asked how one is perceived by others; instead the respondents must think about how they perceive themselves.102

Ranking [q6; q8]: These questions concerned CSR in relation to other attributes: Whether or not the respondents care about CSR when they make a brand choice, and to what extent they associate The Body Shop with CSR. These questions aim to find out if The Body Shop’s core value (CSR) is important to the consumers, and if The Body Shop has succeeded to position the company on that attribute. In other words, to see to what extent their corporate image builds upon CSR. The researchers also wanted to evaluate CSR’s importance in brand choice in relation to other attributes.

The attributes have been chosen for reasons that now will be presented. Price, quality and CSR are included in both $q6$ and $q8$. CSR because that is the attribute the researchers want to test the importance of in comparison to other attributes, the other two because they are essential when choosing what cosmetics to buy.\footnote{Nair and Pillai (2007): 591} The other two alternatives in $q8$ are typical for The Body Shop, where the staff is a very important tool in the marketing of the company’s CSR standpoint. Thus the staff at The Body Shop is known to be very social and personal with the customers, and this together with the interior design could contribute to creating a nice atmosphere in the store. In $q6$, the remaining alternatives are simply based on what the researchers consider to be the most contributing factors when choosing cosmetics. The people who scrutinized the questionnaire before the real sampling begun agreed on these alternatives being appropriate, and had no other suggestions.

Closed question where respondents were asked to choose one $q5$; $q13$ or three $q7$ alternatives: In questions aiming at finding the respondents’ purchase frequency, and what reason they think is behind The Body Shop’s clear communication of its CSR, they were simply asked to choose the appropriate answer out of a list. The latter question aims to check the trustworthiness of the Body Shop’s CSR; whether or not the consumers perceive the motives behind the CSR to be honest. $q7$ concerned reasons behind choosing other brands than The Body Shop. Since there can be many equivalent reasons, the researchers restricted the respondents to choose a maximum of three, so they would not tick all six boxes. Similar to $q6$, this question will also yield information about what other factors the respondents consider being important when choosing a brand. These factors are called evaluative criteria and are crucial in the consumers’ purchase decision. The evaluative criteria will help to understand how brand beliefs are formed, and how consumers categorize brands in their decision-making.\footnote{Solomon et al (1999): 223-224}

The questionnaire was written in Swedish, the language spoken by the majority of Umeå’s population. Using English instead to decrease the risk of non-response caused by language barriers was considered, but the researchers found a counter-argument being of more importance: The probability of respondents’ refusal due to lack of knowledge or confidence concerning the English language. Another drawback with English is the risk of respondents misunderstanding the questions, and thus giving an incorrect answer. Accordingly, Swedish was decided to be the appropriate language.

A possibility for the researchers to get more thorough findings through the survey was to use more Likert scale questions. However, that would have caused the questionnaire to be longer, and thus an increased risk of non-response due to respondents considering it too time consuming to complete the survey. Consequently, the researchers decided to draw some information from ranking questions instead, and that was considered to be enough information for this study.

### 4.5 Ethical Considerations

On the questionnaires it is clearly asserted that the respondents will be anonymous, that the answers will be treated confidentially and used for this study only. A brief description of the purpose of the study is also given, and the researchers are present in person where the
questionnaires are handed out and recollected. Respondents are hence giving informed consent.\textsuperscript{105}

### 4.6 Testing of the Questionnaire

According to Bryman and Bell, a pre-test before the real sample is being asked is desirable for all studies with self-completion questionnaires.\textsuperscript{106} For example, questions that seem to be confusing, and those that respondents are likely to not answer can be identified if the questionnaire is tested beforehand.\textsuperscript{107} It is worth the extra effort, since discovering flaws in the questionnaire after the real research sample has completed the survey can be very time consuming and frustrating.

The questionnaire was scrutinized by three persons in an early stage. Many useful comments and suggestions helped to develop the questions and to clarify words or questions that could lead to misinterpretations or misunderstandings.

In this particular research, 25 questionnaires were handed out to visitors to The Body Shop’s store in Umeå, i.e. people that are included in the population of interest. After examining the way the questions were answered upon and the information that could be drawn from the answers, the researchers made some additional changes to the questionnaire, such as re-phrasing, changing the order of questions and the Likert scale layout. The 25 questionnaires were only used for development of the survey, and were not included in the final sample.

Two more people were asked to complete and comment upon the questionnaire, one more detail was improved, and then the survey was ready to be handed out to the sample.

Bryman and Bell provide a checklist with 23 issues to think of when constructing a self-completion questionnaire.\textsuperscript{108} It includes questions regarding whether ambiguity risk, clear instructions, layout, piloting and connection to research question have been taken into consideration. The researchers read through the list thoroughly before deciding the questionnaire was good enough to be distributed. Especially the issues about the question design were important when making the questionnaire as clear as possible, and the list helped the authors to check for and avoid ambiguous, long, and double-barreled or leading questions.

### 4.7 Sampling

This study focuses on The Body Shop in Umeå and the population is consequently visitors to that store. The researchers wanted to know the opinions and attitudes of everyone entering the store, not just the visitors who actually made a purchase. Some visitors may be customers even if they do not make a purchase during the time for questionnaire distribution.

The reasoning behind including only the store visitors in the population (and not all people in town) was to avoid people that do not know anything about The Body Shop and those who have no interest in or opinion about the company. The researchers are aware of the fact that they thereby take a risk of missing people with negative attitudes towards The Body Shop. Most likely, a person does not walk into a store he or she really dislikes.

\textsuperscript{105} Bryman and Bell (2007): 138
\textsuperscript{106} Ibid: 273
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid: 274
\textsuperscript{108} Bryman and Bell (2007): 277-278
Theoretically, when sampling, a frame of the population is needed to make sure every element in the population has equal chance of being chosen. From that frame, a sample is taken, preferably randomly. As mentioned, the population of interest for this study is visitors to The Body Shop’s store in Umeå.

A problem with including all visitors in the population is that it is impossible to obtain a list of all visitors to the store, thus no frame is available. The researchers could not find any statistical way of solving this, but after discussing how to sample, they consider the strategy chosen to be the best possible (how it was done is explained in the next paragraph.) According to Agnetha Persson at The Body Shop Umeå, there are no patterns of different types of people (age wise, gender wise, etc.) visiting the store on different times or days. According to Agnetha Persson at The Body Shop Umeå, there are no patterns of different types of people (age wise, gender wise, etc.) visiting the store on different times or days.\(^{109}\) The strategy of choosing times and dates for data collection was based on randomization, and thus designed to help make the result possible to generalize. The sampling strategy will now be explained.

Four occasions were randomly chosen, based on different hours of the day and different days of the week. All days of the week that The Body Shop is open (Monday to Saturday) were written on one note each and mixed in a box. In another box, all hours of opening time (10am to 11am, 12pm to 1pm…5pm to 6pm) went through the same procedure. The researchers randomly drew one note from each box and paired them, to decide the four occasions on which to distribute questionnaires. The result can be seen in table 4.1.

\textbf{Table 4.1: Times for Data Collection}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday April 2\textsuperscript{nd}</td>
<td>12.00 - 13.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday April 3\textsuperscript{rd}</td>
<td>17.00 - 18.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday April 4\textsuperscript{th}</td>
<td>13.00 - 14.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday April 6\textsuperscript{th}</td>
<td>16.00 - 17.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textit{In this table, it is visible that each distribution occasion makes a part of the sample. All visitors to The Body Shop during time for data collection are included among the respondents.}

On each occasion, questionnaires were handed out and collected during one hour. The researchers aimed at handing out at least 150 questionnaires during those occasions, and a response rate of 70\% was hoped for. The researchers reasoned that the strategy chosen (an express version of delivery and collection questionnaire) could result in a higher response rate than the likely 30-50\% Saunders et al suggest for delivery and collection questionnaires.\(^{110}\) 70\% response rate would result in a minimum of 105 completed questionnaires.

\section*{4.8 Data Collection}

Initially, The Body Shop store in Umeå was contacted and provided with all necessary information about the planned study. Agnetha Persson was the contact person and the link

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item\(^{109}\) Agnetha Persson, The Body Shop Umeå (interview in appendix 1)
\item\(^{110}\) Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis and Adrian Thornhill, \textit{Research Methods for Business Students} (Harlow: Pearson Educated Limited, 2007): 358
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
between the store and the researchers. She confirmed that The Body Shop was cooperating and willing to let the researchers collect data outside the store.

Every person leaving The Body Shop during the hour of data collection was asked to complete a questionnaire. Each respondent was approached with the same phrase. In addition to this, everyone was asked if they had filled out the survey before, because there was a chance that they had visited the store earlier and been asked to participate in the study. If they had, they were not asked to do it again.

The respondents were asked not to cooperate with each other if they were more than one in the party that were asked to complete the survey. The questionnaires took about two minutes to complete and the researchers collected them personally from all respondents.

4.8.1 Sampling Result and Response Rate

Mark Saunders et al have in their book “Research Methods for Business Students” presented likely response rates for different ways of collecting data. For delivery and collection questionnaires, the method in this study, the researchers should expect 30-50% (“moderately high rate”) of the questionnaires to be returned completed.111 “Delivery and collection questionnaires” are defined as being distributed in the respondents’ hands by the researchers, and then picked up later. The questionnaire distribution for this study was slightly different, when the respondents were asked to hand in right after completing the survey. The risk of not knowing if the right person answered the questions was eliminated since the researchers could see the respondents.

Table 4.2: Sampling Result

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>April 2\textsuperscript{nd}</th>
<th>April 3\textsuperscript{rd}</th>
<th>April 4\textsuperscript{th}</th>
<th>April 6\textsuperscript{th}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of visitors asked</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-response</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response rate</td>
<td>67,6%</td>
<td>70,0%</td>
<td>68,8%</td>
<td>60,9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this table the sampling result from each data collection occasion is presented.

During the four sampling occasions, a total of 188 people visited The Body Shop, and were thus asked to fill out a questionnaire. This means that he researchers achieved the goal of a minimum of 150 respondents (including non-respondents). 127 visitors accepted to participate in the study, and the final response rate of 67,6% is by the authors considered good. It is significantly higher than the likely rate given by Saunders et al.

A risk with self-completion questionnaire could be not reaching respondents. This was easily avoided, since the researchers handed out and collected the surveys in person.

The response rate was, as mentioned above, 67.6%. There can be different reasons for respondents choosing not to complete the questionnaire, for example plain refusal. In this study, the majority of refusals were due to lack of time since many visitors to The Body Shop were on their way to the bus or back to work. Since the store is located in a mall that is a passage from the main shopping street to the bus station, this was expected by the researchers. Some visitors to The Body Shop simply did not want to fill out a questionnaire, due to scepticism or dislike towards surveys. The major part of non-respondents were in their 40’s or 50’s, by the researchers’ estimation. That is another reason why the age intervals between 35 and 64 have remarkably less respondents than the intervals between 15 and 34 years of age, in addition to the reason given above. The researchers do not believe this fact has affected the result significantly, since all age groups had various responses on all questions in the survey.

Out of the completed surveys, only the two questions where the respondents were asked to rank alternatives suffered from non-response. The researchers suspect this to be a result of confusion. Question 6 (where the non-response rate is 4%) asks the respondents to rank only the top 3 attributes, whereas question 8 asks the respondents to rank all 5 attributes. The authors believe this to have caused some confusion that lead to non-response, since the error is most significant on the 4th and 5th place in the ranking from 1 to 5 in question 8. The non-response in this part of the question was 17-18%, but the researchers found no clear pattern in the distribution of the non-response, and the findings from this question were still used.

The remaining 11 questions were completed by all respondents.

4.8.2 Researcher Effect

As already mentioned, researcher effect cannot be completely avoided when handing out questionnaires and collecting them on the spot. These questionnaires were handed out and collected by the researchers outside of The Body Shop store, and the researchers did what they could to minimize the researcher effect on the respondents. To avoid the risk of respondents feeling distracted or watched, the researchers stepped away from each respondent while he or she was filling out the survey. The visitors to the store were not talked to by (most seemed not even aware of) the researchers until they had left the store. Since every person leaving The Body Shop was asked to participate, no one could feel left out or treated differently.

Many respondents looked somewhat suspicious before they were told that the study was for a bachelor thesis written by students from Umeå University. That information seemed to be positive, and a contributing factor to many respondents’ participation. The authors believe that fact made the study look serious to people, and also made it objective, since the researchers conducting the study had no relation to The Body Shop.

The fact that the researchers are female might have made them blend in among The Body Shop clientele, since all employees and most visitors are women. Whether or not the gender of the researchers affected the response rate is impossible to know, but there is a chance that it was easier for the respondents (again, mostly women) to relate to the researchers than it would have been if they were male.

113 Appendix 2: Questionnaire
The age of the researchers, both 25 years old, might have affected the response rate as well. 67.7% of the respondents were between 15 and 34 of age, and most non-respondents were older than 40 years old (researchers’ estimation). This is of course partly due to the age distribution of The Body Shop’s visitors, but it can also be an effect of how much people identify with the person asking for their participation in the study. A woman in her 50’s may rather take part if someone her own age asks her to, rather than if she is asked by two young girls.

4.9 Data Interpretation
All data from the questionnaires was analyzed in Microsoft Excel. In order to illustrate the results, graphs and tables were created. Questions from the survey\(^{114}\) (henceforth referred to as \([q\#]\)) were treated differently when analyzed, since they are of various types.

Where one option was asked to be chosen, bar charts display the result, where each bar represents one alternative. The scales of the bar charts vary between questions, depending on the maximum value of the variables. However, in questions where charts are being compared the charts have equal scales. Some questions are crosschecked in a table, where relations between variables are looked for.

\([q8]\) asks the respondents to rank in what order they associate five attributes with The Body Shop. Where they chose to rank CSR in comparison to the other attributes was of main interest. Attributes ranked as first or second are by the researchers interpreted as “clearly associated with The Body Shop.”

In \([q6]\), three alternatives out of seven are chosen and ranked as most, second and third most important. The options that have not been chosen by each respondent are not paid any attention by the researchers, only the three that are considered important.

The questions with Likert scales – \([q9; q10; q11]\) – ask to what extent the respondent agrees with a statement. The scale range is from 1 (not agree at all) to 5 (totally agree), and in the chapter where empirical findings are presented, alternative 1 and 2 are put together as “do not agree”, while 4 and 5 are merged as “agree”. A 3 is perceived as a middle option, and thus neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

Where possible, statistical significance has been tested using chi-square. In social science, a p-value below 0.05 is indicating that the test is statistically significant. This test has been conducted for two correlations, between purchase decisions/positive attitudes and Body Shop perceived as socially responsible/positive attitudes. The result is shown in the findings chapter.

4.10 Truth Criteria
Though it is impossible to be completely objective in social sciences research, the authors have tried to be as objective as possible. This by not intentionally letting personal values and opinions affect the design or conclusions of the study.

The authors consider the thesis to fill its purpose, through a sincere attempt of measuring the different components of the stated problem question. To further assess the quality of this study, its validity and reliability will now be examined.

\(^{114}\) Appendix 2: Questionnaire
The measurement of validity concerns whether or not the study measures what it sets out to measure.\textsuperscript{115} Put in this context: Does this study really measure whether or not the Body Shop’s CSR is connected to the attitudes and purchase intentions of the consumers? According to Bryman and Bell, face validity can be assured by asking other people whether or not they believe the measures to actually measure the concept in focus.\textsuperscript{116} The face validity of the measures used in this research is considered to be high. This because a number of people with experience (such as the research supervisor, statisticians and other researchers) considered the measures used in the research to reflect the content of the concepts in question.

Internal reliability measures if the indicators that make up the scale in the research is consistent; whether or not the respondents’ answer on one question tends to be related to their answer on another question.\textsuperscript{117} Internal reliability is ensured in this research by asking the respondents the same question two different times, in two different ways, on the questionnaire. This is done with the questions that the authors believed were most fundamental to the research: whether or not the respondents consider CSR to be important, and if they associate CSR with The Body Shop. By comparing each respondent’s answer on those two questions, the authors could conclude that the internal reliability was high.

When a conclusion incorporates a relationship between two variables the internal validity should be examined.\textsuperscript{118} In this research, it is, for instance, suggested that The Body Shop’s CSR correlates with positive attitudes, but is this certain? This was tested through the use of Chi-square tests. All correlations proved to have a p-value under 0,05. This suggests that the correlation is high. It is, however, likely that other factors might affect consumers’ attitudes towards the brand as well. As long as a strong correlation between CSR and attitudes can be confirmed, other variables that might or might not be correlated to attitudes are considered to be of less relevance to this thesis.

Since the authors aimed at covering a wide variety of the population by handing out the questionnaire on different days and times, they consider the sample to be representative of the population. So, even though factors such as non-response and low sample size may have lowered the possibilities to generalize the findings of the study somewhat, the authors still believe that the results can still be generalized beyond the research context.\textsuperscript{119}

\textsuperscript{115} Conny Svenning, Metodboken, (Eslöv: Lorentz förlag, 2003): 64
\textsuperscript{116} Bryman and Bell (2007): 165
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid: 163
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid: 163-165
\textsuperscript{119} Bryman and Bell (2007): 41
5 EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The findings from the survey will now be presented, sorted under problem sub questions. Before this is done, a basic description of the sample will be provided.

5.1 Sample Description

Below follows a short description of the sample that can be used as background information.

Table 5.1: Sample Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of total respondents</th>
<th>April 2\textsuperscript{nd} 12.00 – 13.00</th>
<th>April 3\textsuperscript{rd} 17.00 – 18.00</th>
<th>April 4\textsuperscript{th} 13.00 – 14.00</th>
<th>April 6\textsuperscript{th} 16.00 – 17.00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>92.1%</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-24</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-74</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>56.7%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows the distribution of gender, age and occupation of all respondents, in total and for each occasion of data collection.

As can be seen in this table, the sample consists of 92,1% women. This gender disproportion was expected by the authors. The average customer at The Body Shop is a woman, and it was also obvious when the researchers spent hours outside the store, that the vast majority of the visitors (and customers) are female.\textsuperscript{120} The fact that the sample drawn mirrors this gender distribution indicates that the sample is a good representation of the population. The majority of the visitors were workers, followed by students. This information seems logical as well, since unemployed will not have as much money to spend and thus may not visit a store with relatively expensive

\textsuperscript{120} Agnetha Persson, The Body Shop Umeå (interview in appendix 1)
products as The Body Shop’s, and retired people are not part of The Body Shop’s target group. Most respondents were in the age-groups between 15 and 34. This correlates well with the age of The Body Shop’s target customers, who also constituted the expected largest visitor group.

5.2 Findings

Now, the collected data will be examined and described. The findings are sorted under the subject they belong to, and presented with help from ten sub questions. Each section begins with one of those questions. The questions were developed from the research problem, and used as a basis when designing the questionnaire.

The empirical findings below are based on the answers from the 127 completed questionnaires. If nothing else is stated, the response rate is 100%, i.e. all respondents have answered the question in the survey. The choice “no opinion” is not shown in the results of the Likert scales, since no respondents chose that alternative in any of those three questions.

5.2.1 CSR and Corporate Identity

What are The Body Shop visitors’ opinions about the importance of CSR?

![Figure 5.1: Importance of CSR](image)

The bar chart in figure 5.1 shows the distribution of answers to one statement in the questionnaire: “It is important to me that the company that I buy hair- and skin products and make-up from is socially responsible.”
The purpose of this question was to see whether CSR commitments among manufacturers of cosmetics are looked upon as important by possible consumers of the companies’ products. Figure 5.1 indicates that it is considered important; 99 respondents have answered a 4 or a 5. That means that 77.9% of the visitors agree, since circling one of the alternatives above middle option “3” is considered as agreeing. Only two respondents said that they do not agree (answered 1 or 2), and the researchers consider this result to be a strong indicator that CSR is important when choosing what cosmetic company to purchase such products from.

**What are the most important factors when buying cosmetics?**

**Table 5.2: Most Important Factors when Purchasing Cosmetics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Product quality</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>CSR</th>
<th>Accessibility</th>
<th>Well-known brand</th>
<th>Store location</th>
<th>Popular brand</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>non-resp.</th>
<th>answer rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First</strong></td>
<td>102</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>99,2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second</strong></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>98,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>96,1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>126</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>373</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This table shows what attributes The Body Shop visitors consider to be most, second most and third most important when choosing what cosmetics to buy.*

The respondents were asked to rank the attributes in order of considered importance. There were seven given alternatives out of which the respondents were asked to rank three. Table 5.2 shows how The Body Shop visitors prioritize when making these sorts of purchases, and the three following figures clarify the responses. Figure 5.2 shows what the respondents consider being most important (i.e. ranked as number one), and it is very obvious that it is product quality. In total, the three most chosen attributes are product quality, price and CSR (see table 5.2), and these are also the only ones ranked by anyone as number one. Also, they are the attributes most chosen as second most important (see figure 5.3.) Consequently those three attributes seem to be what matter the most in the choice of cosmetics, out of the seven given alternatives.
Figure 5.2: Most Important Factors in Purchase

Only three attributes were chosen as most important to consider when purchasing cosmetics. A vast majority chose product quality, followed by price and CSR.

Figure 5.3: Second Most Important Factors in Purchase

The same three attributes as in figure 5.2 are considered second most important by most respondents; price, CSR and product quality.
Figure 5.4: Third Most Important Factors in Purchase

Product quality was chosen as one of the three most important by all respondents completing this question in the questionnaire. Price and CSR were also superior to the other four, at all ranks (first, second and third).

5.2.2 CSR and Corporate Image

Do The Body Shop visitors perceive The Body Shop as socially responsible?

Figure 5.5: The Body Shop and Social Responsibility
A clear majority considers The Body Shop to be socially responsible, only four respondents did not agree upon the statement “I think of The Body Shop as socially responsible”.

This question aims at finding what The Body Shop’s corporate image looks like. In order to do so, the result from the questionnaire statement “I think of The Body Shop as socially responsible” is examined. As said in the section above, answering a 5 or 4 counts as agreeing, and the 97 agreeing respondents make up 76.3% of the sample. That is a clear majority over the 3.1%, or 4 respondents, that disagree (i.e. circled a 1 or 2). Thus, The Body Shop visitors seem to think the company is socially responsible.

What do The Body Shop visitors associate the most with The Body Shop?

One question in the survey asked the respondents to rank five positive attributes in the order they associate them with The Body Shop. Ranked first means most associated, and ranked as number five means least associated with The Body Shop, in relation to the other attributes. As mentioned in the data interpretation section, this question suffered from non-response. Especially the last two ranks (forth and fifth), where 18-19% have chosen not to answer. The researchers are aware of that this is a weakness, but still consider the response rate to be high enough to be useful since it is above 70% out of the respondents who have answered the question completely.

Table 5.3: Attributes Associated with The Body Shop

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Rank ↓</th>
<th>High product quality</th>
<th>CSR</th>
<th>Nice atmosphere in store</th>
<th>Knowledge-able staff</th>
<th>Price worthiness</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>non-response</th>
<th>answer rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>95.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>93.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>92.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forth</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>71.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows that the majority of the respondents have ranked high product quality and CSR to be the attributes that they associate the most with The Body Shop, where quality has been placed first by most respondents.
Figure 5.6: Attributes Most Associated with The Body Shop

In this figure the researchers merged the attributes ranked as first and second into one category, to show the attributes that respondents associate the most with The Body Shop. Each bar shows the amount of respondents that have placed each attribute as number one or two. It is obvious that most people have ranked product quality and CSR as first and second. The other three (Competent staff, Nice atmosphere in store and Price worthiness) just about share third place.

Figure 5.7: Attributes Least Associated with The Body Shop

In this figure the researchers merged the attributes ranked as forth and fifth into one category, to show the attributes that the respondents associate the least with The Body Shop. Each bar shows the amount of respondents that have placed each attribute as number four or five. The same pattern can be seen in this model, where the product quality and CSR are the two attributes that has been ranked as forth or fifth by the least amount of respondents. Price worthiness seems to be the attribute that is least associated with The Body Shop.
The information that can be drawn from these models seems to match with the findings in the previous question; The Body Shop visitors do associate CSR with the company. The new information that can be seen now is that when CSR is put in relation to four other positive attributes, CSR is ranked as a top-two association, where only quality is ranked higher. This means that The Body Shop is not just considered socially responsible; CSR is one of the main associations among its visitors.

5.2.3 Consumer Attitudes

Do The Body Shop visitors have positive attitudes towards The Body Shop?

The figure above shows that the vast majority, 88.9%, of The Body Shop visitors agree with the statement “I have positive attitudes towards The Body Shop.”

113 respondents have circled the option 4 or 5, which means they agree. There is a possibility that the result is affected by the fact that people maybe do not enter the store (and thus are not included in the sample) if they dislike The Body Shop. But since the researchers wanted to see if CSR is related to the positive attitudes, it was helpful that such a large proportion of the sample liked The Body Shop.

The next section will examine if CSR seems to be a contributing reason to the positive attitudes.
Do The Body Shop visitors who perceive the company as socially responsible have a more positive attitude towards The Body Shop?

Table 5.4: Positive Attitudes & CSR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 don’t agree at all</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I think of The Body Shop as socially responsible&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows that the respondents’ opinions about whether The Body Shop is socially responsible or not somewhat matched with their attitudes towards the company.

When a very small number of respondents disagree (answered 1 or 2) with any of the two statements, it is impossible to see a correlation in the upper right part of the table. However, the higher numbers show a relation. The more socially responsible the respondent considered The Body Shop to be, the more positive was his or her attitude towards The Body Shop. The chi-square test gives a p-value of 0.00 < 0.05, thus the correlation is statistically significant.

What do The Body Shop visitors believe is the main reason for The Body Shop to communicate its CSR?

Figure 5.9: Motives Behind CSR

The model above shows that 57.4% of the respondents think the motive behind The Body Shop’s CSR is real care for the environment and the world’s injustice, while 24.4% think the motive is to make money. 11.0% do not think that The Body Shop communicates its CSR well and 7.6% believe there is another
motive behind it. The respondents who picked “Other” gave reasons such as “to keep their good reputation”, “it is their positioning strategy” and “a mix between caring & to make money”.

The researchers consider the findings presented in the model above to be an indicator that most people visiting The Body Shop think the motive behind the company’s well communicated CSR is honest care, when more than half the sample gave that answer.

### 5.2.4 Purchase Decisions

**Do The Body Shop visitors who have a more positive attitude towards the company purchase more products from The Body Shop?**

**Table 5.5: Purchase Decisions & Positive Attitudes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 = I don’t agree at all</th>
<th>Purchased products from The Body Shop the last two years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 = I totally agree</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I have a positive attitude towards TBS&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows whether there is a correlation between positive attitudes towards The Body Shop and purchase frequency of its products. Most respondents show positive attitudes and have purchased between one and five products from The Body Shop during the last two years.

In order to see if there is a relation between positive attitudes and purchase frequency, table 5.5 is examined. This table shows no obvious pattern of more frequent purchase of The Body Shop’s products if the attitude is more positive. Since almost all respondents have very positive attitudes towards The Body Shop, it is difficult to make a fair comparison between the high and low attitude scores. Still, the respondents with the most positive attitudes seem to be the ones that have purchased more than 10 products from The Body Shop during the last two-year period, and they also constitute the largest group of those that bought 6-10 products. The chi-square test confirms statistical significance with its p-value of $0.00 < 0.05$.

Positive attitudes towards The Body Shop may not always lead to purchase of their products. In order to see if income could be a contributing factor why visitors to The Body Shop do not buy their products even if they have very positive attitudes, the data was divided into working and non-working categories (the researchers assume the working respondents to have a higher average income than the non-working).
The tables make it possible to compare the answers of the respondents with an assumed higher income, i.e. the ones working (table 5.6), to the respondents with an assumed lower income, students, unemployed and retired (table 5.7).

The percentages are based on the total number of respondents for each category respectively. 71 persons in the sample were working, 55 were not. The non-working category includes students (49), unemployed (4) and retired (2). There is a larger amount of higher income people who have bought more than 10 products. Other than that there are no obvious patterns to be seen in these tables.

### Table 5.6: Purchase & Attitudes, Higher Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 = I don’t agree at all</th>
<th>Purchased products from The Body Shop the last two years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6,9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>13,9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 5.7: Purchase & Attitudes, Lower Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 = I don’t agree at all</th>
<th>Purchased products from The Body Shop the last two years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>9,1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>14,5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What are the reasons for the respondents to choose other brands?

There can be many reasons for choosing other brands than The Body Shop. In the questionnaire, the visitors to the store were asked to choose one, two or three main reasons. The figure shows that habits and cheaper alternatives were the most common causes.

Each respondent could choose one, two or three alternatives, thus the sum of responses adds up to 227, which is more than the number of total respondents in the sample (127). The figure clearly shows that habit and a lower price are the main reasons for choosing other brands than The Body Shop. Group pressure is not affecting much. 15 respondents chose “other”, and they gave reasons such as “impulse / by chance”, “the products I want cannot be found at The Body Shop”, “other products are better for my skin”, or simply “nice products elsewhere.”

Do The Body Shop visitors who perceive themselves as engaged in societal questions consider CSR more important?

Table 5.8: Self image & CSR Importance in Purchase Decision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSR rank ↓</th>
<th>“I perceive myself as engaged in societal questions”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not chosen</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-resp.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The “CSR rank” show how many respondents that ranked CSR as most, second most, or third most important when purchasing skin- & hair care products and make-up. “Not chosen” means that other alternatives were chosen as the three most important.

Three respondents out of four perceive themselves as being engaged in societal questions. The percentages in the table are proportions of yes- and no-sayers respectively. As can be seen, none of the respondents who do not think of themselves as being engaged in societal questions have ranked CSR as most important, and only about one third (11 out of 30) has chosen CSR at all. Among the engaged respondents, 71.9% have chosen CSR, and one out of ten think CSR is most important to consider. In other words, The Body Shop visitors who perceive themselves as being engaged in societal questions consider CSR to be more important when choosing these types of products, than visitors who do not find themselves engaged in those kinds of issues.
6 ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the findings presented in the previous part will be analyzed. In the analysis, the links and connections between the empirical findings and the theory are examined. The analysis will follow the same order as did the theory and findings chapter.

6.1 CSR and The Body Shop’s Corporate Identity

According to Melin, companies need to offer a differentiated brand that provides some kind of added value to the consumers, in order to survive in today’s fierce competition. One way of adding value to the brand is by focusing on CSR as a means of differentiation. This is what The Body Shop has done, as it uses CSR as a core value, and tries to link its behaviour with social responsibility to build a strong corporate identity. In order for this strategy to be effective, however, the selected core value (CSR) has to be considered important by the consumers.

The empirical findings from the survey show that 78% of the respondents consider CSR commitments made by cosmetics companies to be important when buying cosmetics. This can be seen in Figure 5.1 in the findings, where the majority of the respondents agreed with the statement “It is important to me that the company I buy hair- and skin products and make-up from is socially responsible”. This implies that the core value that The Body Shop selected to base their corporate identity on is perceived to be important by the majority of the population; The Body Shop visitors consider CSR to be an important factor when buying cosmetics.

According to self-theory, the corporate identity should be congruent with the consumer’s self image. 75% of the respondents thought of themselves as engaged in societal questions, which can be interpreted to mean that CSR is an important part of their self image. In Table 5.8, it can be seen that The Body Shop visitors who perceive themselves as being engaged in societal questions consider CSR to be more important when choosing between cosmetics brands, than visitors who do not find themselves engaged. Hence, CSR is important in the consumers’ self-images, and it is also an important factor in The Body Shop’s corporate image.

When CSR is placed in relation to six other attributes, it is ranked as third most important to consider on a scale, after quality and price. In Figure 5.2, quality is ranked as the most important attribute to consider when buying cosmetics, so obviously this is an attribute that is perceived very important by the consumers as well.

Quality being ranked higher than CSR is natural, since consumers could be expected to care the most about the quality of what they buy. The researchers did not expect CSR to be ranked higher than quality or price, since previous studies show that consumers perceive quality to be the most

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121 Melin (1999): 80
123 Melin (1999): 75
124 Ibid: 86
important criterion for selecting cosmetics, followed by price as second most important and brand as third most important.\textsuperscript{125}

The fact that CSR is ranked as third most important, after quality and price, shows that CSR is an attribute that the consumers find important, which is a good indicator that building corporate identity upon CSR can be a positive thing.

A reason for why the consumers believe CSR to be important can be that information about third world working conditions and environmental issues reaches the consumers much faster nowadays, and the marketplace is becoming increasingly conscience-focused. The overall trend today is that the demand for more ethical businesses is increasing. Accordingly, the fact that The Body Shop visitors consider CSR to be important comes as no surprise.

It is, however, important that it can be concluded that, after quality and price, CSR is an attribute that the respondents consider to be important when buying cosmetics. This is important because it is a basic condition that has to be fulfilled in order for The Body Shop’s positioning strategy to be successful. The goal with the positioning strategy is to transfer the corporate identity to the consumers. Since The Body Shop builds its identity upon CSR, the company wants the corporate image to build upon this as well. That means that the consumers have to consider CSR to be important.\textsuperscript{126}

It has been shown that the more homogenous the corporate identity and the corporate image are, the more integrated the company’s self image is with the consumers’ view of the company. The congruency between The Body Shop’s corporate image and identity can be analyzed by examining the findings connected to the corporate image.

6.2 The Body Shop’s Corporate Image

The results from the survey show that 77% of The Body Shop’s visitors think that the company is socially responsible. This can be seen in Figure 5.5 in the findings, where the result from the questionnaire statement “I think of The Body Shop as socially responsible” is presented.

This indicates that The Body Shop has succeeded in transferring the corporate identity to the consumers and hence the corporate identity and image seem to be congruent. This is good because it means that CSR is incorporated in The Body Shop’s corporate image as well, which would have been the goal of the company’s positioning. The fact that the corporate image builds upon CSR is also a pre-requisite for testing whether or not CSR contributes to positive consumer attitudes.

\textsuperscript{125} Nair and Pillai (2007): 591
\textsuperscript{126} Ibid
When CSR was put in relation to other attributes, 23% ranked CSR as their first or second first association with The Body Shop, only quality (ranked first or second by 35%) is ranked higher. This, too, is a strong indication that The Body Shop’s corporate image incorporates CSR.

Judging by the information in Figure 5.2, product quality seems to be closely associated with The Body Shop. This is congruent with the fact that the majority of the respondents believe quality to be the most important attribute to consider when buying cosmetics. In fact, the strong association that the visitors have with quality could be an effect of The Body Shop’s CSR activities as well. Some studies have actually shown that CSR strategies that are perceived to be positive by the consumers may even affect the perceived quality of a specific brand’s products. It is impossible to tell from the findings of this study, however, if this is the case for the perceived quality of The Body Shops products.

According to Aaker, the more the association is supported by a network of links, the stronger the association will be. This could be an explanation to why CSR is closely associated with The Body Shop, as the company uses an extensive network of links to reinforce this connection. The Body Shop has been extensively engaged in numerous CSR activities and campaigns ever since the company was first founded.

Also, the fact that The Body Shop is considered to be one of the first companies to use CSR in their branding may have affected the fact that the consumers associate the company with CSR. This because the first company to hold a certain position on the market will in most cases be intimately associated with the selected core value.

CSR can be considered to be an intangible association, which means that it is a very effective association since it will be more sustainable than associations that build on tangible factors.

According to Aaker’s Brand Equity model, positive associations will lead to positive attitudes towards the brand. Hence, the findings so far suggest that The Body Shop visitors’ attitudes should be positive. Whether this is true will be analyzed in the next section, by using the ABC model.

### 6.3 Consumer Attitudes towards The Body Shop

So far, the analysis of the findings has shown that The Body Shop visitors think that the core value the company chose to differentiate on (CSR) is important, they consider The Body Shop to be socially responsible, and they associate the brand with CSR. As already mentioned; according

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132 Ibid: preface
to Aaker’s Brand Equity Model, this should lead to the creation of positive attitudes towards the brand as well.\textsuperscript{133}

The ABC model can be used to further analyze how the attitudes of The Body Shop visitors are created. According to this theory, The Body Shop’s consumers are most likely to use a standard involvement hierarchy. In the standard involvement hierarchy, the creation of positive attitudes of The Body Shop’s consumers will look as follows;

1. The consumers collect knowledge about The Body Shop with regard to attributes they find important. The findings show that CSR will be one of these attributes. In this step, the company can use associations to position itself on the market, and use networks of links to strengthen these associations. As already concluded, the respondents associate The Body Shop mainly with quality and CSR (out of the five attributes included in the survey).

2. The knowledge the consumers have regarding the important factors, such as quality and CSR, is then used to form beliefs about The Body Shop.

3. If these beliefs are positive, positive attitudes regarding The Body Shop are created. The consumer’s behavior is then based on these attitudes.

But what do the visitors’ attitudes look like? Do the consumers have positive attitudes towards The Body Shop, as the theory suggests?

Whether or not CSR contributes to positive attitudes depends a lot on the perceived motives behind the CSR activities. When the consumers form beliefs about The Body Shop (step two in the standard involvement hierarchy above), they will evaluate the trustworthiness of the company’s social responsibility. In order for The Body Shop’s CSR to lead to positive attitudes, the consumers must believe that the motives behind the CSR are honest.

As can be seen in Figure 5.9, 57 % of the respondents think that the motive behind The Body Shop’s CSR is real care for the environment and the world’s injustice. Accordingly, the researchers consider this to be a strong indicator that most people visiting The Body Shop think the motive behind the company’s well communicated CSR is genuine, honest care. This in spite of the recent acquisition made by L’Oréal in 1996, which troubled lots of The Body Shop’s loyal fans, who were afraid that the company was letting go of its commitments.\textsuperscript{134}

Prior research show that when consumers are exposed to a company’s CSR, they will assign to the company one of two main types of motives behind the CSR: self serving or public serving.\textsuperscript{135} The majority of the respondents in the survey perceived The Body Shop’s CSR as being public serving. This means that they believe that the underlying motive is to help world citizens in need, save the environment or raise awareness for a specific issue.

\textsuperscript{133} Aaker (1991): preface
\textsuperscript{134} Robens (2007): 4
\textsuperscript{135} Becker-Olsen et al (2006): 47
This could be an effect of the numerous links that The Body Shop uses to enhance its CSR image; all of the CSR campaigns and activities show the consumers that the company’s CSR is not only words and false promises.

Also, the fact that CSR is deeply embedded in The Body Shops core values and mission statement surely make the consumers feel that the fit between the company and their CSR is good. This will also contribute to the assessment of the company’s CSR as being trustworthy.

Since the majority of the respondents perceive the motives behind The Body Shop’s CSR to be honest, they should, as already discussed, have positive attitudes towards the brand. And, just as predicted, the findings from the survey clearly show that the vast majority, 89% of the respondents, have positive attitudes towards The Body Shop.

But, is there any relation between these positive attitudes and The Body Shop’s CSR? So far, the findings have shown that the respondents believe quality to be important, and that they associate quality closely with The Body Shop as well. Therefore, the positive attitudes of the respondents could be connected to quality, and not CSR.

To test this, positive attitudes were compared to how socially responsible the consumers think The Body Shop is in a cross-table. In Table 5.4 in the findings it is visible that the more socially responsible the respondent considered The Body Shop to be, the more positive was his or her attitudes towards The Body Shop. Accordingly, the findings confirm that the positive attitude the respondents have towards the brand is connected to CSR.

It is possible, though, that the same is true for quality; that the better the quality of The Body Shop products are considered to be, the more positive are the attitudes. This relationship is never tested in this study. Since this study only set out to examine CSR’s connection to positive attitudes, the possible impact that quality has on attitudes are considered to be of less relevance for this study. As long as a connection between CSR and positive attitudes can be confirmed, the eventual impact of quality on positive attitudes is not relevant for this study. As this study never set out to examine all of the different attributes affecting positive attitudes, the purpose can be considered to be fulfilled as long as a relation between CSR and positive attitudes can be confirmed. Hence, other possible attributes effects on positive attitudes are not examined.

The analysis so far has shown that CSR has a positive impact on attitudes. Solomon states that consumers’ purchase decisions are based on attitudes; hence, if the consumers have positive attitudes their purchase decisions should be positive as well.\footnote{Solomon et al (1999): 123-127}

### 6.4 Purchase Decisions

Up until this question, the findings have been rather clear and in line with the theory. Purchase decisions are harder to analyze, however.
To see how well positive attitudes and number of purchases from The Body Shop relates, table 5.5 chapter is examined. In this table, it can be seen that the respondents who made the most purchases are also the ones who have the most positive attitudes. Out of the respondents who gave The Body Shop an attitude score of 3 (out of 5), only one respondent bought 6-10 products and no one bought more than 10. Hence, there seem to be a connection between positive attitudes and purchases. This is strengthened by the chi-square test result, showing a p-value of 0.00 and thus confirming statistical significance of the correlation. Since almost all respondents have positive attitudes, no relation can be found between less positive attitudes and no purchases.

According to Solomon, consumers look at how products differ from one another when making brand choices, and the attributes used to differentiate among choices are determinant attributes. Consumers use evaluative criteria in their decision-making process when they make purchase decisions. Typically, these evaluative criteria consist of attributes that the consumers find important. The brands that have the desired attributes are placed in the consumer’s evoked set of alternatives. 78% of the respondents consider CSR to be important, and 77% think that The Body Shop is socially responsible. This indicates that the majority of the respondents should place The Body Shop in their evoked set when selecting between cosmetics brands.

The findings from the survey measure actual purchase decisions, and not purchase intentions, however. There is a possibility that more of the respondents with positive attitudes have positive purchase intentions, which, due to external factors, are never transformed into actual purchases. The researchers believe that one of these external factors could, among others, be lack of money. Price is an attribute that the respondents found important when buying cosmetics, so price is most likely another determinant attribute in the selection of cosmetics brands.

According to figure 5.7, price worthiness is associated the least with The Body Shop, and when the respondents are asked what the reasons for choosing other brands are, the fact that the alternatives are cheaper was one of the major reasons, as made visible in figure 5.10. Hence, price could be one reason for the respondents to choose other alternatives, in spite of their positive attitudes towards The Body Shop. To further analyse this, the respondents were divided into two categories, working and non-working, to check for differences in purchase behaviour.

When comparing the working respondents with the non-working ones (tables 5.6 and 5.7), it is visible that income could be a contributing factor to how many products the respondents bought within the last two years. Among the respondents with the highest attitude score, 18% of the working respondents bought more than 10 products from The Body Shop, while only 9% of the non-working respondents did. This could be interpreted to mean that one of the obstacles for purchase intentions to turn into actual purchase could be high price, or lack of income.

To conclude, the respondents seem to think that CSR is important when buying cosmetics, they associate The Body Shop with CSR and they have positive attitudes towards the brand, which can be connected to the CSR. A link between positive attitudes and purchase decisions can also be confirmed.

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137 Solomon et al (1999): 221-223
138 Ibid: 210
7 END DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the importance of well-known CSR by examining the consumers’ attitudes towards CSR and The Body Shop, and to further look at these attitudes’ relation to the consumers’ purchase decisions. To do this, empirical findings were collected through a survey. These findings were then analyzed and connected to the theoretical framework to be able to answer the problem question. In this chapter, the findings and analysis of the study will be reflected upon and the conclusions that can be drawn from the analysis will be presented. This is followed by a section discussing what implications this conclusion will have and some suggestions for future studies in this subject.

7.1 Conclusion

Previous studies that have tried to link CSR to purchase decisions have come to the conclusion that this relationship is weak, and one reason for this is the consumers’ lack of knowledge regarding the companies’ CSR. In this research, the CSR of the company was well known to the consumers. Consequently, if the conclusions that previous research has come to are true, there should be a stronger link between CSR and purchase decisions for The Body Shop visitors.

By exploring this relationship the authors aimed at filling the gap in previous research.

The most apparent findings from the survey results are that the respondents have overwhelmingly positive attitudes towards The Body Shop.

The first important contribution this study makes is that it can show how these positive attitudes are correlated with The Body Shop’s CSR, which, for obvious reasons, would not have been true in companies where the CSR is not well known. This is an indicator that well known CSR is connected to positive attitudes in the case of The Body Shop.

The reasons behind this seem to be:

- The respondents consider CSR to be an important attribute when buying cosmetics
- The respondents associate The Body Shop with CSR, hence CSR is included in The Body Shop’s corporate image
- Respondents consider The Body Shop’s CSR to be trustworthy

The authors consider the fit between The Body Shop and its CSR is good; CSR is deeply embedded in the company’s core values and mission statement and the company engages in projects and activities that fit their business (animal testing, recycling, using natural ingredients etc.). The authors think that this could also be a factor affecting the positive attitudes.

The fact that the CSR is correlated to positive consumer attitudes show how one of the goals with using CSR in branding has been fulfilled for The Body Shop.

The second contribution made by this study is that it shows how these positive attitudes correlate with positive purchase decisions as well. The link between CSR and purchase decisions that the previous research could not find can be visible in the examination of The Body Shop visitors. The respondents who have the most positive attitudes towards The Body Shop are also the ones who made the most purchases from the company. The respondents who have less positive
attitudes have bought less from The Body Shop. This correlation was also tested by using a Chi-square test, and the relationship is statistically significant.

Even though positive attitudes and purchase decisions are correlated, the researches believe that more of the respondents with positive attitudes could have had positive purchase intentions, which were never transformed into actual purchases. One factor that could have affected this is price, since this is stated as one of the main reasons for the respondents to choose other brands.

Hence, the findings of the study lead the researches to believe that the conclusions that the previous studies regarding CSR came to might be justified: well known CSR correlates with positive attitudes, and these positive attitudes correlates with positive purchase decisions. However, due to the relatively small sample size in this study, this result only gives a hint that this may be true; lager, more extensive, research is needed in order to definitely confirm this link. This study also suffers from a number of limitations, which will be discussed in section 7.2.

Furthermore, the results of the study can only be generalized to be true for all of the visitors to The Body Shop store in Umeå. However, the researchers believe that the results of this study could possibly be generalized to the rest of The Body Shop visitors in Sweden as well. This because The Body Shop in Umeå is a franchise and all of the company’s CSR campaigns look the same throughout Sweden.

### 7.2 Limitations

The conclusions that this study has come to has been somewhat limited by a number of different factors, which have had an impact on the results and conclusion.

The authors originally wanted to test whether or not CSR leads to positive attitudes and more purchases, but with the measuring instruments used, this relationship could not be tested. For this reason, the only relationship that the study can draw any conclusions about is the correlation between CSR and positive attitudes, and positive attitudes and purchases. This is considered by the authors to be a limitation to the study.

Some of the questions in the questionnaire can be considered to be leading questions. Especially the statement “I have a positive attitude towards The Body Shop” could have lead the respondents to express more positive attitudes that what they actually have. The fact that CSR is introduced in the questionnaire before the respondents are asked to rank what the associate with The Body Shop could also have influenced their responses. These shortcomings have been recognized by the authors as a possible limitation to the conclusions, which build upon the findings from the questionnaire. However, the authors believe that the findings would not have differed much if the questions in the questionnaire would have been rephrased.

Another possible limitation is the choice of using only visitors as the population. By choosing to include only visitors in the sample, the majority of them will have positive attitudes towards The Body Shop, since people with negative attitudes will most likely not visit the store. This increases the chance that the conclusion will be that the body shops CSR leads to positive attitudes, since people who have negative attitudes towards the body shops CSR and the body
shop as a brand are not included in the sample. This might be people who do not consider the body shops CSR to be trustworthy, for instance.

Even though the above mentioned limitations may have affected the possibility to draw conclusions from the findings, the authors still believe the stated conclusions to be valid. The next section will suggest how future studies within this topic can be made, which will take some of these limitations in consideration

7.3 Implications

If well communicated CSR leads to more positive purchase decisions by the consumers, as this study suggests, this will have a number of implications.

First of all, if well communicated CSR is closely connected to positive purchase decisions, more companies might try to communicate their CSR better. For marketing managers, it is essential to know whether or not purchase decisions will be more positive if the CSR is well known, since this might influence the way they create their branding strategies. If a connection between well communicated CSR and positive purchase decisions exists, more companies might chose to base their competitive advantage on communicating the company’s CSR.

But, just because this strategy seems to be working well for The Body Shop does not necessarily mean that it will work well for other companies. The Body Shop may have an advantage by the fact that it was the first company to hold this position on the market\(^\text{139}\). Consumers generally tend to view followers as copies, and thus, basing their competitive advantage on CSR may not work as good for other companies.

For The Body Shop, is it of course essential to know whether there is a link between their CSR and their consumers’ purchase decisions. This knowledge can help The Body Shop’s marketing managers evaluate branding strategies and may also serve as a basis for creating new marketing strategies. At a local level, The Body Shop in Umeå will also be provided with market research.

7.4 Suggestions for Future Research

In order to make this study possible to conduct, the researchers had to make a number of delimitations. The result is that the findings can only be generalized to a small population. To confirm the connection between CSR and purchase decisions when the CSR is well known, a suggestion would be to apply this study on a larger population, where not only visitors is included. This would ensure that the possible negative attitudes towards The Body Shop are included as well.

To obtain a deeper understanding of The Body Shop Umeå’s visitors’ attitudes towards CSR and the brand, and how these factors are connected, a qualitative study can be made. This would make it possible to achieve more comprehensive information regarding the factors touched upon in this thesis, and the problem of asking leading questions can also be avoided.

\(^{139}\) Debapratim and Fernando (2006): 1
Another suggestion for future study would be to examine what happens when more and more companies choose to use CSR in their branding. What happens when the consumers start to take CSR for granted, and the companies have to find new attributes to base their differentiation on?

For The Body Shop, it might be of interest to study how much perceived quality influences purchase decisions, since the findings from this study indicate that there might be a connection between perceived quality, positive attitudes and purchase decisions.
8 LIST OF REFERENCES

Literature


Journal articles


**Electronic Sources**


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**Online articles**

• DI.SE. “L’Oreal köper Body Shop för 8.8 miljarder.” *Dagens Industri, online edition*. March 17\(^{th}\) (2006)


**University theses**


**Other sources**


**Interview**

• Agnetha Persson, The Body Shop. Interview by A. Lundmark and S. Lundgren, over mail. April 7\(^{th}\) 2009.
APPENDIX 1a

Interview with Agnetha Persson, The Body Shop Umeå, April 7th 2009 (Swedish version)

Först några frågor om The Body Shop generellt (om det på något vis skiljer sig mellan BS centralt och i Umeå, nämn gärna det)

1. Vilken är The Body Shops främsta målgrupp? (alltså vilka kunder försöker ni främst locka till butiken)
   - Svårt, vi välkomnar alla! Vi har och har alltid haft mest produkter för kvinnor, men killar är en målgrupp som vi tror på mer och mer. Utbudet för dem ökar, framför allt inom hudvård.

2. Vem är den typiska Body Shop-kunden?
   - En kvinna mellan 25-34 år. (Gäller Umeå framför allt, men är nog ungefär så i hela Sverige)

4. Berätta lite om HIV-kampanjen (“Yes Yes Yes to Safe Sex”).
   - Detta är tredje året i rad som vi har den tillsammans med MTV. Det känns otroligt aktuellt och det är så lätt att prata om kampanjen, framför allt med ungdomar (se mer om den på vår hemsida).

Och nu lite specifikt om Umeås butik.

5. När öppnade ni? Vi är även intresserade av allmän info om BS Umeå som kan vara värt att veta.

6. Ni är ju en franchise. Hur mycket inflytande har ni i Umeå över er butik? Bestäms allt centralt?
   - Vi har direktörer och riktlinjer från huvudkontoret angående skyltning, event och priser etc., men sedan så sätter vi den personliga atmosfären som stämpel på vår butik och hur vi jobbar.

7. Hur många anställda är ni nu?
   - Vi är 6-7 stycken inklusive extrajobbare.

8. Besöker olika människor (åldersgrupper, män/kvinnor osv) butiken id olika tillfällen? Kan ni se ett mönster? Om ja, hur ser det ut?
APPENDIX 1b

Interview with Agnetha Persson, The Body Shop Umeå, April 7th 2009 (English version)

First we have some questions about The Body Shop in general (if there are differences between TBS centrally and in Umeå, please mention that too)

1. What is The Body Shop’s main target group? (what customers do you preferably attract to the store?)
   - That’s a difficult question, we welcome everybody! We have, and have always had, mostly products for women, but we believe more and more in the male consumer group. We have an increasing product line for them, especially skin care products.

2. Who is the typical The Body Shop customer?
   - A woman, 25-34 years old. (That is in Umeå, but it’s likely the same in Sweden in general)

4. Tell us about the HIV campaign! (“Yes Yes Yes to Safe Sex”)
   - This is the third year we’re running the campaign with MTV. It feels really ____ , and it’s so easy to talk about the campaign, especially with the young people. (More about it can be read on the website).

And now, about Umeå’s store.

5. When did you open? We’re interested in all general info about TBS Umeå that can be of interest.
   - Siv och Gösta opened up in 1986. Bettan and I took over the store, at the time located on Vasaplan, in 1999. In 2002, we moved into Kungspassagen after growing too big for the small place we had. The Body Shop has ever since kept attracting conscious customers. We are now more easy-accessed (the location), and we aim at seeing to everyone’s needs. Bettan left her position in February this year, and Johanna Östensson became a new part-owner. We are now heading towards new goals!

6. You own a franchise. How much influence do you have over the store in Umeå? Is everything decided centrally?
   - We have directions and guidelines from the head office concerning displays, events, prices and such. But we set the personal atmosphere of our store, and we decide how we work.

7. How many employees do you have?
   - We are 6-7 persons, including the extra-workers.

8. Does different types of people (age-groups, men/women etc.) visit the store at different times? Is there a pattern? If yes, what does it look like?
   - No, I wouldn’t say so. All types of customers show up at all times. Maybe there are more guys on Saturdays, when more men follow their wives to town.
APPENDIX 2a

Questionnaire (Swedish version)


Tack för hjälpen!
/Sara Lundgren & Amanda Lundmark, International Business Program, Umeå Universitet

Socialt ansvarstagande gäller frågor som rör miljön, djurtester, anställdas arbetsförhållanden och liknande.

1. Jag är (ringa in): Man  Kvinnan

2. Ålder: _________

3. Sysselsättning: ______________________

4. Varför gick du in på The Body Shop?
Välj ett alternativ.

☐ Av en slump
☐ Jag visste vad jag skulle köpa
☐ För att titta och eventuellt köpa
☐ Mitt sällskap ville gå in

5. Hur många produkter har du köpt från The Body Shop under de senaste två åren?

☐ Ingen
☐ 1 till 5
☐ 6 till 10
☐ Fler än 10

6. Vad är viktigast för dig när du väljer hud- & hårvårdsprodukter och smink?
Rangordna de tre viktigaste, 1 = viktigast, 2 = näst viktigast, 3 = tredje viktigast

_____Produktkvaliteten
_____Att företaget är socialt ansvarstagande
_____Pris
_____Att märket är populärt
_____Butikens läge
_____Tillgänglighet
_____Att märket är välkänt

Fortsätter på baksidan →
7. Vad är det som gör att du väljer andra märken än The Body Shop?  
Välj max tre alternativ.

- Alternativen är mer tillgängliga
- Alternativen är billigare
- Påverkan från omgivningen/grupptyck
- Vanesak
- Alternativen har bättre kvalitet
- Annat: _______________________________________________________

8. Vad av följande förknippar du mest med The Body Shop? 
Rangordna följande attribut. Sätt en etta vid det attribut som du mest förknippar med The Body Shop, en tvåa för näst mest osv, och en femma vid det du förknippar minst med The Body Shop.

_____ Prisvärda produkter (valuta för pengarna)  
_____ Hög produktkvalitet  
_____ Socialt ansvarstagande  
_____ Kunnig personal  
_____ Trevlig atmosfär i butiken

De följande tre frågorna är påståenden. Till vilken grad instämmer du? Ringa in.


   1  2  3  4  5
   inte alls mycket ingen åsikt


   1  2  3  4  5
   inte alls mycket ingen åsikt


   1  2  3  4  5
   inte alls mycket ingen åsikt

12. Uppfattar du dig själv som engagerad i samhällsfrågor?

- Ja  
- Nej

13. Vilken tror du är den största anledningen till att The Body Shop är så tydliga med att kommunicera sitt sociala ansvarstagande?  
Välj ett alternativ.

- För att de verkligen bryr sig om miljön och orättvisorna i världen  
- För att det leder till större vinst för företaget  
- Jag tycker inte att The Body Shop tydligt kommunicerar sitt sociala ansvarstagande  
- Annat: _________________________________________________________
APPENDIX 2b

Questionnaire (English version)

Hi! In our bachelor thesis, we examine what factors that matter when a consumer chooses skin- & hair care products and make-up. Your answers are very valuable, and will be treated with confidentiality. You are completely anonymous.

Thank you for your cooperation!
/Sara Lundgren & Amanda Lundmark, International Business Program, Umeå Universität

| Social responsibility refers to issues concerning the environment, animal testing, working conditions and such. |

1. I am (circle): Male  Female

2. Age: __________

3. Occupation: ______________________

4. Why did you enter The Body Shop?
Choose one alternative.

☐ By chance
☐ To make a purchase
☐ To look, and maybe buy something
☐ As company

5. How many products have you purchased from The Body Shop during the last two years?

☐ None
☐ 1 to 5
☐ 6 to 10
☐ More than 10

6. What is most important to you when choosing skin- & hair care products and make-up?
Rank the three most important, 1 = most important, 2 = second most important, 3 = third most important

_____ Product quality
_____ That the company is socially responsible
_____ Price
_____ That it is a popular brand
_____ The location of the store
_____ Accessibility
_____ That it is a well-known brand

Please turn →
7. What makes you choose other brands than The Body Shop?
Choose a maximum of three alternatives.

☐ The alternatives are easier to access
☐ The alternatives are cheaper
☐ Influence from the surroundings / Group pressure
☐ Out of habit
☐ The alternatives are of better quality
☐ Other: ____________________________________________

8. What, out of the following, do you associate the most with The Body Shop?
Rank the following attributes. Put a 1 next to the attribute that you associate the most with The Body Shop, en 2 for second most etc, and a 5 next to the attribute that you associate the least with The Body Shop.

_____ Products are price-worthy
_____ High product quality
_____ Social responsibility
_____ Knowledgeable staff
_____ Nice atmosphere in the store

The next three questions are statements. To what extent do you agree? Circle your answer.

9. I have a positive attitude towards The Body Shop.

1 2 3 4 5 totally no opinion
not at all

10. It is important to me that the company where I purchase skin- & hair care products and make-up from is socially responsible.

1 2 3 4 5 totally no opinion
not at all

11. I think of The Body Shop as socially responsible.

1 2 3 4 5 totally no opinion
not at all

12. Do you perceive yourself as engaged in societal question?

☐ Yes
☐ No

13. What do you think is the main reason why The Body Shop communicates its CSR so well?
Choose one alternative.

☐ Because they really care about the environment and the world’s injustice
☐ To make money
☐ I don’t think The Body Shop is communicating its CSR well
☐ Other: ____________________________________________