

## Get Consumers Walk into the Sustainability Talk

An analysis of consumers' sustainability perception via business's sustainable practice, focusing on a case study from IKEA

*Xiao Yang*

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## **Abstract:**

As more and more companies are realizing the importance to integrate sustainability with their economic prosperity development, Triple Bottom Line functions as companies' Polaris to guide them to incorporate "People, Planet" considerations into their "Profit" seeking goal. Corporate social responsibility initiatives are adopted by many companies. Among them, Cause Related Marketing (CRM) is a popular one, company donates part of its profits to support a good cause (either an environmental or social one). CRM has been claimed to be a win-win-win strategy for business, consumers and non-profit organization (the cause). However, whether consumers think of the same is still highly debatable.

Many researches have been done on CRM, but most are from a business perspective, to test how efficient CRM is to improve the company's profit or reputation, or whether CRM can affect consumers' purchase behavior. Even if some studies start from consumers' point of view, most are to find what are consumers' attitudes toward CRM (this business tool per se), few have focused on how consumers look at the social/environmental issues connected with the cause via CRM.

Since nowadays consumers are increasingly playing an important role in pushing forward the development of sustainability as responsible and conscious citizens, it is important to study how consumers view CRM in the sustainability lens, whether business can help the public have a better understanding of sustainability issues while conducting its economic function. Therefore my research is to find out the connections between consumers and their sustainability perception via business's sustainable initiatives. Namely, whether CRM can increase people's awareness on sustainability issues? Can business CRM initiatives create sustainability value for consumers?

This research focuses on a social sustainability initiative -"Soft Toy For Education Campaign" from IKEA company, using both quantitative and qualitative approach. Data was collected through 60 surveys and 15 semi-structured interviews with consumers from IKEA store in Shanghai, China and Malmö, Sweden respectively. Findings indicate that consumers' attitudes towards CRM are complex, some people claim its positive role in contributing to sustainability, some argue that CRM is more of a marketing tool. CRM may play a certain role in increasing consumers' sustainability awareness, but that largely depends on consumers' sustainability background knowledge, and the social environment they live in. In addition to that, CRM can create emotional, functional and educational value for consumers.

**Key Words:** sustainability awareness, sustainability value, consumer, cause-related marketing, CSR, Triple Bottom Line.

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***There are a thousand Hamlets in a thousand people's eyes.***

—— A Chinese saying of William Shakespeare's work <Hamlet>

—— To my thesis research, and my precious two years' LUMES life

## 1 Introduction

Nowadays business has often been blamed as the major reason for generating environmental, social and economic problems (Porter & Kramer, 2011). With the increasing challenges from environmental degradation, climate change and limited natural resources, more and more companies have realized the importance and urgency to take actions; pressure from society, international active NGOs, and the rapidly changing criteria of business to attract investments has also made companies involved in more sustainable practice (Ko, Hwang & Kim, 2013). Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Sustainable Marketing (SM) activities have been used by many companies to gain competitiveness in the international business environment by tackling those challenges, to name a few, “H&M old clothes recycling campaign”, “Unilever- LUX Green hada tree-planting Plan”, “Avon Breast Cancer Crusade”. Among SM, Cause Related Marketing (CRM) is a way corporations often use to “show” their social sustainability concern, companies implement a product (or service) related campaign which cooperates with a non-profit organization (NPO), part of the profit gained from that product or service will be donated to the NPO to support a good cause (Farache, Perks, Wanderley & Filho, 2008). It has become a popular marketing strategy since the 1980s (Farache et al., 2008).

Some scholars claim that CRM is a **win-win-win** strategy as it brings benefits for **corporations, NPOs, and customers** (Farache et al., 2008). CRM campaigns are claimed to help companies integrate their actions into “**Triple Bottom Line**”(TBL), to demonstrate corporation’s resolution on caring about “**planet and people**” while keeping their **profit** gaining, which could contribute to the great picture of **sustainable development** (Gupta & Kumar, 2013). Studies show that consumers tend to support companies that are more sustainable, bear more social and environmental responsibility (Charter, Peattie, Ottman & Polonsky, 2002). However, how consumers view companies’ seemingly “beautiful drawn picture” CRM is still need to be discovered.

Crane, McWilliams, Matten, Moon & Siegel (2008) claimed the complexity to study CSR: “The field of scholarship that CSR represents is a broad and diverse one, encompassing debates from many perspectives, disciplines, and ideological positions. It is located at an intersection of many contributing disciplines”(p. 5). In my research, although I try to narrow down this topic by only focusing on the consumers’ perspective from only one case study, I still recognize the intersectionality and complexity of the topic of sustainability and CSR, which makes very difficult to study this topic.

## 1.1 Aims and Research Questions

Due to the important role consumers play in pushing forward the sustainability talk, and pushing companies to seek for better sustainability performance, it is important to know how CSR is perceived in consumers' mind, instead of starting from a businessman's perspective. By understanding how consumers view business's sustainable strategies, it can serve both for business to better address sustainability issues, and for scholars to better understand the challenges of sustainability. Therefore my research is to find consumers' perception in terms of sustainability awareness and value towards business's CSR activities.

### Main research question:

1. Can CRM help increase consumers' awareness on sustainability issues?
2. Can consumers draw sustainability value from business's CSR initiatives?

**Sub-question:** If the answer of the second question is positive, what values can be drawn from CSR activities?

## 1.2 Research Process

### 1. Conceptualization

- Background Research and Literature Review
  - CSR and Sustainability
  - Sustainable Marketing and Cause-related marketing
  - Triple Bottom Line
  - Consumer Awareness
  - Consumer Value



- Research Design and Method
  - Qualitative and Quantitative Method
  - Questionnaire Design and Interview questions
  - Case study on IKEA Soft Toy For Education Campaign



### 2. Data Collection and Conduct Research

- Data Collected in IKEA store Shanghai and Malmö
- Questionnaire and Semi-structured interviews



### 3. Analysis and Conclusion

### 1.3 Contributions to Sustainability Science

**Sustainability** has been widely accepted as an interdisciplinary subject worth of comprehensive studies in the social science field, with topics such as climate change, environment and sustainability theory, environmental justice and ethics, environmental policies are widely studied (McDonagh & Prothero, 2014). Which seems more like an “issue-based” topic to researchers in the sphere of social sciences, rather than specialized viewpoint to a specific issue (McDonagh & Prothero, 2014). In the studies of marketing, there has disconnections of marketing with sustainability talk, due to the “mainstream” themes sustainability entitles in (McDonagh & Prothero, 2014). In addition to that, business increasingly plays a vital role in public and society, and it is seen as a vital stakeholder in tackling sustainability challenges and shouldering sustainability responsibilities. Consumers, as ordinary public citizens, also become more demanding and seeking for sustainable consumption behavior.

However, in academics there are **disconnections** between researches of business and sustainability science. Most researches have focused on the economic role of CSR practice, how CSR may change customers’ consumption behavior, how CSR can work to improve company’s brand reputation; but very few have studied from a sustainability viewpoint, whether business’s sustainable practice can work to leverage public’s sustainability awareness and value, how consumers perceive this sustainability talk.

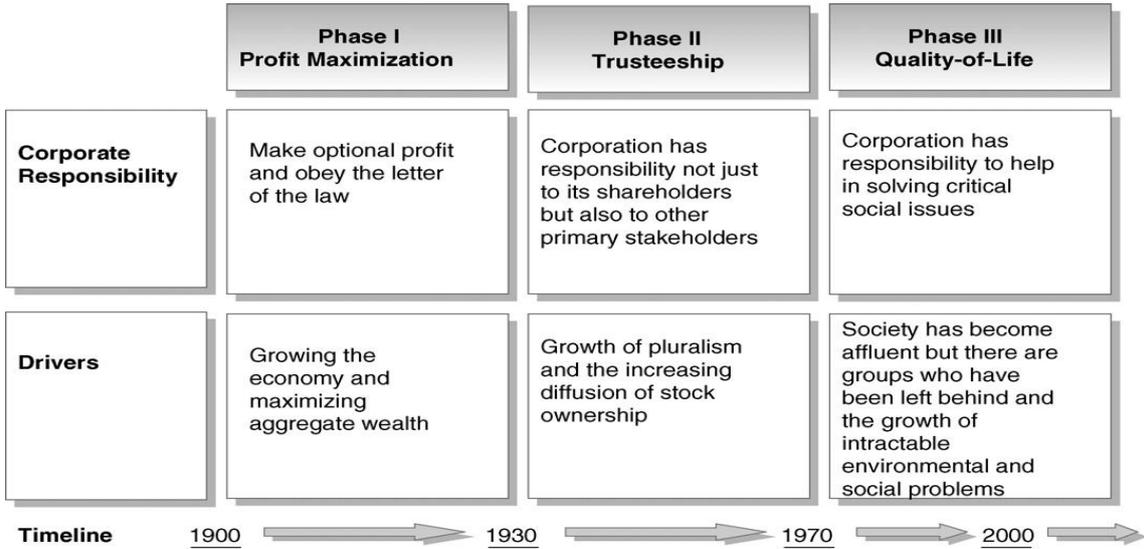
Therefore my research can provide basic insights into understanding how consumers view business’s sustainable practice, what sustainability perception (awareness/value) can consumers get from CSR activities. This can **narrow** the disconnections between business and sustainability science, and **enlarge** the sphere from the “mainstream” sustainability topics.

If business’s sustainable practice is efficiently carried out and the sustainability information throughout can be accurately delivered to consumers, it would contribute to leveraging the importance and urgency of sustainability talk, delivering **sustainability value and knowledge** through its practice, increasing public’s awareness on sustainability issues, therefore contribute to the **ongoing sustainability topic**. Further it can be useful for business to integrate TBL with its business practices by understanding consumers’ attitudes and the efficiency of CSR activities in shaping consumers’ sustainability perception, therefore to implement better practice to infiltrate sustainability value into the society and achieve a balance between “people, planet” and “profit”.

## 2 Background and Literature Review

### 2.1 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Sustainability

CSR was firstly defined by Bowen in 1953 as “the obligation of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the **objectives and values of our society**” (Choi & Gray, 2008, p. 342). MaGuire in 1963 further explained the concept “the idea of social responsibilities supposes that the corporation has not only **economical and legal obligations** but also certain responsibilities to **society** that extend beyond these” (Choi & Gray, 2008, p. 342). Hay and Gray (1974) claimed three stages of CSR, the first stage is to **maximize corporate profit**; the second stage is “**trusteeship**”, broaden companies’ responsibility from only shareholders to primary stakeholders such as suppliers, employees and communities; the third stage is “**quality of life**”, further expanded the corporations responsibility to the whole society (see Figure 1). The focus also broadened from environmental pollution and employee’s working condition in the 1970s to wider international social problems and commercial morality in the 1990s with the advent of sustainable development topic (Choi & Gray, 2008).



Source: Derived from Hay and Gray (1974)

Figure 1. Three Stages of CSR (Choi & Gray, 2008, p. 342)

The first phase prevailed in the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, which Hay and Gray argued that the only goal of business is to **maximize its profits** (Smissen, 2012). This is also regarded as a “**shareholder approach**”(Smissen, 2012). Jensen (2002) argues that in the profit maximization stage, business and managers should “**make all decisions so as to increase the total long-run market value**

**of the firm**" (p. 236). Here the total market value refers to the total financial values of the firm, such as stock, equity, interests, debt (Jensen, 2002).

The second stage is called "**Trusteeship management**", which gained popularity in the 1920s and 1930s (Smissen, 2012). Hay and Gray (1974) argue that "corporate managers were responsible not simply for maximizing stockholder wealth but also for maintaining an equitable balance among the competing claims of customers, employees, suppliers, creditors, and the community, as well as the stockholders" (p. 136). Therefore, the manager was seen as a "trustee for the various contributor groups to the firm rather than simply an agent of the owners" (Hay & Gray, 1974, p. 136). It is also considered as "**stakeholder theory approach**", which means that the corporation is not only responsible for the shareholders, but also responsible for all the stakeholders who may be affected by corporation's decisions and actions (Smissen, 2012). Jensen (2002) defined the **stakeholders** as "all individuals or groups who can substantially affect the welfare of the firm—not only the financial claimants, but also employees, customers, communities, and governmental officials, and under some interpretations, the environment, terrorists, blackmailers, and thieves" (p. 236).

The third stage is "**quality of life**" management (Hay & Gray, 1974). Hay and Gray (1974) argue that due to the success of economic development, it has resulted in social and environmental problems, such as air and water pollution, degradation of land, poverty, deteriorating cities. Therefore efforts emphasized on improving the quality of life have emerged (Hay & Gray, 1974). This is also regarded as a "**societal approach**" (Smissen, 2012), which is considered to be the full picture of CSR. Van Marrewijk (2003) refers this to business's responsibility to the whole society .

## **2.2 Marketing and Sustainability**

Marketing is defined as "*the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements **profitably***" (The Chartered Institute of Marketing, 2016). The central idea of marketing is to satisfy customers' need and therefore to add value via marketing (The Chartered Institute of Marketing, 2016). It can be seen from the definition that the main aim of marketing is to gain profit, and marketing has been long blamed for being the main cause of some environmental problems, as it leads to (over)consumption, and people assume marketers have the role of increasing consumers' environmental awareness and offering environmental-friendly products and services (Quoquab & Mohammad, 2016).

It has been acknowledged of the contradictory of the current consumption mode and sustainability. If the current consumption mode goes on without limitations, it would exceed the capacity of planet can sustain people, with increasing pressure from rapidly growing population and decreasing natural

resources, and increased emissions of green house gases (McDonagh & Prothero, 2014). Those challenges make people realize their unsustainable behavior, and let different social institutions recognize their pressing missions to tackle those sustainability issues.

Since the 21st century, some changes have been witnessed in the marketing environment, sustainability has been more acknowledged by the business world. Researchers in Harvard Business Review claimed that sustainability is a “**megatrend**” (McDonagh & Prothero, 2014). Different institutions start to tackle those challenges. Multinational **governments** like European Union and national and local governments implement strict policies and regulations to deal with sustainability problems; **Industries** and leading **business corporations** act actively in response to sustainability challenges (McDonagh & Prothero, 2014). In addition to mega organizations, **individuals** and **consumers also react positively through their consumption practices**, “sustainable consumers”, “ethical consumption”, “carbon footprint” or “carbon neutral” are becoming popular trends. Although the marketing environment still receives lots critiques and doubts, it has been acknowledged that sustainable marketing practices play a role in creating sustainability value for consumers (McDonagh & Prothero, 2014).

### **2.2.1 Sustainable Marketing (SM)**

By far there is no official definition of SM. Sheth and Parvatiyar firstly put up the concept of SM, which focused on promoting green products and sustainable consumer behavior, in contrast of conventional marketing strategies that promoting consumption (Reutlinger, 2012). However, this overlooks the social aspects of sustainability, later the development of academic research on SM still focuses much on the environment and economic sustainability (Reutlinger, 2012). However, the social dimension of sustainability should not be ignored, Praude and Bormane (2013) argue that SM can never equals to only green marketing, and they argue that social marketing should be at the core of SM.

Followed by green marketing, which is emphasizing on environmental issues, such as trying to reduce ecological damage and offering green products (Charter et al., 2002), Praude and Bormane (2013) defines SM as “*the process of the creation, communication and delivery of **consumption values** to the consumer with a view to meet their needs and observe the requirements of **environment** preservation without jeopardising the possibilities of meeting the needs of future generations*” (p. 168). The emphasis here is on **delivering consumption values**, which also puts sustainability responsibility on the consumers. Reutlinger (2012) defined SM as “*a holistic approach with the aim of satisfying the wants and needs of the customers while putting equal emphasis on **environmental** and **social** issues, thus generating **profit** in a responsible way*” (p.19). This definition incorporates the three dimensions

of sustainability which integrates with TBL, underlining the importance to look at environmental, social problems, but also points out the nature of marketing- gain economic profits. Which I think is a more comprehensive definition.

### **2.2.2 Cause-related Marketing (CRM)**

Among SM, CRM is a popular way corporations use to demonstrate their social responsibility by donating part of the income from a product or service to a NPO to support a good cause (Broderick, Jogi & Garry, 2003). Two of earliest researchers of CRM Varadarajan and Menon (1988) defined CRM as *“The process of formulating and implementing marketing activities that are characterised by an offer from the firm to contribute a specified amount to a designated **cause** when customers engage in revenue-producing exchanges that satisfy organisational and individual objectives”* (p. 60).

CRM covers various topics, such as education, children, health, social justice, Endacott (2004) claims that CRM help build a good relationship and trust between companies and consumers, and it can increase companies' sales and build good company reputation and image. Endacott (2004) claims that CRM can also increase public awareness for social issues.

CRM started in the late 1890s in America (Broderick et al., 2003). It gained popularity through the American Express campaign in 1983. With 1 cent from every card transaction and \$ 1 from every new card issued would be donated to the renovation of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island (Stole, 2006). This campaign received huge success, there was a 28% growth of the card use, and raised 1700000 dollars donation for the project (Farache et al., 2008).

Some other CRM cases have also proven to be very successful. One is Avon Breast Cancer Crusade, it aimed at elevating society's concern on women's breast cancer, every £ 5 bought from some related lipsticks and nail color products , £ 2 at least would be donated to Breakthrough Breast Cancer (NPO) (Adkins, 2004). It started in UK, but became a world popular “crusade” in more than 50 countries and raised \$ 250 million until 2004, the money was used for research and public education on breast cancer (Adkins, 2004). It was regarded as one of the most successful CRM campaign in the UK (Adkins, 2004). Some other CRM cases such as Tesco's “Computers for Schools” also proved to be successful, it donated large amounts of computer equipment which worth £ 84 million to schools in the UK (Adkins, 2004).

Besides the huge economic benefits associate with CRM, scholars claim that CRM can increase public awareness, participation and care for social issues (Endacott, 2004).

However, there are also cases which present more negative view towards CRM. Concerns are around the relationship between “good cause” and business. In Spain, after Pepsi launched some good “cause branding” strategies, people’s attitudes toward Pepsi oppositely became worse (Endacott, 2004). People regarded it as a “**mercantilist abuse**” of good cause (Endacott, 2004).

Adkins argues that CRM is not “**doing good for nothing**”, but a worth business both for the corporations and NPOs (Farache et al., 2008). In the other hand, CRM creates positiveness among consumers, as a way to help consumer understand and contribute to social problems, but it also arises critiques, as the business is making use of good cause.

### **2.3 Consumers (Customers) and The Sustainability Talk**

Customer refers to “*someone who regularly purchases from a particular store or company*”, for example, a person who shops often in a specific store like Walmart is the customer of the store (Bello & Gana, 2008, p.2). Consumer refers to a more general group: “*anyone engaging in any of the activities of consumer display in searching for purchasing, using, evaluating and disposing of product and services that they expect will satisfy their needs*” (Bello & Gana, 2008, p.2). Customer therefore is more limited concept compared with consumer, it refers to a group to a specific firm, but consumer are more general (Bello & Gana, 2008). In my research these two words are interchangeable.

And in the talk of sustainability, the part of “consumers” should never been neglected. Zimmerli, Richter & Holzinger (2007) claimed the significance of consumers: “**The customer, like capital, now has global power at his disposal**” (p. 2). Therefore, it is of vital importance to look at CRM from consumers’ lens.

Studies have shown that **consumers** are key drivers to motivate corporations to take environmental actions and make changes (Høgevoid, Svensson, Klopper, Wagner, Valera, Padin, Ferro, & Petzer, 2015), therefore it is important to understand how consumers perceive the sustainable actions taken by corporations, whether CSR practice can shape consumers’ sustainability perception and attention.

## **3 Methodology**

The essence of this thesis is consumers’ perception on CRM, their social sustainability consciousness and value derived from CRM campaign. Both quantitative and qualitative approach are used in this research. But analysis focuses on qualitative method since the consumers’ comments could provide more detailed and deep insights of their attitudes towards CRM. A case study method focuses on

IKEA company “Soft Toy For Education Campaign” has been used in order to gain deep understanding on the topic.

The field work was carried out in IKEA store on Sunday 31.01.2016 in Xuhui district in Shanghai, China & Sunday 12.03.2016 Malmö, Sweden, it took me around 6 hours to finish this field work in each store. I stayed in the soft toy section in IKEA store and approached people who stopped there to look at the soft toys, and asked whether they would like to conduct the surveys and interviews. I randomly chose people who answered the questionnaire to conduct the interview. I chose the soft toy section and nearby is because as I assume that people who are there would mostly be parents with their children or people who like soft toys, therefore they may have better chance of knowing the campaign than people in other parts of the store.

Answering the questionnaire and interviews is voluntary, and it highly depends on the goodwill of the participants (Farache et al., 2008, p.215). I have conducted 60 surveys and interviewed 15 customers in each country respectively, each interview took me around 15-30min.

When I conducted the field work, I had claimed the anonymity of the survey and interviews, and asked for permission of using the data of their responses on both surveys and interviews’ comments, and the pictures taken of them.

### **3.1 Case Study (IKEA Soft Toy Campaign)**

#### **3.1.1 Why I Choose IKEA**

IKEA is a Swedish-based company founded in Småland, Sweden (IKEA, 2015). As a leading home furnishing company in the world, IKEA not only take business actions to boost profits by offering home furnishing products, it also takes various environmental and social actions to integrate sustainability into their company vision, which is “to create a better everyday life for the many people” (IKEA, 2015). This is also the reason why I choose IKEA as my case study, as for long IKEA is regarded as a responsible company that have taken many sustainability actions. IKEA ranked top 10 (5<sup>th</sup>) in a 2015 sustainability leader report, which researchers had investigated 82 sustainability experts’ view in 82 countries about companies they thought had best sustainability practice (Watson, 2015). IKEA’s environmental actions include investing 1 billion in tackling climate change, selling sustainable certified coffee and seafood, using sustainable cottons (IKEA, 2015;), social actions include campaigns such as “Brighter Lives For Refugees”, which is also a CRM campaign that had donated € 30.8 million to United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to “help build light and renewable energy in

refugee camps in Asia, Africa and the Middle East” (IKEA Foundation, 2016), and “Soft Toys For Education ” campaign which is the case I study.

In 2004, a study done by in three Scandinavian countries of Denmark, Norway and Sweden about public’s opinion on companies’ Reputation Quotient, In Sweden, IKEA ranked NO.1 in overall reputation ranking which covers many different dimensions (Aperia, Brønn & Schultz, 2004). Relates to my study is the social responsibility dimension, IKEA ranked NO.1 among Swedes (Aperia et al., 2004).

### **3.1.2 IKEA Soft Toy For Education Campaign Background**

“Soft Toys For Education”campaign was launched by IKEA company from 2003 to 2015, and it was a long-running activity happened every year in November and December in participating IKEA stores all over the world (IKEA, 2015). The IKEA Foundation had cooperated with Save the Children (NGO)and UNICEF for 13 years. Every soft toys sold in IKEA participating stores, €1 would be donated to Save the Children and UNICEF to support children’s educational projects in Africa, Asia and Europe (IKEA, 2015)(see Figure 2). According to IKEA Foundation (2016), this campaign had raised €88 million to support 100 educational projects in 46 countries, more than 12 million children had benefited from this campaign by having better educational resources and learning opportunities. It had built up 40 community early-childhood development centers in China, assisted caregivers and disabled children with educational help in Indonesia, built up child-protection systems based on communities in Burma (IKEA, 2015).



**Figure 2.** Advertisement of IKEA Soft Toy Campaign placed at the entrance of IKEA store in Shanghai, China.

### **3.1.3 Geography Chosen and Sample Selection**

#### **Geography Chosen**

##### **Sweden**

I have conducted my field work in both China and Sweden. The reason for choosing Sweden is because on one hand IKEA is a Swedish-based company, therefore I assumed that people are more familiar with this company. Secondly is because Swedish companies have been engaged in CSR work for long history and Sweden has been the leader of CSR all over the world (Swedish Institute, 2015). In 2013, Sweden ranked NO.1 in RobecoSAM Country Sustainability Ranking, which evaluated 59 countries on 17 social, environmental and governance criteria (Swedish Institute, 2015).

##### **China**

The reason to choose China is for comparison, as CSR was still a relative new field in China. The concept of CSR was first introduced to China mainly via global supply chains in the late 1990s (Lin, 2010). But it is not paid well attention to until the last decade (CSR Asia, Embassy of Sweden in Beijing, & Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility, 2015). And some companies only use CSR as a tool to meet government's requirements and stock exchanges, or use it as a communication instrument to build up good company image and public relationship (CSR Asia et al., 2015).

Although there were general fast development in recent years in CSR issues, it is agreed that the public still have relatively very low awareness of CSR (CSR Asia et al., 2015).

In China, metropolitan cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Eastern and Southern China are regarded as places where CSR is most developed in China, not only in terms of companies' CSR performance, but also CSR knowledge (CSR Asia et al., 2015). This is also part of the reason why I chose Shanghai.

Firstly because Shanghai is one of the CSR most developed city in China, CSR awareness and sustainability knowledge are generally higher among public, business and government officials (CSR Asia et al., 2015, p.12). Secondly is because IKEA opened its first Chinese store in Shanghai in 1998 (Pan, 2005), and before 2005, there were only two IKEA stores in China, the other one is in Beijing (Pan, 2005). Therefore, I assume that people in Shanghai are more familiar with IKEA as they have longer time experience with IKEA compared to people live in other cities. Therefore, consumers in IKEA store may have higher knowledge and awareness of both IKEA and sustainability (CSR).

Due to the facts I listed above, and the big differences lie between two big different countries, one with long developed CSR history, one is at the starting point, therefore I want to see how people under two different contexts view the same campaign launched by the same company. That is the reason I want to conduct my research in both China and Sweden.

### ***Control Variables***

Because that this project was conducted in two different countries, some variables must be controlled to be the same.

- Questionnaire design

In the questionnaire, all information includes background description, title, questions and options are exactly the same, apart from the language. Chinese survey was written in Chinese, and Swedish one was written in English (One limitation is that I should written in Swedish, which I overlooked when I designed the survey).

The survey was distributed to the exactly same number of people, in the same area around the store.

- Interviews

The same number of interviews were conducted (15) in IKEA store in both countries. The differences of interviewees lie between gender, age, education level, income level.

In the field work, I did not intentionally to make the interviews to include people have same gender, age, education level, income level, as I think it is not realistic to control these variables exactly the same in two countries, secondly my research not aims at finding out the relationships between demographics differences with CRM, my research is to find ordinary consumers' opinion on CRM. On the contrary, I think different demographics features provide more diversity views from consumers, which helps gain a wider and comprehensive view.

### **3.2 Quantitative Method and Questionnaire Design**

The main aim of questionnaire is to find out consumers' general view on IKEA campaign. Questions were designed around the main research question (Appendices).

It has distinguished the customers into two groups, one is consumers who already knew the "IKEA soft Toys for Education campaign", and the other group is those who had not heard of it before (see Figure 3). Contingency questions were used for that. Therefore it could test whether people buy soft toys for the cause (education). The closed-ended questions are all single choice from multiple options

questions. Closed-ended questions are used because they are more time-efficient, respondents can answer quickly, since in many situations people do not want to be disturbed or occupied too much time in questionnaire, and it is easy for researchers to analyze the results (Sincero, 2012).

One open-ended question ask consumers' view and suggestion on this CRM campaign. According to Sincero (2012), open-ended questions would give respondents more freedom to express exactly what they want to say, and more insightful for researcher to the topic, it's an ideal approach for qualitative research.

The questionnaire starts with background introduction explaining the purpose of the questionnaire is for master thesis, then followed by claiming its anonymity and question types. It also provides information of IKEA soft toy campaign in case some people do not know it, it serves as a good way to increase the accuracy of the answers.



**Figure 3.** A Chinese customer from Shanghai IKEA store was answering the questionnaire

### **3.2.1 Reliability and Validity Analysis**

Reliability is defined by Saunders et al. as “[t]he extent to which your data collection techniques or analysis procedures will yield consistent findings”(Alcheva, Cai & Zhao, 2009, p.37). Sometimes

respondents do not choose the answer based on their real behavior, therefore it reduces the reliability of research (Alcheva et al., 2009). In my research, due to the description of questions, language understandings, bias may exist. The length and quantity of questions may result in people's impatience, as when I conduct the survey some people said that "Are there many questions? If there is not so many I will take it." It is obvious in some cases people omitted many questions, in those cases questionnaires were not used for analysis. In some other cases, people omitted one or two questions, some may be due to the layout of the questions. Some questions are close to each other, people may easily omit them. This is also one big limitation of my research. Therefore there lies some degree of unreliability in the survey.

Validity is "concerned with whether the findings are really about what they appear to be about" (Alcheva et al., 2009, p.37). In my research, in order to keep high validity of the results, I have designed too many questions in the survey and wanted it to be as comprehensive as possible, some may be irrelevant, which may cause some invalidity.

### **3.3 Qualitative Method**

Qualitative method can describe the situation with more insights gaining (Alcheva et al., 2009). Due to the diversity of CRM topic, it is hard to get deep insights on how consumers view CRM and their sustainability perception only by questionnaire, as the questions written on the questionnaire are often too general and can not exactly describe what the researcher wants to imply. Therefore I have decided to use semi-structured interviews to get deeper insights.

Semi-structured interviews allow interviewer to prepare some questions beforehand, but also allow flexibility in the conversation which open questions and discussions may stay away from the prepared questions (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). Semi-structured interviews ensure credibility and comparability, and allow both researchers and interviewees to have more freedom express relevant questions to give them a deeper understanding (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). It is suggested that semi-structured interviews should be recorded since it may contain open questions and answers (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006), but in my research I did not record any interviews, since I feel recording would make interviewees feel uncomfortable during the interview, which may affect the answers of credibility and veracity. But during the interviews I wrote down interviewee's answers on notebook and later typed into the computer, therefore ensured the accuracy and integrity of the data.

The interview questions are designed around main research question, such as "Do you think IKEA soft Toys for Education campaign can increase your awareness on social problems such as poor child's education?" , "How do you view CRM campaign?" , "Does CRM campaign influence your purchase

behavior? ". But during the interviews there are many free views expressed by the interviewees, therefore I got broader and deeper understandings on how consumers view IKEA CRM campaign.

## 4 Theoretical Frameworks

### 4.1 Triple Bottom Line Theory (TBL)

TBL is often used to incorporate economic practice with social and environmental concern, to better understand and achieve sustainable business practice (Høgevoid et al., 2015). Research has shown that business can make great contributions to sustainability by building their business practice based on the principle of TBL (Høgevoid et al., 2015).

The concept of TBL was first used by John Elkington in 1994 in an article, and then he developed this idea in one of his books in 1998 (Zak, 2015). The basic bottom line is “**profit**” gaining, that is the primary goal of a company; the second bottom line is “**people**”, which signifies companies’ social responsible identity; the third is “**planet**”, corporations’ responsibility toward natural environment (Zak, 2015). That’s also the so called “3P” notion in literature- Profit, People, Planet (Zak, 2015).

TBL emphasizes the three pillars of sustainable development: social, economic and environmental sustainability (Høgevoid et al., 2015)(see Figure 4). All of the three dimensions are not independent, instead they are closely connected, one dimension could affect the other two dimensions (Høgevoid et al., 2015). It is impossible to sustain the natural environment without integrating with the social system, local laws, social equality, poverty reduction (Zak, 2015). Therefore companies must integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions into their overall development (Zak, 2015).



Figure 4. Three spheres of sustainability (Zak, 2015, p.253)

TBL starts to shake companies' only-for-profit-making view, as previously many companies assume their responsibility were to provide products or services in order to satisfy their customers, to maximize the profit (Høgevold et al., 2015). Although whether its companies' genuine sustainability concern or only a way to integrate into the big trend is unknown, TBL starts to add the social and environmental concern for organizations beyond their economic concern (Høgevold et al., 2015).

Nowadays TBL is being more and more recognized globally in business and governments, many organizations are taking actions to shoulder their social and environmental responsibility which they overlooked before, and to increase "stakeholder value" instead of "stakeholder benefits" by shifting from focusing on short-term economic benefits to broader social and environmental value (Høgevold et al., 2015).

However, it should be recognized that although many companies start to shoulder their social and environmental responsibility, however, how to evaluate their performance is still a difficult task. From the economic perspective, there are some index can be used to measure company's economic performance, such as market share, shareholder benefits, but the social and environmental performance are very hard to quantify, as it can not be measured in terms of monetary measurement, and it is difficult to find a uniform evaluation measurement, as different actions signify different meanings to different companies and industries (Høgevold et al., 2015). It is impossible to evaluate the cost of an oil-tank spillage accident into the ocean, the cost of depriving child's education opportunity, the cost of deforestation and related community loss (Zak, 2015).

### **Economic Pillar (Profit)**

Economic sustainability not only means company's ability to make profit to sustain itself, also indicates company's contributions to sustain the whole economic system, locally and internationally (Høgevold et al., 2015). The gaining of profit must in be in parallel with the rest two dimensions, the environment and people (Zak, 2015).

### **Environmental Pillar (Planet)**

Companies have taken actions to minimize their environmental impacts. Some focus on the company's internal environment, such as improving production and transport efficiency to reduce environmental footprint; some focus on external environment, such as reducing water, air pollution (Zak, 2015). Companies' environmental performance also refers to the natural resources and ecological impact they produce from their practices, such as land, water, energy resources use, and carbon emissions they produce (Zak, 2015).

## **Social Pillar (People)**

Compares to environmental performance, the social pillar is less undertaken and emphasized by organizations (Høgevold et al., 2015). Høgevold et al. (2015) had summarized TBL social pillar as “social sustainability is concerned with the social interaction relations, behavioral patterns and **values** between people” (p. 430). Corporations social performance refers to the influence corporations have on their employees, the society and communities where they may have impact when conducting the business practice (Zak, 2015). For example, companies’ internal responsibility towards employees in terms of fair wages, safe working environment; externally, companies “give out” their kindness to the society or community, such as supporting actions that aim at improving child’s education and health care (Zak, 2015). With the advent of CSR, it has been used to evaluate company’s social performance (Høgevold et al., 2015).

TBL involves various stakeholders, according to Zak (2015), the key of TBL to succeed is the widely accepted social awareness, the pressure from consumers and public, the commitment of employees. Those are the factors which are more likely to drive companies to make changes, as they are the ones to decide whether CSR practice stays in theory or go to practice (Zak, 2015). Therefore it is important to understand how the consumers and public perceive company’s TBL performance.

## **4.2 Sustainability Consciousness/Awareness**

Bennet and Bennet (2008) claimed that “*consciousness by definition is heightened sensitivity to, awareness of, and connection with our unconscious mind*” (p. 7). From the consumers’ perspective, consciousness depicts how consumers are aware of a certain topic (de Carvalho, Salgueiro & Rita, 2015). However, there is no exact definition of “consumer sustainability consciousness” and there is no research provide the scale and measurements aiming at consumers’ sustainability awareness, de Carvalho et al. (2015) try to explain the concept based on the notion of “sustainability”.

de Carvalho et al. (2015) offers a framework which try to evaluate the consumers’ sustainability consciousness from an integrated TBL sustainability perspective- environmental, social and economic. In the social aspect, the “Social Consciousness Construct” was used to evaluate consumers’ social concerns for social issues, based on the “Social Responsibility Scale”, which mainly captured a person’s social responsibility (de Carvalho et al. , 2015). Other scales such as Fraj and Martinez’s “Lifestyles Scale” explains how people concerned about sustainability via their daily life, such as a balanced diet, recycling, etc (de Carvalho et al. , 2015).

From environmental perspective, many studies focus on consumers’ green consumption behavior, such as how people choose certain products out of environmental concern (de Carvalho et al. , 2015).

Academically, “environmental consciousness” was defined by Borland the “*consumers’ response to green companies differs by how environmentally conscious they are*”. (de Carvalho et al . , 2015, p.403). It was further developed by Schlegelmilch et al., who construct the “Environmental Consciousness Construct” consists of 3 aspects: environmental knowledge scale , environmental attitudes scale and recycling behavior scale (de Carvalho et al., 2015).

#### **4.2.1 Green Consumer**

Shabani, Ashoori, Taghinejad, Beyrami & Fekri (2013, p. 1880) defined green consumer as “*consumers who are concerned about the environment in their purchase behavior, activities associated with the marketplace and consumption habits and consider the effect of their behavior on the natural environment around them*”.

de Carvalho et al .(2015) conducted a qualitative research with 20 Portuguese consumers who had shopped sustainably at least once, here “shopped sustainability” means they had bought something with sustainable traits. They found that consumers are more aware of 5 dimensions which drive them into the sustainability talk: Health Reasons (increasing concern out of health reasons); Environmental and Social Information (limited knowledge of public restricts the communication of sustainable products and consumption); Crisis Scenarios (the usual higher price of sustainable products in markets makes people consider carefully, especially during economic crisis period); Connection to Nature (people’s awareness on environmental issues such as organic farming and food, renewable energy ); Sense of Responsibility (people are very concerned of social welfare problems, such as local communities’ welfare, “good-for-people-and-planet”products, health security issues) (de Carvalho et al . , 2015). In my paper, CRM and related consumer sustainability awareness belong to the last dimension.

#### **4.3 Consumer Value**

**Value** has been defined by Holbrook as “*an interactive, relativistic preference experience*” (Smissen, 2012, p.37). Smissen (2012) argues that value building in CSR is an interactive process as it involved both the customers and companies, and the value consumers built is affected by both external and internal factors: Externally, the context or environment that customers live in; Internally, customers’ personal view or “subjective taste” to company’s practice or products/ service.

Green and Pelozo (2011) has identified three main value customer get from CSR: **emotional value (feeling good), social value (acceptance by others), and functional value (products/services related**

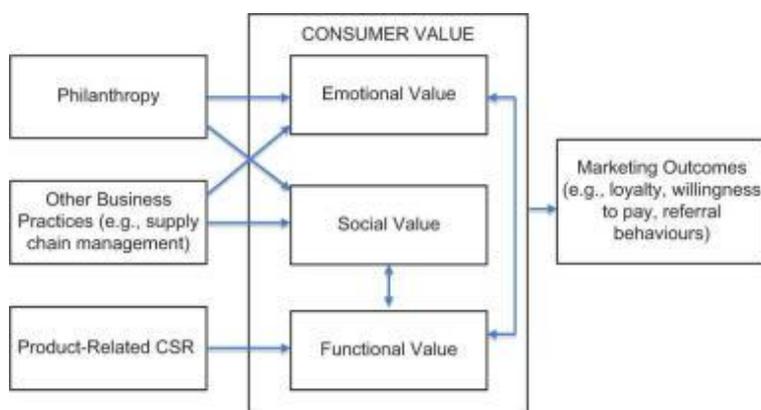
**performance).** Value is “treated as a concept that may be perceived differently and constructed differently”(Kovaljova & Chawla, 2013, p.2).

**Emotional value** refers to the “warm glow” that is obtained by customers when they conduct their purchase behavior in accordance with social or environmental demand, such as charity donations, and the “feeling good” perception was mostly emotional (Green & Peloza, 2011). For example, consumers get a feeling of satisfaction and think they contribute to environmental protection when they buy green products which are made of reused materials (Smissen, 2012).

**Social value** is created when consumers make responsible purchase, such as buying from company CSR related products/services, they are seen by others as “responsible consumers”, as “people make judgments about others based on the purchases they make” (Green & Peloza, 2011, p. 50). During this process consumers build social value as “at least satisfies the social norms and community expectations of them” (Kovaljova & Chawla, 2013, p.3). Green and Peloza (2011) argued that social value can be drawn in the meanwhile with emotional value when from the same type of CSR activities. For example, when consumers buy an environmental-friendly product from a social responsible company, he/she left a good impression on others as a “responsible consumer”, and therefore it may arise social value for him/her (Smissen, 2012).

**Functional value** refers to “The perceived utility acquired from an alternative’s capacity for functional, utilitarian, or physical performance” (Sheth, Newman & Gross, 1991, p. 160). This value relates to the direct benefits consumers get from the company’s products/service (Green & Peloza, 2011).

Green and Peloza (2011) suggested a consumption value model of company’s CSR initiatives (see Figure 5).



**Figure 5:** Consumption Value Model of CSR Effectiveness (Green & Peloza, 2011, p.51)

## 5 Result Analysis and Discussion

### 5.1 Quantitative Results

Questionnaire are mainly used to get information about consumers' general idea on IKEA Soft Toy Campaign.

#### 5.1.1 Demographics and Social-economic background of Respondents

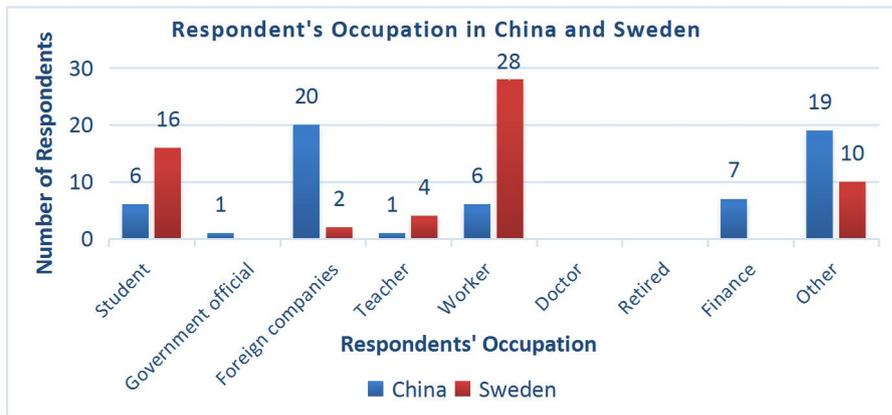
**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics of Respondents

Categories		China		Sweden	
		Number of Respondents	Percentage	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	25/60	41.7%	24/60	40.0%
	Female	35/60	58.3%	36/60	60.0%
Age	<20	4/60	6.7%	6/60	10.0%
	20-30	37/60	61.7%	24/60	40.0%
	30-40	17/60	28.3%	16/60	26.7%
	40-50	2/60	3.3%	10/60	16.7%
	>50	0/60	0.0%	4/60	6.7%
Education Level	Mater and above	9/57	15.8%	22/54	40.7%
	Bachelor	44/57	77.2%	12/54	22.2%
	High school and below	4/57	7.0%	20/54	37.1%
	did not answer	3		6	
Income Level (Chinese: RMB; Swedish:KR)	< 5000 RMB (< 20000KR)	17/58	29.3%	28 /56	50%
	5000-8000RMB (20000- 25000KR)	18/58	31.0%	14/56	25.0%

	8000-10000RMB (25000-30000KR)	11/58	19.0%	4 /56	7.1%
	> 10000 RMB (>30000kr)	12/58	20.7%	10/56	17.9%
	did not answer	2		4	

I did not intentionally to keep the equal balance of male and female and the same quantity in two countries, but coincidentally, there is similar amount of male and female respondents in both countries, with female (60%) slightly more than male (40%) male. But age, education and income level differs a lot (see Table 1).

### Occupation



**Figure 6. Chinese and Swedish Respondents' Occupation**

Respondents' occupation differs a lot in two countries (see Figure 6). Almost half of Swedish respondents were workers (46.7%), 12 were students, 10 worked in other discipline such as own-employed or business, urban planning. However, among Chinese respondents, the majority worked in foreign companies (20/60,33.3%) and other discipline(19/60,31.7%) such as private Chinese companies, engineering, designing, 10 were students, 6 were workers. As there is big difference lies between people's occupation in two countries, this could be one factor that result in the differences.

### 5.1.2 Consumers' Perception of IKEA Company

**Table 2: Consumers' perception of IKEA company**

Question	Answer	China (number of respondents)	China (percentage of respondents)	Sweden (number of respondents)	Sweden(percentage of respondents)
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<b>Familiarity of IKEA</b>	Very familiar	9/60	15.0%	42/56	75.0%
	Basic know	48/60	80.0%	14/56	25.0%
	Barely know	3/60	5.0%	0	
	did not answer			4/60	
<b>Frequency of visiting IKEA</b>	Few times a week	0/60	0.0%	0/60	0.0%
	Few times a month	13/60	21.7%	22/60	36.7%
	Few times half a year	21/60	35.0%	20/60	33.3%
	Few times a year	14/60	23.3%	18/60	30.0%
	Barely	12/60	20.0%	0/60	0.0%
<b>Whether IKEA is a responsible company</b>	Yes	46/60	76.7%	44/60	73.3%
	No	0/60	0.0%	4/60	6.7%
	Not sure	14/60	23.3%	12/60	20.0%

As can be seen from table 2, most Swedish consumers (75.0%) are very familiar with IKEA, as IKEA is a Swedish based company, while most Chinese only have basic knowledge of IKEA. But majority consumers in both country think IKEA is a responsible company (76.7% vs. 73.3%). Many of them visit IKEA based on a semi-annual or annual frequency.

Consumers' familiarity and trust towards IKEA may affect their perception on IKEA's sustainability initiatives, whether they trust their CSR actions.

### 5.1.3 Answers related to IKEA Soft Toy Campaign

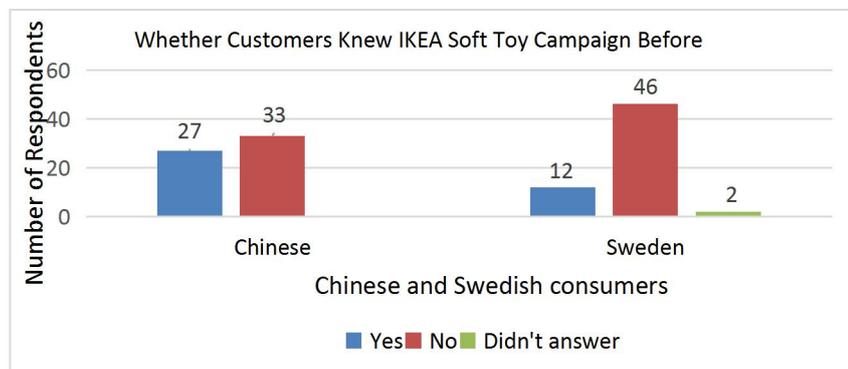


Figure 7. Customers' knowledge of IKEA Soft Toy Campaign

Among Chinese respondents, 55% knew this campaign before. However, more than half Swedish customers (79.3%) did not know this campaign before, only 12 of them heard of it (see Figure 7).

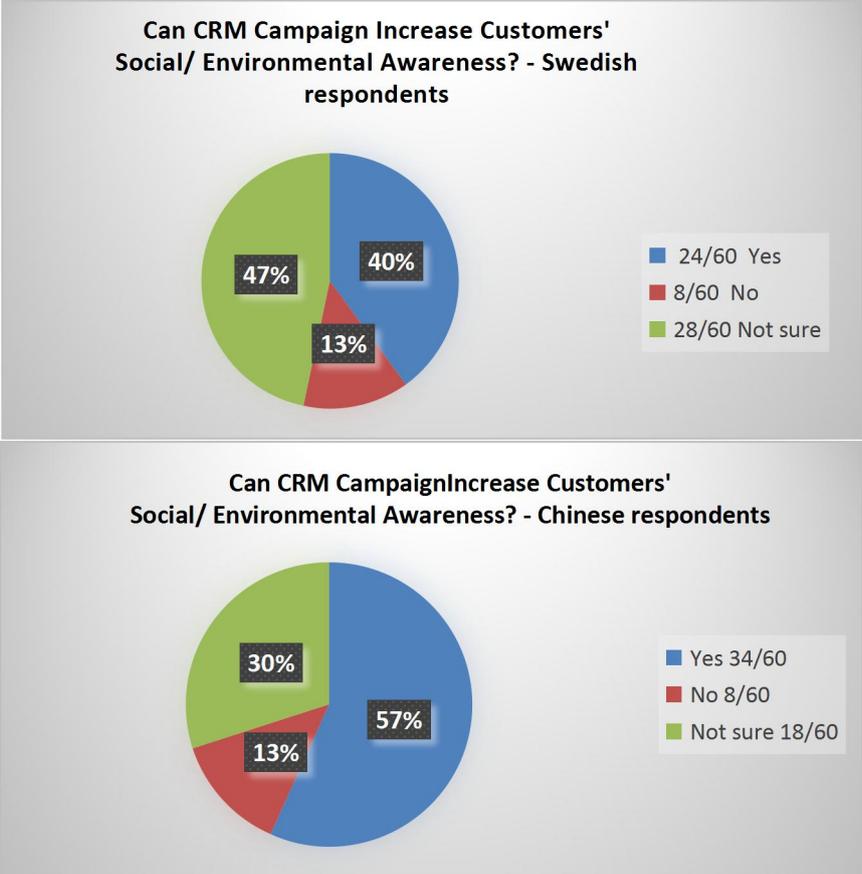
Among 27 Chinese respondents who had heard of this campaign before, 19 claimed that they buy for the soft toy per se, not for the good cause. While among 12 Swedish customers who knew this campaign, 8 said that they bought for the good cause. 17 Chinese respondents claimed that they had participated other companies' CRM campaign before, with similar number of Swedish customers (14).

**5.1.4 Triple Bottom Line Analysis**

**Connections with Sustainability Talk (People)**

**Sustainability Awareness**

The first research question reflects in the survey is question NO.13: "Do you think this kind of campaign increase your understanding and awareness of social problems (such as needy children)", 56.7% (34/60) Chinese consumers chose the answer yes, compared to 40% Swedish consumers who had the same answer, and almost half of Swedish consumers (28/60, 46.7%) chose the answer "Not sure" (see Figure 8).



**Figure 8.** Consumers' Perception on Sustainability Awareness

### ***Sustainable Development***

In the 11<sup>th</sup> question from the questionnaire “Do you think this kind of activities would promote the social sustainable development?”, more than half people chose yes in both countries (Chinese 68.3% vs. Swedish 57.1%), 32.1% Swedish and 26.7% Chinese consumers chose “not sure”.

### ***Social Responsibility***

More than half (63.3%) Chinese consumers claimed that when they donated money to NGO via this purchase, their sense of social responsibility was expressed during this process. But Swedish consumers were more skeptical about that, with 43.3% thought so but same amount (43.3%) were not sure about that (compared to 31.7% Chinese consumers).

### ***Benefits From this campaign- Company side (Profit)***

8/27 Chinese respondents who knew this campaign claimed that they bought soft toy because of this campaign, the number of Swedish customers was 8/12. Therefore it can be inferred that CRM not work very prominently to increase related products sales.

78.8% Chinese respondents who did not know this campaign claimed that they would buy for the good cause after knowing this campaign, compared with 39.1% Swedish who had the same answer. Around half Swedish customers (52.2%) chose “not sure” whether this would affect their purchase.

However, it should be noticed that there is gap between attitude and purchase behavior. The attitude-behavior gap refers to the discrepancy between consumers’ purchase statements with their actual purchase behavior (Smussen, 2012). Due to the gap between attitude and real behavior, and the easily-answered feature of questionnaires (just tick yes or no), it may result in some uncertainties and irresponsible answers. Mohr, Webb & Harris (2001) argued that answer questionnaire questions is so easy, participants do not need to take any risks, and the “cost of answering the question” is much lower than the “cost of the actual behavior” (p.50). Therefore what consumers claim to buy, not necessarily will transform into actual purchase behavior.

However, profit not necessarily means the visible “financial” monetary benefits, economic performance such as market share, shareholder benefits, consumer satisfaction are also “profit” to companies (Høgevold et al., 2015, p.430).

74.6% Chinese and 30% Swedish consumers claimed that this campaign increased their brand loyalty to IKEA. 36.7% Swedish claimed that it would not increase their brand loyalty to IKEA, 33.3% were not sure. There are big differences in two countries consumers in term of this question. But

increased trust and good reputation can be possible profits to companies, which in the long run could also bring companies in financial profit.

### ***Personal Perception on Sustainability Talk (Planet)***

51.7% Chinese and 36.7% Swedish respondents claimed that they care about environmental/social issues in their daily life. 13.3% Swedish respondents did not care compared to 5.0% Chinese customers. 50.0% Swedish and 43.3% Chinese respondents shows their sustainability care sometimes.

Personal perception on sustainability also affect their attitudes towards CRM, as their sustainability background knowledge and sense of social responsibility affect their views on CRM, and how efficient CRM can work on people.

### ***5.1.5 Factors affect Consumers' Participation on CRM Campaign***

#### ***Company reputation***

63.3% Chinese and 60% Swedish consumers claimed that it depends on the company's reputation to decide whether they will support CRM campaign. Same amount of Chinese and Swedish consumers (6.7%) claimed that they would not support this campaign if it was no IKEA company.

#### ***Price***

More half both Chinese (85%) and Swedish (66.7%) consumers claimed that if the price of the soft toy increases due to this donation campaign, they could still purchase it, but there is a price increasing limit about it. 11.7% Chinese and 20% Swedish customers claimed that they would not purchase it if the price increases. 13.3% Swedish compared with 3.3% Chinese respondents said that no matter how much the price increases, they would still purchase the toys.

#### ***NGO's Reputation***

More than half Chinese and Swedish consumers (34/60,56.7%) claimed that if the NGO is not UNICEF but other small NGOs, they would consider the NGO's reputation to see whether they will still participate.

#### ***Money Donated to NGO***

43.3% Chinese and 34.5% Swedish consumers claimed that no matter how much money it donated to NGO, they would purchase it. 25% Swedish and 20.7% Chinese consumers claimed that money donated to NGO must over €1 in this campaign, otherwise they would not purchase it. But most people were not sure about the money factor, 44.8% Swedish compared to 31.7% Chinese.

### **Transparency of CRM Campaign**

61.7% Chinese consumers were skeptical of the money donated to the NGO, they claimed that more transparent system is needed to monitor the money donation process, compared to only 24.1% Swedish consumers. 34.5% Swedish trusted the money donation process, compared with 16.7% Chinese. 41.4% Swedish and 21.7% Chinese consumers were not sure it.

### **Green Consumer**

In this survey, 58.3% Chinese participants regarded themselves as “**green consumer**”, compared with 48.3% Swedish. 35% Chinese and 41.4% Swedish consumers claimed they were not “green consumer”, with 10.3% Swedish and 6.7% Chinese consumers did not know what is “green consumer”. One Swedish participants did not choose from the answers, and wrote that “between yes and no”.

### **5.1.6 Customer’s General View on CRM and Open Question**

People had different views on CRM. 50% Chinese participants compared with 39.3% Swedish claimed that it is a way of showing company’s social responsibility, and it could help the society. 34.9% Chinese and 28.6% customers claimed that CRM helped consumers to increase their consciousness and understanding of social problems, 10.6% Chinese vs. 32.1% Swedish customers viewed CRM as only a way company used to promote sales, only 4.5% Chinese respondents claimed that it of no use.

### **Open question**

Last question in the questionnaire asks “Your view and suggestion”. Most people did not write anything, only 3 participants wrote their opinions and reflections on it. One Swedish wrote “*Their company idea is based on cheap stuff, until they take a big responsibility, this campaign is just a scratch on the surface*”.

2 out of 60 Chinese consumers answered this question, one answered “*I just wanted to buy a IKEA style toy*”, one answered “*Since it is for good cause, the price should be reasonable, but I think the price of the toys ( some) are still very expensive.*”

## 5.2 Qualitative Results and Discussion

### 5.2.1 Sustainability Awareness

From the questionnaire results, there seems to have more positive results towards CRM's "awareness raising" role. From the interviews, both positive and negative attitudes are given by consumers.

#### *Supporting View*

Some customers claimed the increasing awareness toward children's education via this campaign<sup>1</sup>:



*"It's a good starting point of the company, and it can increase my awareness and care on social problems, needy children's education is a really big problem."*



*"I think it's a good campaign, it can help to increase social awareness, and promote sustainable development, to help people who are in need. It lets us understand the social problems in society."*



*"I don't pay attention to social charity problems often, so that's a good way to let us (customers) know the problems. It is good for people who take part in this campaign, it will increase consumers' awareness."*



*"I am not aware of this activity before, I buy toys from IKEA, but I didn't notice it. It's a good initiative and it's useful to improve public's social consciousness. "*

The comments listed above show CRM campaign can have positive impact on consumers' cause problem awareness, especially for those who do not pay attention to social problems often. Some scholars also claim that CRM can build up public awareness. Endacott (2004) argues that CRM can increase public awareness, participation and care for social issues. Pringle and Thompson argue that from the consumer's perspective, CRM raises public awareness on social sustainability, and it demonstrates consumers' social responsibility (Farache et al., 2008). In a research conducted by M.Glavas & Mish (2014) with 8 TBL companies that have more than 15 years experience of integrating environmental and/or social practice with economic goals, one respondent reaffirmed CRM' **awareness raising role**, he/she claimed that by means of implementing TBL activities, it helped

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<sup>1</sup> In all of the comments listed below, Chinese flag represented Chinese customer's comments from IKEA Shanghai store, Swedish flag represents Swedish customers' comments from Malmö, this was inspired by LUMES student Mendle's (2013) thesis, Lund University, Sweden .

to inform and **educate** the public, through the transparent information distribution process, it helped increase consumers' **sustainability consciousness**.

### ***Skeptical View***

Uncertainties and critiques on sustainability awareness were mainly came from two different groups' opinions. **One group claimed that they already knew a lot of social or environmental issues, they cared about sustainability issues in their daily lives and had high background knowledge.** Their awareness of the issues was already "high" enough, which CRM campaign could not increase their awareness anymore, as they have already known a lot about the cause issues. The statements listed below explained this situation:



*"It will not increase my awareness, because I have already known very much (about social problems), I study human rights in Lund University, and I care about social problems in daily life, I've known much from my study."*



*"For me, I don't think it's a good way to help increase the awareness on social problems, on one hand, I pay attention to social problems often in life, read newspapers and watch TV; on the other hand, I will not demonstrate my social responsibility via this kind of company activity, instead, I donate to charities directly."*



*"It will not increase my social awareness, as I am concerned about public welfare and take part in some activities in ordinary life, my consciousness was not from this kind of activity."*

It is recognized that in the new era consumers are more knowledgeable, educated and aware than ever before (Broderick et al., 2003), therefore the "awareness raising" role of CRM may not come into play for consumers with high social care background.

**The other group claimed that the information is too limited to "reach the level" that can increase their awareness.**



*"I have heard of this IKEA soft toy campaign before, it not necessarily increase my awareness, more information need(s) to be provided, it's too limited information on the advertisement. But I think it is still a good campaign."*



*"It can help to increase the social awareness, but I think company should also increase the publicity, like (to provide) more advertisements in store, or public billboards, it's too limited information there".*

Simon (1995) also stated this point in his research, he claimed that consumers are increasingly acceptable of company philanthropic practice, but the information they got about the practice is not enough, therefore it may not be efficient to increase people's awareness. He also pointed out that the importance of advertising/PR practice to help increase people's awareness, successful cases such as McDonald who put large expenses on advertising and collaborated with the Environmental Defense Fund, which has achieved more success and higher awareness level (Simon, 1995).

From the results, it can be seen that CRM can to some extent increase consumers' awareness to the cause, but the extent depends on the consumers' background knowledge of CSR/CRM. In Broderick et al.'s research (2003), they also found that there were big differences lying between consumers in terms of the level of awareness to the cause activities. Broderick et al. (2003) argued that many consumers were aware of some CRM campaigns, but the knowledge of the story behind that customers had varied a lot. In addition to that, information provided from the advertisement also affect consumers' perception.

## **5.2.2 Sustainability and Consumer Value**

### ***Sustainability and Symbolic (Emotional and Social) Value***

Green and Peloza (2011) argued that the most commonly drawn value is **emotional and social value** from company's CSR initiatives, especially for corporate philanthropic campaigns. But in my research, it seems that this is not the case. Only one interviewee mentioned the feeling of "doing good" :



*"...Individuals also express their **individual responsibility** via participating this kind of activity (CRM)."*

And no respondents mentioned **social value** gaining from CRM, one question in the survey asked if consumers regard themselves as "green consumer", however, it is what consumer looks at him/herself, rather than what the others see them, therefore it is difficult to judge whether they gain social value from the CRM campaign

In Kovaljova and Chawla's study (2013), they studied whether sustainability can be an added value for customers. They conducted a case study on Hotel Ermitage in Evian, France, as the hotel has focused a lot on environmental sustainability. He found that the section of "**social value**" was also **very vague**, only 4 out of 30 interviewees felt that it was important to "get social acceptance by supporting green organizations", others did not see the connections between sustainability and social value, one respondent claimed that he cared about sustainability, but it was not for "show off "

to others (Kovaljova & Chawla, 2013). Therefore it can be inferred that social value seems vague in CRM activities.

### ***Sustainability and Functional Value***

Many scholars claim that there is a connection between sustainability and functional value, both positively and negatively (Kovaljova & Chawla, 2013). There are some respondents in my interviews expressed the perceived **positive functional value** from this IKEA campaign.



*"... We all know that IKEA has good food, good quality (stuff), therefore good quality toy notion is also delivered (via this campaign among customers)".*



*"... I don't buy for the campaign, but I think IKEA do have good quality toys, their toys are made of environmental-friendly material, the textile are non-toxic, which are good and safe for the children. I have a one-year child, therefore it's the reason why I buy the soft toys in IKEA. IKEA has good reputation for being a responsible company, we all know that, therefore I feel assured and safe to buy stuff in IKEA".*

Some scholars argue that the connections between CSR and consumers' perceived improved products functional value (price and product quality) is vague (Green & Peloza, 2011). Hoeffler and Keller (2001) claimed that CSR programs "would not be expected to have much impact on more functional, performance-related considerations" (p.79). However, my research seems contradicts with this argument. Functional value seems prominent among consumers. But some other scholars also claim that CSR could improve consumers' perceptions on the functional performance of a product (Green & Peloza, 2011). In Green and Peloza's (2011) research, a large number of interviewees (19/30) claimed that the functional value is the major factor or even the only one to drive them consider CSR when comes to make decisions. One respondent replied with his examples "Fuel efficiency standards save the environment, but after a few years, long term, it saves you money. When these things go hand in hand, I find these are a real seller for me" (Green & Peloza, 2011, p. 51). This implies that the traditional products benefits drive consumers to participate in company's CSR campaigns. Another prominent case is the purchase of organic food. A research done by Essoussi and Zahaf found that the main reason for consumers to buy organic food is health reasons, which is still the direct benefits (functional value) consumers can get from organic food (Smissen, 2012).

Kovaljova and Chawla's (2013) research also found a large number of respondents associated sustainable initiatives with "a guarantee of high quality", "better health", etc. Consumers generally put **functional value** in a higher position compared to social and emotional value (Kovaljova &

Chawla, 2013). In my case, consumers claimed that they buy the soft toy because of the product's good quality, which also indicates that they think highly of the **functional value** of the products.

### ***Sustainability and Educational value***

In Green and Peloza's research (2011), they identified three values (**functional, emotional, social value**) consumers perceived from CSR activity, which some were in high priority, some were vague. These three values are the most distinctive ones and most commonly found in CSR activities. Sheth, Newman & Gross (1991) defined 5 values derived from CSR, in addition to those three values, CSR could create **epistemic** and **conditional value**. While Lai (1995, p.383) identified 8 values connected with CSR, **functional, social, affective, epistemic, aesthetic, hedonic, situational, holistic value**. The differences results from the attributes of different CSR activities, also different products/ services related. In my research, I found consumers could get "**educational value**" from this particular IKEA campaign. A Swedish consumers said:



*"... But I think it is still a good campaign. **It is a good way for educating (the children), for families who come with (their) children, it's a good way to teach their children about social care, to teach (them) social sustainability, there are much more happening in the world.. (It can) educate the children to build up their social values when they are young. It's still a tiny little way to build up "good awareness".***

This customer claimed that it is a good way to educate customers who come with their children about the social problems in society, to build up children's sense of "social care" when they were young. The "educating role" to some extent coincides the with "awareness raising" role, both play a part in educating people about social or environmental problems.

Green and Peloza (2011) suggested that the three values consumers receive from CSR are not interdependent with each other, but rather **interrelated**, one value can have either a positive or negative impact other value(s). In addition to that, different forms of CSR generate different forms of values, some CSR only create one kind of value, but some CSR can create several forms of those values in the same time (Green & Peloza, 2011). In my research, due to the speciality of this case (poor children's education) and the products (soft toys), functional and educational value are in high priority among consumers, however, if it were other cases with other causes (such as breast cancer or tree-planting), the results may be different.

### 5.2.3 Sustainability or Profitability?

Although more and more companies start to integrate social and environmental sustainability into their economic bottom line, take actions under the guidance of TBL, however, they are still criticized for focusing much on profit maximization. “People” and “Planet” only come after profit. Some people argue that TBL is used by business as a tool for maximizing profit (Zak, 2015). In my research, there are some respondents expressed this point of view, people think CRM as a tool of marketing and making profit:

 *“It will not influence my purchase behavior, and I am very skeptical about the company’s intention. I think company mainly use it as a tool to earn money, rather than shoulder social responsibility and care for the society. It is just a marketing method, and it will not increase my social awareness or attention to social problems, there is no direct link between the two.”*

 *“... It will not affect my purchase, I only buy it if I need it... I think more like a making-profit behavior companies uses than corporate social responsibility... It is just a way of marketing”*

 *“I don’t know... I am not sure about that... It may be a way of company used to gain profit”*

Some people expressed a mixed feeling:

 *“...It’s a good marketing campaign, but it also shows company’s social responsibility, and it’s a good cause.”*

 *“... It is (CRM campaign) both good for consumers, also good for company to gain profit.”*

 *“...But I think it’s a good initiative, it can both increase the sales and good for consumers, it’s a win-win situation, and it’s also good for the “cause””.*

Friedman (1970) claimed that **“the social responsibility of business is to increase its profits”**, “There is one and only one social responsibility of business—to use its resources and engage in activities designed to **increase its profits** so long as it stays within the rules of the game, which is to say, engages in open and free competition without deception or fraud”(p. 214). He argued that in present society, “capitalism”, “profits”, “soulless corporation” is widely known by people, therefore “social responsibility” comes as a way for corporations “to generate goodwill as a **by-product** of expenditures that are entirely justified in its own self interest” (Friedman, 1970, p. 213). Friedman argued that “corporations” do not have the ability to have “responsibilities”, only people can have responsibilities (Friedman, 1970). He claimed that “a corporation is an artificial person and in this sense may have artificial responsibilities, but ‘business’ as a whole cannot said to have

responsibilities, even in this vague sense” (p. 211). Therefore he argued that it is the executive of the company who put up the social responsibility initiative, rather than the “company”. Nowadays some companies use the notion of “sustainability” to show that they are keep pace with the current global “sustainability” trend to increase their competitive edge in business, rather than genuinely care about sustainability. Scholars also argue that the efficiency of CSR depends on whether corporations take actions out of **genuine** sustainability care or just “**window dressing**”. From Zak’s research (2015), there are also respondents claim that practice around TBL is more of a marketing activity, and it is hard to tell what’s the company’s genuine purpose (Zak, 2015)

From another point of view, no matter how “**sustainable**” marketing is, it is still “**marketing**”. Kotier and Kelier claimed that “**one of the shortest good definitions of marketing is meeting need profitably, and the purpose of marketing is to sell more stuff to more people more often for more money in order to make more profit**” (Alcheva et al., 2009, p.13), which implies that the essence of marketing is to make profit.

#### **5.2.4 Differences Between Chinese and Swedish consumers**

From the discussions I talked above, there are some differences lie between Swedish and Chinese customers. Some Chinese are skeptical of the real purpose of companies, as well as the transparency of the process of money donated to NGO, as there are some notorious philanthropic cases in China, which causes the low trust towards NGO and low social credibility in society. One Chinese interviewee expressed this view:



*“It may increase my awareness to social or environmental problems, but in general I am more skeptical about public welfare, especially involved with business corporations, I don’t trust the social philanthropy very much, such as the **scandal of Red Cross**<sup>2</sup>. Due to the national conditions of China, the philanthropy reputation is bad, so public lost trust to this kind of situation. Therefore it’s hard to do (CRM) in China, but in Sweden it may be different. ”*

In addition to that, one Chinese consumer showed his skeptical view toward the “**cause group**” ---the **targeted group** from IKEA campaign, he said that:



*“This target donation group of this campaign is too broad, it is donated to the children in the*

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<sup>2</sup> On 21st June 2011, a 20-year-old Chinese woman named Meimei Guo with the identity of manager of Red Cross Society of China(RCSC), showed off her luxurious lifestyle on Sina microblog (Chinese Twitter) with Sports cars Maserati, expensive bags and grand villa, which caused fierce public critiques of corruption of RCSC and plummeted social credibility (Hong & FlorCruz, 2011).

*whole world, but there is still a large number of needy children in China who are in urgent need of help. If it targets in Chinese children, I will think about it. ”*

IKEA soft toy campaign targeted on children from poor communities all over the world- Asia, Africa and Middle and Eastern Europe (IKEA, 2015), however, this consumer claimed that in China there are still a lot of poor children who are in desperate need of educational resources, not only education, even numerous impoverished children are in a condition of lacking living resources such food and water to sustain their basic life<sup>3</sup>. Therefore it can be inferred that the customer’s **living social context, and the causes’ social context** affect their perception on the cause and the campaign.

*Another Chinese customer claimed the personal value connected with it.*



*“It will not influence my awareness (to social problems), I think it’s based on an **intrinsic value** people have.”*

Endacott (2004) claimed that consumers make contributions to a good cause through purchase based on their **personal value**. Rowley and Moldoveanu argued that CSR evaluations matter to people’s own **beliefs, values, morals and priorities** (Green & Peloza, 2011). One customer who was a new immigrant to Sweden expressed the matters of personal **“priority”**.



*“ I am an immigrant and just moved to Sweden. I will not spend my money on this, because right now I have more to care about. I have no job, and my money was mainly used in daily necessities..... I am more skeptical about it, the money consumers donated may not go to good cause, it will not increase my social awareness.”*

**This comment states that consumers’ social-economic situation affects their perception and participation on CRM, one Chinese customer also expressed similar opinion:**



*“...It(CRM) can have a positive influence on social awareness, but not very significant. Public welfare (issues) is too far away from us (a topic which is too far away in normal people’s life)”.*

Research has shown that consumers’ attitudes and perceptions on global company’s philanthropic initiatives were affected by culture and country context, therefore people from different countries and different background view CRM differently (Green & Peloza, 2011).

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<sup>3</sup> In 2013, there were around 40.08 million Chinese children (between 0-15 years old) lived below the relative poverty line (rural area: 4213RMB(≈5281SEK)/capita per year; urban area: 9659RMB(≈12109SEK) /capita per year), accounting for 16.7% of all Chinese children (Xu & Wang, 2015). Among them, about 10.08 million lived below the absolute poverty line (rural area: 2736RMB(≈3430SEK)/capita per year; urban area: 4476RMB(≈5611SEK)/capita per year) (Sheng, 2015).

The different stages of sustainability development in these two different countries affect people's perception, as Sweden has long history of sustainability practice (Swedish Institute, 2015), on one hand, consumers are more knowledgeable towards CSR, on the other hand, consumers are more cautious towards it.

Compared to developed countries where CSR development is often driven by public and NGOs, in China, the Chinese government is regarded as the main driver in promoting CSR (Lin, 2010, p.85). Besides, in Western countries, consumers play critical role in advancing CSR development (Lin, 2010, p.85). Consumers' purchase decision has strong effect on deciding companies' future development direction as that is where company's profits from as to satisfy their customers, therefore it may shape company's behavior to take sustainability into consideration (Lin, 2010, p.97). However, the awareness of CSR among Chinese consumers are still very low, and consumers did not show big interest on demanding social and environmental sustainability manners from a product (Lin, 2010, p.97). In terms of purchasing, price and physical functions of products are still primary consideration of Chinese consumers, as "live within one's income" and "thrift" are still main consumption culture in China (Lin, 2010, p.97).

In addition to external stakeholders, some Chinese companies claim that it was unrealistic to fit into the global CSR environment with the global CSR standards due to the economic development situation in China, some of the indigenous corporations were still at the starting stage of company development, therefore they do not have so much resources and capital to devote to protecting the environment and supporting human rights (Lin, 2010). Most of the companies are still focusing on the economic interests (Lin, 2010). Some companies think CSR as a "cost" that cuts into profitability and not as something that can create value and help to improve business performance (CSR Asia, 2015, p.9).

### **5.3 What Not Matters to You, Matters to Them**

#### ***Story of the Boy and the Starfish***

"Once upon a time, a man walking along a beach saw a boy picking up starfish and throwing them into the sea.

He asked the boy why he was throwing starfish into the sea.

The boy replied, "The tide is going out. If I don't throw them in, they'll dry up and die."

The man smiled patronisingly and said, "But, there are miles of beach and thousands of starfish on every mile. You can't possibly make a difference!"

The boy smiled, bent down, picked up another starfish, and threw it into the sea.

"Well," he said, "I made a difference for that one." " (BBC, 2014)

### ***Individual Value Matters***

This famous story shows that philanthropy can be valuable to individuals (BBC, 2014). Although the debates around CSR are still fierce and controversial, there are lots of problems need to be solved, **but** as the good cause practice happens, no matter how many recipients from the cause group benefits from companies' CSR initiatives, how much help they receive, for every single person from the group who are really in need, that matters to them, which for some of them the experience could be a changing point in their lives.

Howard W. Buffett, lecturer from Columbia University once said "**philanthropy isn't about writing a check; it's about the value we create when we invest in local communities, follow our principles, and make a lasting difference.**" (Krakoski, 2015, p.5).

Even small things can makes big difference.

Although the genuine purpose of companies to conduct CSR practice are still suspicious, whether it is out of altruistic or egoistic reasons still needs to be discovered, as long as it fulfills needs of people who are in need (even not all of them), creates value both in public and the recipients, it contributes to the development of **sustainability for both current and future generation**. Jones (1980) argues that the importance and contribution of CSR is in the process, rather than on tangible outcomes: "corporate behaviour should not, in most cases, be judged by the decisions actually reached, but by the process by which they are reached" (p. 65).

## **6 Conclusion**

Due to the **complexity** and **intersectionality** between different subjects in the topic of sustainability, and the complicated attributes of business relates to sustainability talk--the basic "**profit-making**" attribute and controversial "**doing good for people and planet**" attributes, it is difficult to grasp the full picture of business sustainability. Therefore this research starts from a small fracture of the whole picture, focusing on one kind of business's sustainable practice (CRM), and tries to understand the connections between consumers' sustainable perception with it.

The case study from IKEA company “Soft Toy For Education” CRM campaign has proved the complexity and controversy of public’s view towards business CSR practice. On one hand, CRM can possibly play a role in increasing customer’s awareness on social problems, but consumers’ sustainability background knowledge and awareness affect their perception. Personal value and the social context that consumers live in also influence consumers’ attitudes towards CRM. The differences between Swedish and Chinese consumers from qualitative results show that country and culture play a role in shaping people’s sustainability view.

Høgevold et al. (2015) suggested that even though integrating TBL within companies’ structure and practice is a difficult task, it can speed up the pace of transition to sustainability and lead companies go further. The TBL construct can fulfill its potential and significance when practitioners not only view it as a business practice, but also linked to the broader sustainable development goal (Høgevold et al., 2015). Although CSR is still a controversial topic, its role in the sustainability talk should not be completely negated. Consumers claimed the emotional, functional and educational value drawn from company’s sustainable practice from this IKEA case. And for every single recipient in cause group who are in need, the support from business’s sustainable practice also matters a lot to them, no matter financially, materially, or spiritually.

## **6.1 Limitations**

One big limitation in my study is the research method, integrated qualitative and quantitative research seem too much for my research, especially from the questionnaire design. As I want my research to be more comprehensive and cover as much as possible at the beginning, therefore designed lots questions in the questionnaire, but later found that it is too broad, some are more of a marketing perspective. This makes it difficult for me to analyze from a comprehensive and deep view in later analysis, and it is hard to stay focus on my main research question, as I have taken some roundabout courses and spent lots of time trying to link all the relevant factors into an integrated talk, which is over ambitious and very time, energy consuming. In addition to that, the number of quantitative method is limited (60), which can not really be representative. Therefore I would only focus qualitative method and analyze deeply rather than try to cover as many as possible if I were do it again.

Another limitation is the case chosen. I chose IKEA because it is famous for its sustainability initiatives, and therefore may be popular among consumers, especially for Chinese consumers that CSR is still a developing topic. However, it should be noticed that if this project is done in other companies with different CSR reputation, the results of consumers’ sustainability awareness and value may be different.

Field work done in both China and Sweden was also a challenge and limitation. As I want to see how people in two countries with different sustainability and development context view CSR differently, however, I did not focus too much on trying to find the reasons why they view it differently, as I feel it is a such complex topic and could lead to another master thesis topic. And when I conducted the field work in IKEA store, I just went to the store directly and interview consumers, I did not ask for permission from IKEA staff, which may violate research's ethics.

Another limitation is the time difference when I conducted my research. As this IKEA campaign was supported to finish by the end of 2015, but when I conducted my field work in Shanghai, advertisements about this campaign were still placed in store and it was still going, however, when I conduct this research in Malmö, there was no ad in the store, which may cause bias to results.

## **6.2 Research Implications**

As the limitations I listed above, future research can extend to study cases in companies with low CSR popularity, to get the full understanding of consumers' sustainability perception with CSR practice. And in order to get better understanding on how CSR works in different countries, case study focuses on one country would provide more insightful sights.

Secondly, due to the gap between attitude and behavior, studies could also research on whether their claimed sustainability value and awareness has transformed into actions, whether it really changes their sustainability care and behavior in daily life. And further research could also see whether companies have better understandings of CSR and efficiently integrate TBL concept into their sustainability actions, and take an active role in educating the public with positive sustainability value and awareness.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Research Survey for Chinese Consumers (Chinese)

#### 宜家“毛绒玩具教育义卖”活动调查问卷

尊敬的消费者您好！我是来自于瑞典隆德大学的学生，此次调查问卷是毕业论文项目为研究消费者对宜家“毛绒玩具教育义卖”的了解和认识。问卷匿名填写，所有信息仅用于论文中的数据  
分析，绝不会泄露信息或者转为其他用途，答案无对错之分，请您如实作答。您的答复对我的研究起着至关重要的作用，感谢您的参与！（宜家毛绒玩具义卖活动：每买一个毛绒玩具，1 欧元捐献给联合国儿童基金会用于贫困儿童教育）（单选，在选项下打勾即可）

1. 您的性别      A. 男 B. 女
2. 您的年龄      A. 20 以下 B. 20-30 C. 30- 40 D. 40-50 E. 50 以上
3. 您对宜家的了解程度    A. 很了解，宜家的粉丝 B. 基本了解 C. 完全不了解
4. 您多久逛一次宜家商场？ A. 一周多次 B. 一个月几次 C. 半年几次 D. 一年几次 E. 很少
5. 您是否觉得宜家是个负责任的企业？    A. 是 B. 否 C. 不确定
6. 您之前是否听说过宜家“毛绒玩具教育义卖”活动？  
A. 是（转 8） B. 否（转 7）
7. 若您以前不知道这个公益活动，现在知道以后是否会因为这个活动而购买？ A. 是 B. 否
8. 您是为了买毛绒玩具而买还是为了奉献爱心/捐款而买？  
A. 本身就计划买毛绒玩具 B. 本身未计划购买，看到此公益活动而购买
9. 您是否觉得这类活动增加了您对社会问题的了解与关注 (比如贫困儿童教育问题)？  
A. 是 B. 否 C. 不确定
10. 您觉得该类活动是否可以促进社会的可持续发展？    A. 是 B. 否 C. 不确定
11. 您的月收入水平    A. 5000 以下 B. 5000-8000 C. 8000-10000 D. 10000 以上
12. 若毛绒玩具的价格因为捐助活动而提高，您是否依旧会购买？

A.是, 但有价格接受上限 B. 是, 不论价格多高都可以购买 B. 否, 若价格再高就不会购买

13. 若是其他小型非公益组织而不是联合国儿童基金会(unicef), 您是否仍会参与此次活动?

A.是 B. 否 C. 不确定, 取决于非公益组织的名誉

14. 该活动是否会增加您对宜家企业的好感/品牌忠实度? A. 是 B. 否 C. 不确定

15. 您之前是否参与过类似的活动(产品销售的部分收入捐入非公益组织)?

A.是(请指明具体活动\_\_\_\_\_ ) B.否

16. 您的受教育程度 A. 硕士及以上 B. 大学本科 C. 高中及以下

17. 您的职业

A. 学生 B. 公务员 C. 外企 D. 教师 E. 工人 F. 医生 G. 退休 H. 金融 I. 其他 \_\_\_\_\_

18. 通过此次购买您是否认为您帮助了社会/此类活动可以增加您的社会责任感与参与感?

A. 是 B. 否 C. 不确定

19. 您是否认为您自己是“绿色环保消费者”? A. 是 B. 否 C. 不知什么是“绿色消费者”

20. 捐助给贫困儿童的金额是否影响您的购买? 为什么

A. 是, 必须捐助 1 欧元及以上 B. 否, 不论捐赠多少都会购买 C. 不确定

21. 您是否怀疑捐助款项的流入, 是否真正捐献给公益组织?

A. 是, 需要更加透明的制度 B. 否 C. 不确定

22. 如果不是宜家, 而是其他的公司做该活动, 您是否依旧会支持?

A. 是, 不论什么公司 B. 否 C. 不确定, 要看那个公司的名誉

23. 您怎样认为这种营销手段?

A. 只是公司盈利的一种手段 B. 彰显企业责任, 可以真正的帮助社会 C. 可以帮助顾客提高社会参与度以及对社会问题的认识 D. 没什么用

24. 您的看法以及建议(开放式问题)

谢谢! 祝猴年大吉!

## Appendix B: Research Survey for Swedish Consumers (English)

### “IKEA soft Toys for Education campaign“ Survey

Hej dear consumer! I am a master student study environment and sustainability in Lund University, this questionnaire is for my thesis research. It is anonymous and all information is confidential, it only used for my thesis data analysis. There is no right or wrong answer, please answer based on your experience and knowledge. Your reply will play a critical role in my research, thanks for the participation!(IKEA Soft Toy Campaign is that every soft toy sold, €1 will be donated to UNICEF for poor children’s education)( All questions are single selection)

1. Your gender A. Male B. Female 2. Your age A. Below 20 B. 20-30 C. 30-40 D. 40-50 E. Over 50

3. Are you familiar with IKEA? A. Very familiar with IKEA B. Basic known IKEA C. Barely know

4. How often do you visit IKEA?

A. Few times a week B. Few times a month C. Few times half a year D. Few times a year E. Barely

5. Do you think IKEA is a responsible company? A. Yes B. No C. Not sure

6. Do you usually pay attention to social or environmental problems/ public good? A. Yes

B. No. C. Sometimes

7. Have you ever heard the “IKEA soft Toys for Education campaign” before? A. Yes (To 9) B. No (To 8).

8. If you don’t know this campaign before, but knowing it now, will you purchase the soft toys because of this campaign for good cause? A. Yes B. No C. Not sure

9. Do you buy the soft toys because of the product per se or for the donation/good cause?

A. I plan to buy the soft toys initially B. I buy for good cause

10. Do you think this kind of campaign will increase your understanding and awareness of social problems (such as needy children)? A. Yes B. No C. Not sure.

11. Do you think this kind of activities would promote social sustainable development? A. Yes B. No C. Not sure

12. Your monthly salary (SEK) A. Below 20000 B. 20000-25000 C. 25000-30000 D. Over 30000

13. If the price of soft toys increase because of the donation activity, will you still purchase it?

A. Yes, but there is a price acceptance limit B. Yes, no matter how much it will increase C. No, if it increase I will not purchase it.

14. If the NGO is not UNICEF but other small NGOs, will you still participate in this activity?

A. Yes B. No C. Not sure, it depends on the reputation of the NGO.

15. Do you think this campaign will increase your brand loyalty to IKEA? A.Yes B.No C.Not sure.

16. Have you ever participated this kind of business campaign before (some of the sales from a product is donated to a NGO for good cause) A. Yes (Please indicate which activity\_\_\_\_) B. No.

17. Your education level A. Mater and above B. Undergraduate C. High school and below

18. Your profession A.Student B. Government official C. Foreign companies D. Teacher E. Worker F. Doctor G.Retired H. Finance I. Other\_\_\_\_\_

19. Do you think by donation to NGO via this purchase, it increases your social responsibility and participation/ you make contributions to help society in need? A. Yes B. No C. Not sure.

20. Do you regard yourself as “green consumer”? A. Yes. B.No. C.I don’t know what is “green consumer”

21. Will the amount of money donated to NGO affect your purchase of soft toys?

A. Yes, it must over 1 euro B. No, no matter how much money C. Not sure.

22. Have you ever suspected whether the money would be donated to the NGO?

A. Yes, it must have more transparent system. B. No C. Not sure

23. If it is not IKEA but other companies launch this campaign, will you still support it?

A. Yes, no matter what company B. No. C. Not sure, it depends on the reputation of the company

24. .How do you think of this marketing strategy? A.It’s just a way that company uses to promote sales B. It shows company’s social responsibility, it can help the society. C. It helps consumers to increase their consciousness and the understanding of social problems. D. Of no use

25.Your view and suggestion(open questions)

Tack!