

Essay on ethics nestle infant formula

[Business](#), [Company](#)



Ethical issue: practicing defiant/ignorant promotional exercises of infant baby formula at the expense of breastfeeding in third world countries.

Context: Profitability vs. social concern

Facts

A baby should be breastfed exclusively during the first six weeks of its life.

Breast milk contains nourishing and immunity-giving components

Third world countries face low literacy levels, poverty and sanitation which affect safe administration of infant baby formula in babies by young mothers.

If action is taken to compel Nestle to act ethically:

The company will cease providing misleading information

The company will improve the quality of its products to avoid blame on any issues relating to consumption of its products

Mothers will follow advice from nutritionists and breastfeed babies instead of promotional adverts thereby reducing infant mortality rates

The company's profits will dwindle initially

Adoption of factual promotional practices will regain people's trust

Company reputation will increase and thereby the profits

If action is not taken

Nestle will continue to mislead their customers

There are chances of increased infant mortality due to sanitation and poverty concerns

People will continually demonstrate against the company

Demonstrations will damage the reputation of the company

The company will run at a loss

Nestle's practices will bear on its competitors' businesses negatively

Theory

Derrick Jelliffe suggested that the increased profitability of Nestle was related to the increased consumption of Nestle infant formula in third world countries. However, the consumption of the formula led to increased infant mortality in those countries. The allegations by Jelliffe cannot be ascertained since they do not emanate from scientific or verifiable sources. The effects of Nestle's unethical practices can be measured by " number infant deaths".

Scientific evidence proved that aggressive promotional practices of infant formula were not liable for increased infant mortality. However, Nestle's offers of kickbacks to hospital staff in order to have them recommend infant formula to babies and their offering of " free samples" was unethical. The company should therefore act ethically and adhere to nutritional recommendations regarding infant nutrition in its product promotional practices. As a corporate social responsibility, Nestle can advocate for increased breastfeeding and hence the reduction in infant mortality.

Reference

Newton, L. & Schmidt, D. (2003) Wake-Up Calls: Classic Cases in Business Ethics, South-Western College Pub pp. 31-67