

Victoria's secret term paper



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Victorians Secret is a huge US company of lingerie. This brand is worth billions of dollar and is well-admired all over the globe having over 1, 000 retail stores. However, as what is common to organizations, Victorians Secret also meets challenges. One of them was when it faced a controversy of being involved to child labor issue in 2011. This pertains to its fair-trade with Burbank Fast, where the cotton produced by this West African nation were said to be hand-picked by forced children laborers.

This allegation concerned consumers, affected the company's public image and had the company's value for social responsibility and ethics questioned. With this, the main problem of this case arises: how Victorians Secret could have acted upon this sudden involvement to child labor? Moreover, this case also aims to provide solutions to the following sub-problems: 1 . What could have prevented Victorians Secretes involvement to the allegations? 2. What actions Victorians Secret could have done as its involvement has become an issue of social responsibility in the eyes of the public?

II. CASE FACTS The issue started as the situation of the child workers of a certified Firetrap International organic cotton program in Burbank Fast was discovered and investigated. It has been reported that the grown goods of National Federation of Burbank Cotton Producers are hand-picked by underage workers forcibly. The cotton produced from this organization incidentally has its giant buyer, Victorians Secret. During 2007, Victorians Secret established a deal of purchasing cotton from Burbank Fast.

Since then, Victorians Secret has been one of the top customers of this fair-trade and organic cotton program. It was in 2009 when Victorians Secret

launched its all- organic fair-trade labeled lingerie line with the " Good for women. Good for the children who depend on them" tag. This served as a social and environmental scheme for Victorians Secret where they declared they affiliated with female farmers of West Africa " who are hoping that the products would be popular to socially minded consumers" as said by Lori Greenly, the company's CEO.

Upon the spread of the issue of child labor in the cotton program of Burbank Fast, news soar and the public reacted curtly: against Firetrap International, the world's arrest labeler of goods marketed for the benefit of small-scale producers in emerging markets, and Victorians Secret. " If this allegation is true, it describes behavior that is contrary to our company's values and the code of labor and sourcing standards that we require all of our suppliers to meet," Timmy Roberts Myers, vice president of external communications for Limited Brands Inc. , the owner of Victorians Secret, said in a statement.

Myers promised " we are vigorously engaging with stakeholders to fully investigate this matter. " (Source: Bloomberg News. [Http:// www. Bloomberg. Mom/news/2011-12-15/Victoria-s-secret-revealed-in-child-picking- Burbank-fast-cotton](http://www.Bloomberg.Mom/news/2011-12-15/Victoria-s-secret-revealed-in-child-picking-Burbank-fast-cotton). HTML) III. ANALYSIS Throughout the case, the following are found points for analysis that lead to answers for the problem and sub-problems: Supply chain monitoring. Seeing it, the blame is not entirely worthy to Victorians Secret alone. It seems that the company was just caught up due to Firetrap Internationally negligence of keeping an eye to labor methods and standards.

However, it should have been the company's chief responsibility to choose and know further their suppliers or the trades they are joining in. Fair trades are meant to be good. Their aim is to assist producers from developing countries to increase trades and have better trading conditions. The intention of this movement is for the good however; in this case, it led Victorians Secret to unexpected involvement to an ethics controversy. This became an issue of ethics as Victorians Secret was surged as wrong for having a fair-trade linked to child labor, which they defended to have no knowledge about.

All that Victorians Secret understood is that the Burbank Fast cotton program is worked by female Africans: that they are working with the aim of giving benefits for the small livelihood of poor African women. Advocating fair-trades would have been an efficient and responsible strategy for Victorians Secret, as a matter of fact. Unfortunately, due to lack of monitoring and prevention, this act of goodwill, which should have noted to be exemplary for other companies, seemed to be a move tolerating exploitation of children.

Having a deal with fair-trades would have made the company appear to be caring and contributing to the society and industry. Significantly, it should have been a vital act for the management of Victorians Secret to do their task of monitoring and controlling those who they make interactions and do business with. Awareness of the child labor issue. With the promotional statements of " Good for women" and " Good for the children who depend on them" on Victorians Secretes fair trade range, the company assured that the purchase of their all-organic products would benefit the lives of female farmers.

However, on the strike of the child labor issue, Victorians Secret stated that they are not aware of the child labor reports in Burbank Fast. Testifying that they do not have any idea of the reports and concerns in their supplier and the farms where the materials claimed as fair-trade came from, Victorians Secret appeared socially irresponsible. The issue of forced labor to underage workers befell to be a big matter for the consumers, socially minded ones or not.

And learning that Victorians Secret was not mindful of the existence of such exploitation to their providers sadly presents that the company does not watch out the fair sourcing and labor standards of organizations they are trading with. For the consumers, the fair-trade labeling greatly helps them choose and get what they want along with the intention of helping others. Customers think ethically too when buying. They see the good in fair trades for it serves as the industry aid for the polished of people from poor countries.

When a product is labeled as fair-trade, the customers suppose that the consumption of it would not only benefit the farmer economically, but would also exhibit that the merchandise is not a fruit of forced and child labor. That is mainly why the consumers reacted heatedly upon learning the story of the slave-like condition of the underage farmers behind the lingerie giant's fair trade cotton supplier. Patrons are disappointed and entities admitted that buying a pair of underwear made with materials from child labor appears disrespectful too them.

Company's value for ethics and integrity. As the owner of Victorians Secret, Limited Brands released their position on the issue saying " We take these allegations regarding cotton farming in Burbank Fast very seriously, as they describe behavior contrary to our company's values and the code of labor and sourcing standards we require all our suppliers to meet. " These statements strongly support the organizations' policy of ensuring high-quality, legal and ethical operations for the company, the suppliers and the consumers.

The company promises to investigate the claims to restore its reputation and integrity. The Limited Brands policy regarding suppliers and subcontractors states: " We require our suppliers to comply with all applicable laws, regulations and industry standards. Limited Brands maintains a policy called " What We Stand For," which is designed to ensure that our business partners operate ethically and that our merchandise is produced under appropriate conditions in the United States and around the world. We will not do business with individuals or suppliers that do not meet our standards.

We expect our suppliers to promote an environment of dignity, respect and opportunity; provide safe and healthy working conditions; offer fair insemination through wages and other benefits; hire workers of legal age, who accept employment on a voluntary basis; and maintain reasonable working hours. Finally, we require that all suppliers be particularly vigilant about compliance with country of origin and other requirements of the United States Customs Service and related agencies, and with similar requirements of other applicable Jurisdictions. " Investigation of the issue.

This was the chosen action of Victorians Secret. They assured to probe all the claims regarding the child labor and the cruel working setting within their fair-trade partner. It is the social obligation of Victorians Secret to manage the allegations and act upon this controversy to clean the company's reputation, of course, for the sake of the stakeholders. Issues come, however, the priority, still, of the organizations are their investors for the main intention of maintained business operation. This does not just apply to Victorians Secret but to all other companies as well.

It is a substantial role in management to control business issues and uphold business ethics. Investigating the claims first demonstrates strategic compliance to appropriate procedures and not just instantly making risk in approaching social issues aimed at the organization. With regards to social responsibility, the intentions of Victorians Secret to help Burbank Fast was pressed because the issue made it appear that the organization did not mind whatever is happening to the other party of the fair trade- the cotton farmers.

Back again to the purpose of fair trades, which is to supposedly help the livelihood from developing countries, the only deficiency of this lingerie company to the fair-trade is its dearth concern to the known poor laborers of Burbank Fast: that Victorians Secret missed the chance of reviewing and acting upon the farmers' conditions before the controversy behind the fair-trade could have been exposed by the media.

Doing so would have prevented the allegations and proved that the organization can go beyond making profits to include protecting and

improving society welfare. 'V. CONCLUSION The issue of child labor and forced toil of Burbank Fast cotton farmers may not directly be a social obligation of Victorians Secret. However, as the company and its image get involved, Victorians Secret could have been aware of better business plans ND approach to the situation.

It is good that Victorians Secret launches investigations first, but it could have acted upon the issue of child labor with more eagerness of clearing Firetrap Internationally method of certification. Due to the flaw in application and assurance of standards in the fair trade, what happened is that the heat from the public was put to Victorians Secret despite that its only intention is to support fair trade and cause help to other people.

Victorians Secret admitted that it didn't have an idea of the true conditions of the cotton farmers which we can infer that they lacked the initiative of checking the background of the other organization. But since it is a company that is popular and is well-sought for, for a minimal fault, Victorians Secret got the excessive blame and hate reactions. Being more sensitive of the conditions in Burbank Fast, as their cotton supplier and perceived as the organization Victorians Secret is aiding, would have prevented the controversies and clashes.

What Victorians Secret could have done as the issue leads to matters of social responsibility is that it must have delivered immediately a motion that would settle the company as one who is standing firm against child labor and cruelty during work. Along with the investigation, Victorians Secret could have also compromised and apologized to the public as it has appeared

insensitive of the existence of exploitation more that the subject is their supplier for fair-trade labeled products.

Since the company's reputation is strongly associated to its commitment to the imperatives of CARS, Victorians Secret should have essentially monitored the sourcing of its materials for it significantly links to the company's operations and productions. V. RECOMMENDATION Due to the controversy that Victorians Secret was acquiring their cotton for production from producers who are practicing child labor, the company's image has been damaged.

Many criticisms arose regarding how they are socially irresponsible and insensitive from the exercise of child labor by their cotton supplier. Through these I'm suggesting Victorians Secret with two recommendations: First, engage and sponsor in corporate social responsibility without breaking the fair-trade. This is by meaner of monitoring the abolition of child labor in the cotton farm of Burbank Fast ND maintaining the fair trade with qualified workers only and no forced working conditions.

It would be Victorians Secretes task to supervise the cotton farmers if they are sustained well within the program; then can the company continue the production of all-organic lingerie with assurance to the consumers that it is made free from child labor. Second, intensify the enforcement of company standards with regards to labor and supply chain by being evident advocates of Nun's 4th and 5th Principle on Labor Standards: " The elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory abort" and " The effective abolition of child labor".

It is good that the owners of Victorians Secret shaped the organization business morale and the strong motto of " What we stand for". It is observed through the way Limited Brands disclosed their position on the controversy and intention only for the good. Through these, Victorians Secret must stand for what the company stands for and stand firm in its opposition to abuse of laborers. The company must then highly watch out on where they're getting their materials and mind the methods of obtaining from then on as it continues to engage in fair trades.