

DO MARKETS ERODE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY?*

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This article studies socially responsible behavior in markets. We develop a laboratory product market in which low-cost production creates a negative externality for third parties, but where alternative production with higher costs mitigates the externality. Our first study, conducted in Switzerland, reveals a persistent preference among many consumers and firms for avoiding negative social impact in the market, reflected both in the composition of product types and in a price premium for socially responsible products. Socially responsible behavior is generally robust to varying market characteristics, such as increased seller competition and limited consumer information, and it responds to prices in a manner consistent with a model in which positive social impact is a utility-enhancing feature of a consumer product. In a second study, we investigate whether market social responsibility varies across societies by comparing market behavior in Switzerland and China. While subjects in Switzerland and China do not differ in their degree of social concern in nonmarket contexts, we find that low-cost production that creates negative externalities is significantly more prevalent in markets in China. Across both studies, consumers in markets exhibit less social concern than subjects in a comparable individual choice context. *JEL* Codes: C92, D03, D62, M14.

I. INTRODUCTION

Adam Smith's metaphor of the invisible hand illustrates the idea that decentralized interaction of independent actors, through market exchange, leads to efficient allocation of resources. In fact, there exists widespread evidence that markets often fulfill this function. However, unregulated market exchange is also often blamed as a source of social ills, including

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environmental damage, labor coercion, and animal cruelty, and many scholars question whether the inherent nature of markets erodes people's motivations to exhibit concern for the social impact of their actions (Bowles 1998; Sandel 2012; Falk and Szech 2013; Besley 2013).

Indeed, returning to the efficacy of the invisible hand, an important underlying condition is the absence of negative externalities. When the social costs of market activity are not borne by the trading parties in the market—as in the foregoing examples—then markets can systematically underappreciate such impacts, absent some other channel through which they are incorporated. Hence, a standard response to the problem of external effects is to call for an active role for government in regulating or taxing activities that impose externalities.

An alternative remedy occurs if market participants voluntarily internalize the social impacts of their actions. Firms may voluntarily incur additional production costs to limit negative environmental impacts, as reflected in Apple CEO Tim Cook's statement to shareholders that the firm does "a lot of things for reasons besides profit motive. We want to leave the world better than we found it" (Politi 2014). However, the extent to which such acts reflect true concern for social impact, rather than for firm reputation and long-term profits, is unclear. At the same time, consumers may be willing to pay higher prices for products that mitigate social harm. Several studies document such willingness (Roe et al. 2001; Johnston et al. 2001; Louriero, McCluskey, and Mittelhammer 2001; De Pelsmacker, Driesen, and Rayp 2005), though these results are typically from hypothetical choice or willingness-to-pay measures or from comparisons of purchasing behavior over distinct market products that may differ in dimensions beyond social impact, such as actual or perceived quality.

Thus, although the notion of individual and corporate social responsibility—a willingness to sacrifice profits or wealth in pursuit of broader social interest—has recently come into focus as a means to prevent efficiency losses due to external effects (Bénabou and Tirole 2010),¹ the extent to which this presents an actual remedy for negative impacts of market activity remains

1. This notion is, however, not new to economics. For example, Arrow called "attention to a less visible form of social action: norms of social behavior, including ethical and moral codes" and suggested "as one possible interpretation that they are reactions of society to compensate for market failures" (1970, p. 22).

to be better understood. The presence of product labels such as “carbon-free,” “fair trade,” and “cruelty-free” in consumer product markets—often associated with higher production costs for firms and prices for consumers—suggests a potential influence of concerns for social impact on market activity. But in real product markets it is difficult to isolate social responsibility from other possible motives underlying production and consumption of such products.²

To address this issue, we report two laboratory studies that explore the extent to which socially responsible market behavior can mitigate the problem of negative external effects. Our paradigm models a competitive product market, in which sellers decide on a price and on which type of product they want to offer for sale—either one that produces a negative externality for a third party or one that does not, with the latter involving higher production costs. Consumers choose which offered product to buy or whether to buy a product at all. We allow repetition to observe outcomes that arise with experience in the market. The standard equilibrium prediction for these markets is that only the cheaper good, which produces the externality, is traded.

In contrast to this prediction, a baseline condition from our first study—conducted in Switzerland—finds that markets converge rapidly to a stable outcome in which a significant proportion (roughly 45%) of products traded cost more to produce but yield no externality. The prices for such goods are regularly higher than prices for externality-producing products, though to a lesser extent than the additional production cost. Thus, in our markets, sellers and buyers share, on average, the burden for preventing negative externalities. We interpret these findings as evidence that fair or moral behavior can persist in competitive market exchange.

One goal of our research is to study how varying factors affect the prevalence of socially responsible market behavior. Real markets sometimes fail to internalize externalities, as with widespread instances of pollution, whereas in other cases they appear to reflect greater concern for social impacts. The extent to which

2. The possibility that market participants voluntarily internalize external costs is also consistent with evidence that decision makers in nonmarket contexts regularly demonstrate concern for the external impacts of their actions (Hoffman et al. 1994; Andreoni and Miller 2002; Fisman, Kariv, and Markovits 2007; Cappelen et al. 2007).

market participants internalize social impacts thus varies and may be influenced by factors such as market characteristics, production technologies, and culture. Therefore, we study the robustness of social responsibility, starting from the level we observe in the baseline market condition with subjects in Switzerland.

First, we study the effect of increased seller competition, by adding supramarginal firms to the market, which should theoretically have no effect. However, increased competition might diminish fairness concerns (Roth et al. 1991) and, more broadly, is often considered a potentially corrupting influence in market behavior (Shleifer 2004; Cai and Liu 2009; Brandts, Riedl, and van Winden 2009). In our market, increased competition drives down overall prices, thus yielding greater relative surplus for consumers. But increased competition does not diminish the degree of concern exhibited toward externality-bearing parties outside of the market.

Second, we consider the possibility that consumers may have limited information about which firms' products are socially harmful, but that such information is often available if a consumer chooses to acquire it. In a setting where consumers are initially uninformed about the types of the offered products, we study both a case in which the information about external impact is free and one in which acquiring it involves the consumer incurring a small cost. In both cases, we find that the informational default has only a small effect—though slightly larger when acquiring information is costly—on the expression of social responsibility in the market.

Third, we study the effect of an alternative production technology under which the cost of externality-free production is considerably higher. In our baseline market condition, this cost equals 20% of the surplus created for firms and consumers through exchange. We compare this with a condition in which firms and consumers must forgo 80% of this surplus to avoid imposing the externality. In this case, the market share of the socially responsible product decreases significantly, by about half, though this lower market share nevertheless remains stable throughout the experiment. This finding indicates that market participants respond to economic factors in deciding whether to act socially responsibly and provides a basis for understanding why the share of socially responsible trade is higher in some markets than others.

To better understand the nature of preferences for social responsibility, we estimate choice models of consumer and firm behavior from our experimental data. For consumers, we estimate a conditional logit choice model (McFadden 1974) in which utility is determined by both a consumer's own material payoff and the social impact of a product purchase. We find that choices made by consumers in all market conditions demonstrate concern for both sources of utility, and this concern is fairly stable. Thus, positive social impact can be modeled as a utility-enhancing product attribute that consumers compare to products' relative prices. We also study firms' product supply decisions, and find that firms, on average, respond sensibly to the expected relative profitability of the two types of products, but their behavior also exhibits persistence, among some firms, in producing socially responsible products.

Hence, the experimental conditions generally reveal significant and stable levels of socially responsible behavior in markets conducted in Switzerland. However, it is also important to identify the robustness of such behavior in other populations, particularly across societies with varying cultural values, market practices, and historical trajectories in economic development. To this end, we report a second study, in which we compare socially responsible market behavior in our subject pool in Switzerland and a comparable subject pool in China. Concerns about social impact, such as environmental damage, are ubiquitous in discussions of China's rapidly growing economy; relatedly, there is debate regarding whether market behavior in China reflects less concern for morality and responsibility than in advanced Western economies (Ip 2009). Indeed, survey evidence suggests that notions of what constitutes "fair" behavior in markets may differ between Chinese and Western responders, with Chinese responses often judging deceitful and harmful business conduct less harshly (Ahmed, Chung, and Eichenseher 2003; Lee et al. 2009; Gao 2009; Wong, Long, and Elankumaran 2010). However, to our knowledge, no empirical data directly test whether the behavior of Chinese market participants exhibits less concern for social responsibility. Hence, our second study implements a replication of our baseline market in Zurich and in Shanghai. In Switzerland, we almost exactly replicate the market share of the socially responsible product (48%). In China, however, this market share is much lower, at 16%.

The data thus reveal much less social responsibility in the experimental markets in China than in Switzerland.

We also implement an experimental nonmarket condition, in which individuals in Switzerland and China make identical allocation choices, affecting themselves and two other participants, absent any market context. Consistent with prior research that finds no systematic differences when comparing prosocial behaviors in nonmarket contexts for Chinese and Western subjects (Buchan, Johnson, and Croson 2006; Chuah et al. 2007; Bohnet et al., 2008; Herrmann, Thöni, and Gächter 2008), we find no differences in the nonmarket context. This suggests that norms of socially responsible market behavior are weaker in our subject population in China than in Switzerland—even though the measured propensity to act prosocially outside of markets does not differ.

Finally, to address the debate whether markets “corrupt” concern for social impact, we include conditions in both studies that allow us to directly compare the strength of the social concern exhibited by individual participants in our market environment with social concern expressed in a comparable dictator-like choice context. More precisely, we take choices faced by consumers in our baseline market condition and present exactly the same choices, without the market context but with identical monetary consequences for the decision maker and for two other participants, to a new group of participants. Across three comparisons—one from each study in Switzerland and one from Study 2 in China—the frequency of choices mitigating the negative social impact on third parties in this nonmarket context is higher than in the market context, though the difference is smaller in Switzerland than in China. These observations are qualitatively in line with recent arguments that markets erode socially responsible behavior, relative to nonmarket contexts (e.g., Falk and Szech 2013), though our findings also indicate that social concern may be more robust to market contexts in some populations than in others.

The remainder of the article is structured as follows. Section II reviews related literature. Section III describes the experimental design of our first study, conducted in Switzerland. Section IV presents the market shares and prices for the two types of products, and Section V presents analyses of individual firm and consumer behavior. Section VI contains the design and results of our second study, comparing socially responsible behavior in

Switzerland and China. Section VII uses the combined data from both studies to compare consumer market behavior to individual allocation choices in comparable nonmarket contexts. Section VIII concludes.

II. RELATED LITERATURE

An extensive literature shows that experimental markets generally converge to equilibrium predictions in which considerations such as fairness have minimal impact, even when one side of the market captures all of the surplus (Smith 1962; Plott and Smith 1978; Smith and Williams 1982; Roth et al. 1991; Holt 1995; Franciosi et al. 1995) and when product purchases create negative externalities for other market participants (Plott 1983). Although these data are often interpreted as evidence that social considerations are minimally important in markets, a key distinction between this and our work is that the kind of social impact we study deals not with fairness or inequality among directly interacting market participants—such as firms and consumers—but with concern for individuals entirely uninvolved with the market exchange process. This is the case, for example, when production and exchange yield widespread negative social impacts, such as environmental pollution, or harm to those unable to exert agency, as with labor coercion or animal testing. Our experiments find that concerns for such social impact can be persistently manifested in market behavior.

Our results also relate to a prominent argument that market exchange crowds out moral values (e.g., Sandel 2012).³ Much of the evidence supporting this argument, however, is indirect and does not study the behavior of individuals interacting in markets. For example, experimental findings reveal that framing a nonmarket interaction with market terminology can reduce the importance of moral considerations among interacting participants (Hoffman et al. 1994; Ross and Ward 1996; Cappelen, Sørensen, and Tungodden 2013). Similarly, the act of assigning monetary value to “good” behaviors, through prices, can crowd out intrinsic motivations for such acts (Frey, Oberholzer-Gee, and Eichenberger 1996; Gneezy and Rustichini 2000; Mellström and

3. A distinct argument is that the properties of markets make moral considerations indistinguishable from other motivations under certain conditions governing exchange (Sobel 2010; Dufwenberg et al. 2011).

Johannesson 2008). Moreover, priming people to think of money, in contrast to similar nonmonetary primes, leads to more individualistic and less prosocial behavior (Vohs, Meade, and Goode 2006; see also Kube, Maréchal, and Puppe 2012). Thus, while there is considerable indirect evidence that suggests a perverting effect of market exchange, there is little direct evidence on whether moral considerations are truly eroded by market interaction.

One exception is Falk and Szech (2013), who show that repeated interaction in bilateral and multilateral double-auction markets yields less socially responsible behavior than one-shot nonmarket decisions, measured by individuals' willingness to accept 10 euros for the death of a mouse. However, comparing only the extent to which outcomes that produce negative social impacts are generated by market and nonmarket contexts, the results of Falk and Szech show a limited negative impact of markets.⁴ Moreover, Falk and Szech's comparison of market and nonmarket decision making changes several aspects of the choice context simultaneously, making it difficult to interpret whether the change results from aspects unique to market versus nonmarket comparisons.⁵ Finally, and perhaps most important, Falk and Szech's markets have only one production technology, which necessarily requires the imposition of a negative externality if exchange occurs. However, many real-world markets are characterized by a multiplicity of production technologies, some of which create fewer negative externalities than others. Indeed, a valuable aspect of markets is that where a preference to employ a technology that limits external harm exists, market incentives and competition can encourage its adoption. Hence, our design allows social responsibility to be manifested in market exchange—as long as the trading parties are willing to bear the necessary costs. Thus, an important contribution of our work is to highlight the valuable role markets can play in

4. In Falk and Szech's individual (nonmarket) condition, 45.9% of subjects accept a 10 euro payment that kills a mouse, whereas in a bilateral market, 47.7% of possible trades that cause a mouse's death occur. Both of these proportions are similar to the frequencies of social harm that we observe across many market conditions in our experiments. See also Breyer and Weimann (2014) for further discussion of Falk and Szech's data.

5. For example, the nonmarket treatment involves a one-shot decision, without feedback, that unilaterally determines social outcomes, while the market context involves repeated decisions, with feedback on others' behavior, in which parties jointly determine outcomes and responsibility is therefore diffused.

generating socially responsible alternatives to harmful products—provided a feasible technology for doing so.

Our findings also relate to research showing that markets and social concerns are compatible. For example, Henrich et al. (2001, 2010) find that exposure of developing societies to market interaction facilitates the adoption of prosocial norms. Our studies show directly that behavior consistent with such norms can persist as a feature of market exchange. In this sense, our work also relates to the literature showing that efficiency-enhancing reciprocity between buyers and sellers can persist in markets with incomplete contracts (Fehr, Kirchsteiger, and Riedl 1993; Fehr and Falk 1999). Although the nature of these results is distinct from our work, in which contracts between buyers and sellers are complete, we establish the similar finding that social considerations can persist in competitive markets.

Finally, our second experiment relates to work that measures differences in preferences and behavior between Chinese and Western individuals in nonmarket contexts (Buchan, Johnson, and Croson 2006; Chuah et al. 2007; Bohnet et al. 2008; Herrmann, Thöni, and Gächter 2008).⁶ This work shows that Chinese subjects tend to be generally no less prosocial than Western subjects—if anything, they may be slightly more prosocial. Close to our work are survey studies that document differing perceptions between Chinese and Western respondents regarding what constitutes ethical behavior in markets (Ahmed, Chung, and Eichenseher 2003; Lee et al. 2009; Wong, Long, and Elankumaran 2010). For example, Gao (2009) analyzes survey responses collected in China and Switzerland using Kahneman, Knetsch, and Thaler's (1986) vignettes describing market behavior and eliciting judgments of the fairness or unfairness of the behavior, finding that Chinese respondents often rate egoistic market behaviors less harshly than do respondents in Switzerland and Canada.⁷

6. A related paper (Kachelmeier and Shehata 1992) compares laboratory behavior in China and the United States in double-auction markets with highly asymmetric equilibrium profits. Markets in both countries converge to equilibrium prices. Hence, the tendency for markets to eliminate concerns for equality between buyers and sellers, which we reviewed earlier, is present in China as well as in the United States.

7. For example, for a scenario in which a landlord exploits a tenant's inability to move to raise the rent, 91% of Canadian respondents in the original study judged the behavior as unfair, 92% of Swiss respondents did so, while only 63% of Chinese nonstudents and 80% of Chinese students did so.

Our study provides an empirical complement, by testing whether such perceptions are reflected in the behavior of participants in competitive markets.

III. STUDY 1: EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN

III.A. *The Market Game*

Our design develops a novel experimental market environment that contains important features of real-world product markets. Firms and consumers can exchange two types of products, one of which imposes a negative externality on a third party. For simplicity, we label the product that produces no externality ($e = 0$), the socially responsible product, as the “fair” product and the product that generates a negative externality ($e = 1$) as the “unfair” product.

Both product types are worth 50 to the consumer. The production cost of the unfair product is normalized to 0, thus generating a surplus of 50 to firms and consumers when exchanged. However, exchange of this product, which imposes a negative externality of 60 on a third party, is socially harmful and inefficient, with a net welfare impact of $50 - 60 = -10$. In contrast, the fair product has a production cost of $c \in (0, 50)$ that is borne by the firm but has no impact on the third party. In most of our experimental conditions, $c = 10$. In all cases, exchange of the fair product is efficient, as it generates a net surplus of $50 - c > 0$, which is greater than the net surplus of not trading (0) or of trading the unfair product (-10).

Our *Market Baseline* condition consists of six firms, five consumers, and five third parties. All start with 100 units of wealth. Each firm offers a single product, either $e = 0$ or $e = 1$, in a posted-offer market, at a price, p , determined by that firm. The cost to the firm of producing a fair product is $c = 10$. After all firms select product types and prices, consumers enter the market sequentially in a randomly determined order, observe the current menu of prices and product types, and either choose a single product or reject all available offers. A firm can sell at most one product. Hence, while the consumer who enters the market first can choose among all six product offers, consumers who enter later only see and choose from the remaining offers. Because there are six firms but only five consumers, even the last consumer entering the market can choose from at least two

product offers. There is, however, always at least one firm that cannot sell its product. Firms are informed about the product offers—type and price—of all firms in a period, the order in which offers are accepted, and thus also the offer(s) that remain unsold. The payoff of each of the five third parties is determined by one of the five possible market exchanges between firms and consumers. Specifically, the purchase of an unfair product by a consumer reduces a randomly selected third party's payoff by 60 units, while either the purchase of a fair product or a consumer's decision not to purchase any product yield no impact on the corresponding third party's payoff. Equations (1) to (3) summarize the payoffs in a period.⁸

$$(1) \quad \Pi^{firm} = \begin{cases} 100 + p - (1 - e) \cdot c & \text{if firm sells its product at price } p \\ 100 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

$$(2) \quad \Pi^{consumer} = \begin{cases} 100 + 50 - p & \text{if consumer buys a product at price } p \\ 100 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

$$(3) \quad \Pi^{third\ party} = \begin{cases} 100 - 60 \cdot e & \text{if matched with an exchanged product} \\ 100 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

Subjects play 24 rounds of the market game in fixed groups (16-person markets) and roles. We eliminate the possibility of cross-period reputation by not showing subjects the ID numbers of other market participants and by randomly ordering the display of product offers in each period. One round is randomly chosen for payment at the end of the experiment. Each third party is randomly matched to the purchasing decision realized by a particular consumer.

We introduce an explicit market context in the instructions. Players A are described as “sellers” and Players B as “buyers” and they are told they can “trade” different “types of products” at the offered “prices.” Player C is neutrally described as Player C, and the two types of products are called “product without impact on

8. Note that the production costs (when $e = 0$) and the externality (when $e = 1$) arise only if a product is sold, which can be interpreted as a “production on demand” technology. We chose this design feature to create a situation in which exchange between buyers and sellers creates the externality.

Player C" (in case of $e = 0$) and "product with loss for Player C" (in case of $e = 1$). An English translation of the original German instructions for the Market Baseline condition is included in Online Appendix F.

III.B. Varying Market and Technological Characteristics

To study the robustness of socially responsible market behavior, Study 1 implements additional market variants, each of which changes one characteristic of the market. Specifically, we vary (i) the degree of competition between firms in the market, (ii) the information that consumers have about the types of available products, and (iii) the cost of becoming informed about the characteristics of products. Moreover, we also implement a variation in the production technology by (iv) increasing the production cost of the fair product.

First, in a *High Firm Competition* condition, we increase the number of firms from six to eight. Apart from this difference, this condition is identical to the Market Baseline. We expect this increased competition between firms will lead to prices closer to competitive equilibrium than in the Market Baseline, as posted-offer markets typically yield prices above competitive equilibrium (Plott and Smith 1978). Our primary focus, however, is on how this increased competition affects social responsibility, for example, the market share of the fair product.

Second, we conduct two *Limited Information* conditions, in which consumers initially have no information regarding the types of different products. Consumers initially only observe the price of each available product, though they are aware that the products might vary based on their social impact. In both conditions, consumers have the opportunity, in each period, to learn the social impact of all available products after observing the prices. If they decide not to acquire this information, they never become informed about the product types in that period, not even about the impact of any product they might purchase. The two conditions vary how costly it is for consumers to become informed. In the *Limited Information (Free)* condition, a consumer can reveal the product types at no monetary cost, simply by clicking a button. Apart from the fact that consumers do not learn the types of products by default when entering the market, this condition is identical to the Market Baseline. However, it allows us to identify whether an alternative,

perhaps more natural informational default affects socially responsible behavior and market outcomes. In the *Limited Information (Costly)* condition a consumer has to pay a small cost of 1 unit if she chooses to reveal the types of the available products before making a purchasing decision in a period. This adds the realistic feature that it is often (minimally) costly for consumers to become informed about the social impact of available products.

Finally, in the *High Production Cost* condition, we increase the production cost of the fair product to $c = 40$, in contrast with the production cost of $c = 10$ in the Market Baseline. The High Production Cost condition thus implements a technological change from the Market Baseline, in terms of the cost of mitigating the externality, but is otherwise identical.

III.C. *The No Market Condition*

The foregoing experimental conditions all study the prevalence of concern for social impact under varying market and technological conditions. To provide a nonmarket benchmark against which to compare the degree of such concern, we conducted a *No Market* condition. This condition mimics standard distributional decision tasks (i.e., dictator games) typically used to measure concerns for fairness and social impact in individual choice experiments.

Our novel design creates a precise parallel between the monetary consequences of the product choices made by consumers in a given round in the Market Baseline and the allocation choices made by decision makers in our No Market condition. To achieve this, we present each decision maker in the No Market condition with the exact sequence of choices faced by a yoked consumer in the Market Baseline. That is, for each consumer in the Market Baseline, who faced a sequence of 24 menus of product offers, we have a decision maker in the No Market condition who faces a sequence of 24 identical (in monetary terms) neutrally framed allocation choices.

We implement three-person groups (Players A, B, and C), in which Player B (corresponding to consumers in our market conditions) chooses between different allocations of payoffs among all three players. Players A and C are thus inactive in this condition and correspond implicitly to the roles of firms and third parties in

the market condition.⁹ The assignment of subjects to roles is fixed for the 24 rounds. As in the Market Baseline, one of the 24 rounds is randomly chosen to determine payoffs at the end of a session.

Our design compares the behavior of individuals—in the roles of “consumers” or as neutrally framed decision makers—between market and nonmarket settings. Specifically, we aim to study the trade-offs people make between personal benefits and the welfare of others in two very distinct and important settings: an individual choice context similar to the widely studied dictator game and a context designed to simulate consumer choice in product markets. For this purpose, we employ a design that allows us to identify differences in individuals’ preferences between the two contexts, measured by choices among consequentially identical sets of alternatives. By holding the monetary consequences of these choices constant while also keeping the choice procedures and interface very similar, our design creates a clear basis for this comparison, relative to one in which we change more features of the choice environments.¹⁰

III.D. Predictions

The standard economic assumptions of self-interest and rationality yield the same prediction for all the market conditions: all consumers purchase the unfair product, which is traded at a price of zero. The resulting outcomes are maximally

9. For example, suppose a consumer in Market Baseline can choose between three different products: (i) one fair product at price, $p = 30$; (ii) one fair product at price, $p = 25$; and (iii) one unfair product at price, $p = 15$. There is also always the option (iv) not to buy a product at all. Then, the corresponding four allocation options for a Player B in the No Market condition are: (i) 120 for Player A ($100 + 30 - 10$), 120 for Player B ($100 + 50 - 30$), and 100 for Player C ($100 - 0$); (ii) 115 for A ($100 + 25 - 10$), 125 for B ($100 + 50 - 25$), and 100 for C ($100 - 0$); (iii) 115 for A ($100 + 15 - 0$), 135 for B ($100 + 50 - 15$), and 40 for C ($100 - 60$); and (iv) 100 for each player.

10. For example, an alternative approach might compare our Market Baseline to a nonmarket condition in which a single subject plays the role of firm and consumer and can choose among all payoff combinations (price and product type) available in our market setting. Such a design, by taking a decision collectively produced by multiple subjects (firms and consumers) and making it the responsibility of a single subject, would essentially test diffusion of responsibility. Extensive evidence documents that diffused responsibility significantly decreases concern for social impact, even in contexts not involving markets (Darley and Latane, 1968; Dana, Weber, and Kuang 2007; Hamman, Loewenstein, and Weber 2010).

inefficient, since each unit of the unfair good traded results in a net social loss.

Our experiment also allows the possibility of socially responsible behavior, reflected in market shares and prices. If concern for social impact is a persistent characteristic of market participants' preferences, and such concern is sufficiently strong, then we expect positive and constant market shares for the fair product.¹¹

III.E. General Information and Procedures

All sessions took place at the computer laboratory of the Department of Economics at the University of Zurich. Subjects were mainly students from the University of Zurich and the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich. Students majoring in economics or psychology were not eligible to participate. Study 1 employed a total of 613 participants in a between-subjects design; that is, each subject participated in only one condition. Table I gives an overview of our treatment conditions and the number of observations. We conducted between six and seven independent markets for each market condition, each using between 96 and 112 subjects. We also conducted three sessions of the No Market condition, with 105 subjects.

The study was conducted using the software z-Tree (Fischbacher 2007). Before entering the lab, each subject randomly drew a place card that specified at which computer terminal to sit. The terminal number determined a subject's role. Subjects received written instructions, including comprehension questions that had to be answered correctly before a session began. An experimenter read a summary of the instructions

11. Online Appendix A provides a straightforward application of a standard model of social preferences (Fehr and Schmidt 1999) to our setting. The model predicts that consumers and firms sufficiently concerned with fairness and inequality are willing to bear additional costs for socially responsible products that do not harm the third party. The model also predicts a decreased market share for the fair product as the cost of mitigating the externality, c , increases, but the predicted market share is insensitive to increased firm competition and costless limited information (and also essentially insensitive to very small information costs). Research on social concern in nonmarket environments shows that many people exploit default informational states to act self-interestedly (Dana, Weber, and Kuang 2007). Although inconsistent with most social preference models, such behavior raises the possibility that consumers with limited information will similarly exploit a state of default ignorance about product types.

TABLE I
SESSION OVERVIEW AND NUMBER OF OBSERVATIONS

Treatment	Markets	Firms (Participant A)	Consumers (Participant B)	Third parties (Participant C)
Market Baseline	7	42	35	35
High Firm Competition	6	48	30	30
Limited Information (Free)	6	36	30	30
Limited Information (Costly)	6	36	30	30
High Production Cost	6	36	30	30
No Market	–	35	35	35

aloud to ensure common information about actions, payoffs, and procedures.

Sessions lasted about 1.5 hours. Payoffs from the experiment, denominated in “points,” were converted into money at the rate of 10 points to CHF 2.50 (CHF 1 \approx \$1 at the time of the study). On average, subjects earned about CHF 42.0, which includes a show-up fee of CHF 15.

IV. STUDY 1: MARKET SHARES AND PRICES

We first present the results of the Market Baseline, to identify the extent to which concern for social impact is reflected in market outcomes, that is, market shares and relative prices. Then, we study how varying market and technological conditions—increased firm competition, limited consumer information, and increased production costs—influence social responsibility. In Section V, we shift our attention to the individual behavior of consumers and firms.

We defer a comparison of the Market Baseline and No Market conditions to Section VII, after presenting Study 2 in Section VI. This is because Study 2 also includes identical market and nonmarket conditions, and we thus present a more thorough analysis using the combined data.

IV.A. *Market Baseline*

In 99% of cases (831 of 840 consumer choices), consumers purchased a product. Therefore, our analysis will primarily

focus on the realized purchases by consumers; unless otherwise noted, we ignore cases in which a consumer made no product purchase.

The solid line in Figure I displays the proportion of fair products purchased by consumers across time in the Market Baseline. This statistic identifies how often the externality on third parties was mitigated and therefore corresponds to the efficiency of the market. To smooth random variation across periods, we report data aggregated in three-period blocks. The figure reveals a large and stable share of fair products in the Market Baseline. This share is 50% in the first three periods, then decreases slightly, but remains between 42% and 46% in all remaining three-period blocks. The overall market share of fair products in the Market Baseline is 44.3%.¹² Thus, as measured by product purchases, we observe a persistent manifestation of socially responsible behavior in market exchange, with almost half of realized trades revealing an apparent concern for avoiding the imposition of the externality.

Table II reports probit regressions, with subject random effects, of consumers' product choices. All models include period as an explanatory variable; the coefficient for this variable is never statistically significant. Model 2 introduces an explanatory variable measuring the size of the choice set available to the consumer (recall that consumers acting later saw subsets of the original product offers), which has no effect on the frequency of fair product choices.¹³ Model 3 restricts the data to cases in which a consumer saw both types of products, again finding no time trend. Model 4 reveals that consumers respond sensibly to prices: they are less likely to purchase a fair product as the lowest price at which one is available rises and, conversely,

12. When a consumer's choice set included at least one product of each type, the frequency of fair product purchases is slightly higher (48.1%). We also compare purchases based on whether consumers were randomly selected to choose earlier (when there were more product options available) or later in a period. When consumers observed all six product offers, including at least one product of each type, 45.3% purchased fair products. When consumers observed only two product offers (i.e., a consumer was last to act) this frequency is 42.5%. The small difference suggests that consumers did not strategically alter their behavior to influence choice sets of later-acting consumers.

13. Alternatively, if we construct binary variables for whether a consumer saw two, three, four, five, or six product offers, and use these variables instead, none of the coefficients are statistically significant.

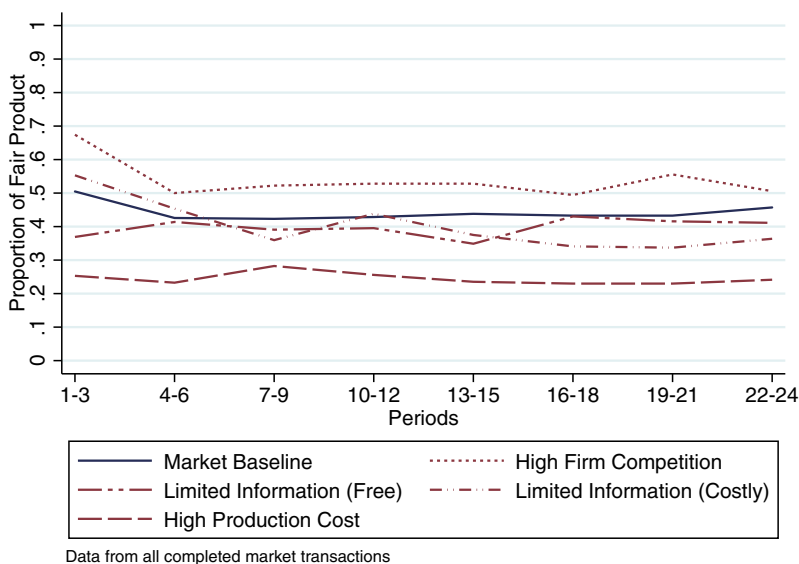


FIGURE I

Fair Product Purchases across Varying Market Conditions

they are more likely to buy a fair product as the lowest price at which an unfair product is available increases.

Consumers' concern for social impact is also reflected in a persistent price difference for the two types of products. Products that produce no social harm trade at higher prices than socially harmful products throughout the experiment. This price premium increases over time, from 2.7 in the first six periods to 4.8 in the final six periods.¹⁴ This trend is illustrated by the solid line in Figure II, which shows the price premium for the fair product—that is, the mean price of the fair product minus the mean price of the unfair product—in the Market Baseline condition. By the end of the experiment, when the price premium is approximately 5, the 10-unit cost of mitigating the externality is thus borne equally by sellers and buyers. The observation that the average price premium is below the additional cost of

14. Average prices in the first six periods are 28.7 for the fair product and 26 for the unfair product; these averages decrease to 25.7 and 20.9, respectively, by the final six periods. Online Appendix B provides time series graphs of prices for all market conditions.

TABLE II
RANDOM-EFFECTS PROBIT REGRESSIONS OF FAIR CONSUMER PRODUCT CHOICE IN
MARKET BASELINE

	(1) All purchasing decisions	(2) All purchasing decisions	(3) Consumer saw both types of products	(4) Consumer saw both types of products
Period	-0.007 (0.008)	-0.007 (0.008)	-0.013 (0.010)	0.014 (0.022)
Number of product offers		0.054 (0.047)		
Lowest price of fair product				-0.403*** (0.074)
Lowest price of unfair product				0.385*** (0.063)
Constant	-0.009 (0.211)	-0.225 (0.252)	0.180 (0.248)	2.275 (1.826)
Observations	831	831	621	621
Number of subjects	35	35	35	35

Notes. The dependent variable in all models takes on value 1 if a consumer purchased a fair product and 0 otherwise. The table reports raw probit coefficients. All four models omit the nine cases in which a consumer made no product purchase. Models 1 and 2 include all purchasing decisions. Models 3 and 4 further exclude cases in which either only fair or unfair products were available to a consumer. Period takes on integer values between 1 and 24. Number of product offers takes on integer values between 2 and 6 and controls for the size of a consumer's choice set. Lowest price of (un)fair product is the lowest price among all (un)fair products in a consumer's choice set. The models allow for individual level random effects. Robust standard errors (clustered by subject) in parentheses, *** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$.

producing the socially responsible product reflects firms' concern for social impact.¹⁵

As a complement to the qualitative description of the price pattern, Table III reports regressions that study how prices vary over time and by product type. Model 1 reports estimates using data from the Market Baseline condition and reveals that the general price decrease across time is significant, that the fair product sells at a significantly higher price, and that the gap between the two prices increases over time.

15. Offering the fair product led to lower expected profits for firms—the average profit for firms offering fair products was 114.2, whereas it was 119.1 for firms offering unfair products—but a significant proportion of firms' product offers (44.1%) were nevertheless fair. The proportion of fair product offers by firms differs little between the first (43.1%) and second (45.2%) halves of the experiment. The probability of having an offer accepted was similar for both fair (83%) and unfair (82%) product offers.

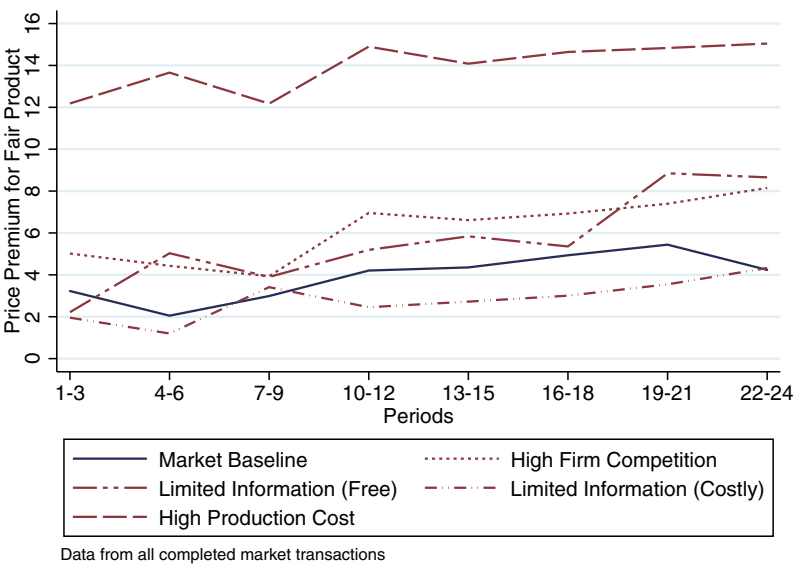


FIGURE II
Price Premium for the Fair Product across Varying Market Conditions

TABLE III
RANDOM-EFFECTS REGRESSIONS OF PRICES BY PRODUCT TYPE

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Market Baseline	High Firm Competition	Limited Info. (Free)	Limited Info. (Costly)	High Prod. Cost
Period	−0.283*** (0.037)	−0.474*** (0.066)	−0.574*** (0.051)	−0.342*** (0.055)	−0.154*** (0.048)
Fair product	2.401*** (0.651)	3.328*** (0.846)	3.121*** (1.153)	1.202 (0.934)	8.993*** (1.448)
Period × fair product	0.108** (0.050)	0.190** (0.079)	0.192** (0.078)	0.103* (0.062)	0.115* (0.066)
Constant	26.881*** (0.574)	21.812*** (0.754)	28.771*** (0.791)	30.240*** (0.989)	31.974*** (0.836)
Observations	831	711	695	702	686
Num. of subjects	35	30	30	30	30

Notes. The dependent variable in all models is the price of a purchased product. Period takes on integer values between 1 and 24. Fair product is a binary variable taking on value 1 in case of a fair product and value 0 in case of an unfair product. The models allow for individual level random effects. Robust standard errors in parentheses (clustered by subject), *** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$.

RESULT 1. Outcomes in the Market Baseline condition reveal a significant and stable concern by consumers and firms for the welfare of the third party, reflected both in market share and in relative prices for the two kinds of products.

IV.B. Increased Firm Competition

Our second market condition increases the number of firms, from six to eight, thereby increasing competition and likely putting downward pressure on prices. Returning to Figure I, the dotted line shows that the High Firm Competition condition yields a slightly higher frequency of fair products relative to the Market Baseline. Specifically, the overall market share of fair products increases from 44% to 54%. Models 1 and 2 in Table IV report the results of random-effects probit regressions of the type of product purchased, comparing the Market Baseline and High Firm Competition conditions. Model 1 shows no significant difference between the Market Baseline (omitted category) and High Firm Competition conditions, in terms of overall fair product market shares. Model 2 additionally tests for differences in condition-specific time trends, again revealing no significant treatment effects.

We also observe the price premium for the fair product that we found in the Market Baseline condition. Reflecting basic economic forces, increased competition lowers prices for both types of products (see Figure B.1 in the Online Appendix). More important, for our purposes, the price difference for the two types of products persists under High Firm Competition and if anything is slightly greater; this is apparent in the dotted line in Figure II. The price premium for the fair product increases to about 8 near the end of the experiment under High Firm Competition, which is higher than in the Market Baseline and close to the marginal production cost for firms. Nevertheless, many consumers are willing to pay the greater price premium for the fair product, as indicated by the market share in Figure I.

Returning to Table III, in model 2, we see that the lower prices with High Firm Competition are reflected in the smaller coefficient for the constant term, relative to the Market Baseline. We also observe the persistent price premium for fair products, reflected in the positive and significant coefficient for that variable and for the interaction term with period, both of which are

TABLE IV
RANDOM-EFFECTS PROBIT REGRESSIONS OF FAIR CONSUMER PRODUCT CHOICE IN MARKET BASELINE AND ALTERNATIVE MARKET CONDITIONS

	(1) Baseline vs. High Firm Competition	(2) Baseline vs. Limited Info. (Free)	(3) Baseline vs. Limited Info. (Costly)	(4) Baseline vs. Limited Info. (Free)	(5) Baseline vs. Limited Info. (Costly)	(6) Baseline vs. Production Cost	(7) Baseline vs. High Production Cost	(8) Baseline vs. High Production Cost
Treatment	0.373 (0.359)	0.494 (0.333)	-0.314 (0.374)	-0.472 (0.378)	-0.136 (0.307)	0.167 (0.308)	-0.896** (0.387)	-0.867** (0.401)
Period		-0.007 (0.008)		-0.007 (0.008)		-0.007 (0.008)	-0.007 (0.008)	-0.007 (0.008)
Period × treatment		-0.010 (0.013)		0.013 (0.016)		-0.025 (0.017)		-0.002 (0.017)
Constant	-0.085 (0.230)	-0.001 (0.209)	-0.083 (0.232)	0.002 (0.211)	-0.098 (0.225)	-0.014 (0.204)	-0.079 (0.234)	0.005 (0.213)
Observations	1,542	1,542	1,526	1,526	1,533	1,533	1,517	1,517
Num. of subjects	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	65

Notes. The dependent variable in all models takes on value 1 if a consumer purchased a fair product and 0 otherwise. The table reports raw probit coefficients. Each model contains the purchasing decision from the Market Baseline and one additional treatment, as indicated in the column heading. The omitted category is Market Baseline and Treatment is a binary variable taking on value 1 if an observation comes from the respective additional treatment and 0 otherwise. Period takes on integer values between 1 and 24. We omit cases in which consumers made no product purchase. The models allow for individual level random effects. Robust standard errors (clustered by subject) in parentheses, *** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$.

higher under High Firm Competition than for the Market Baseline.

RESULT 2. Outcomes in the High Firm Competition condition reveal a significant and stable concern for the welfare of the third party, reflected in both market shares and relative prices for the two kinds of products. Increased firm competition lowers prices relative to the Market Baseline. Socially responsible behavior is slightly, but statistically insignificantly, higher under High Firm Competition than in the Market Baseline.

IV.C. Limited Consumer Information

We next analyze the case in which consumers initially possess limited information about the types of the different available products in a period, but have the opportunity to acquire such information for free or at a small cost. The lines of varying dash length in Figure I show that under Limited Information, the overall market shares of fair products across all periods decreases to about 40%, for both conditions, slightly lower than the 44% in the Market Baseline. Looking at the second half of the experiment, where time trends are fairly flat, the fair product market shares are ordered in the manner one would expect—highest in the Market Baseline, lower with Free Limited Information, and lowest under Costly Limited Information—but with differences that are not very large in magnitude. Models 3 to 6 in Table IV provide statistical comparisons of product market shares in the Market Baseline with the two Limited Information conditions. Models 3 and 5 show that there are no significant differences in market shares, for either of the two Limited Information conditions. Models 4 and 6 additionally show that there are also no significant differences in time trends.

A persistent concern for the welfare of the third party is again reflected in the relative prices of the two product types. The two varying-length dashed lines in Figure II show an increasing price premium for the fair product in both Limited Information conditions. Returning to Table III, models 3 and 4 present coefficient estimates for random-effects regressions of price on product type and across time for the two conditions. The price premium for the fair product is statistically significant

throughout the experiment and significantly increasing for Free Limited Information, a similar pattern as in the Market Baseline. Under Costly Limited Information, the price premium increases marginally significantly over time, but the overall difference only becomes statistically significant after a few periods.¹⁶

RESULT 3. Outcomes in both Limited Information conditions reveal a significant and stable concern for the welfare of the third party, reflected both in market shares and in relative prices for the two kinds of products. Relative to the Market Baseline, the concern for the welfare of the third party, manifested in purchasing behavior, is slightly but not significantly reduced when acquiring product information is costly.

Consumers in the Limited Information (Free) condition acquired product information 73% of the time, while information acquisition in the Limited Information (Costly) condition is less frequent (42%). These frequencies are fairly stable across time. Moreover, information acquisition appears to be instrumental. Consumers who do not acquire information end up purchasing unfair products 87% of the time.¹⁷ Conversely, a large majority of consumers who pay for information purchase fair products. Thus, information use appears generally sensible, with those consumers interested in acting socially responsibly acquiring and using the information and those less concerned with social impact simply remaining uninformed and purchasing the least expensive product.

IV.D. High Production Cost

Finally, we consider the market with a high production cost for the socially responsible product. In this condition, the marginal cost of producing the socially responsible product equals 40

16. Specifically, statistical rejection of the condition that, $Fair\ Product + t * Period \times Fair\ Product = 0$, based on the estimates in model 3, reaches a level of significance of $p = .05$ ($\chi^2(1) = 3.77$) in period $t = 3$.

17. While consumers who do not acquire information in either condition do not know (and are not informed, *ex post*) which type of product they are purchasing, they almost always purchase the cheapest product available, which is typically an unfair product. The high level of product type information implicit in offer prices might partly explain the small effect of consumers' limited information on market outcomes. In Online Appendix C, we provide a more detailed analysis of consumers' information acquisition and subsequent purchase decisions.

units, or 80 percent of the surplus from exchange, four times higher than in other conditions.

The dashed line in Figure I shows that this increase in the cost of producing the socially responsible product leads to a considerably lower market share: 24 percent across all periods, close to half of that in the Market Baseline. Models 7 and 8 in Table IV provide statistical comparisons of fair product market shares in the Market Baseline and High Production Cost conditions. Consistent with Figure I, the latter yields significantly lower frequencies of fair products, with no time trend in either condition. Thus, while previous changes to the market—increased competition and limited information—had little effect on the fair product market share, making the fair product more costly to produce has a much larger impact. However, it is also noteworthy that the market share of fair products remains constant throughout the experiment, revealing stability in socially responsible behavior—though at a lower level—similar to that in the Market Baseline.¹⁸

As is evident in Figure II, there is again a persistent and increasing price premium for the fair product. Not surprisingly, the price premium is higher with High Production Costs—close to 14 units over the entire experiment—than in the other market conditions. As with our other market conditions, however, the average price premium remains below the full cost of socially responsible production, meaning that firms and consumers share the burden of implementing socially responsible outcomes.¹⁹

RESULT 4. Outcomes in the High Production Cost condition reveal a significant and stable concern for the welfare of the third party, reflected both in market shares and in relative prices for the two kinds of products. With High Production Cost, the price premium for the fair product is higher and the market share for the fair product is significantly lower than in the Market Baseline.

18. The high production cost slightly increases the frequency with which consumers opt not to buy a product, from 1% in the Market Baseline to 4.7% across all periods, and 3.9% in the second half of the experiment. A random-effects probit regression of no-purchase choices on High Production Cost condition, period, and the interaction of these two variables reveals no significant difference between the High Production Cost and Market Baseline conditions. The frequency of no-purchase choices is low (3.5% or below) in all other conditions.

19. The application of the Fehr and Schmidt (1999) model in Online Appendix A predicts both the lower market share of fair products and the smaller relative price premium in the High Production Cost condition.

V. STUDY 1: INDIVIDUAL CONSUMER AND FIRM BEHAVIOR

Our analysis thus far has focused on aggregate market outcomes—product shares and prices—as a way of studying socially responsible market behavior. We next shift our attention to the individual behavior of consumers and firms. If market outcomes truly reflect socially responsible behavior, then such concern should show up as part of a sensible dimension of the decision making of market participants. Moreover, average preferences for social responsibility should be relatively similar across market environments, even when behavior changes in response to market factors like prices and costs.

V.A. *Consumer Behavior*

We assume that individuals potentially care both about their own material payoff and about the social impact of their product choice. A simple way to capture such preferences is with a linear utility function of the form, $u = \theta x + \gamma y$, where $\theta > 0$ represents the weight that consumers place on their own monetary payoff (value of the product purchased minus the price paid), indicated by x , and γ captures their concern, or social responsibility, for the third party, whose payoff is indicated by y . Thus, for example, consumers with $\gamma = 0$ care only about buying the product at the lowest price, while consumers for whom $0 < \rho\theta = \gamma$ are willing to sacrifice up to ρ units of own wealth for a one unit increase in the third party's wealth.

We estimate the weights in the above utility specification, using McFadden's (1974) conditional logit choice model. Specifically, Table V reports coefficient estimates for utility functions of the form,

$$u_{itj} = \theta x_{itj} + \gamma y_{itj} + \left(\sum_{k=1}^K \alpha_{jk} z_{itk} \right) + \epsilon_{itj},$$

which describe the utility to a consumer, i , in period t , from product alternative, $j \in \{0, 1, 2, \dots, J^{it}\}$, where J^{it} is the number of product alternatives available. The option not to purchase a product, which is always available, corresponds to $j = 0$, and the actual number of product offers observed by the consumer is indicated by $2 \leq J^{it} \leq 6$, except for High Firm Competition, where $4 \leq J^{it} \leq 8$. The variables, z_{itk} , correspond to K variables that vary between cases (i.e., between subjects and periods) but not

TABLE V
ESTIMATED WEIGHTS FOR CONSUMER UTILITY MODEL

	(1) Baseline Market	(2) Baseline & High Firm Competition	(3) Baseline & Lim. Info. (Free)	(4) Baseline & Lim. Info. (Costly)	(5) Baseline & High Cost	(6) All market conditions
Consumer earnings (θ)	0.372*** (0.062)	0.370*** (0.054)	0.395*** (0.044)	0.439*** (0.054)	0.214*** (0.069)	0.282*** (0.041)
Third-party earnings (γ)	0.033*** (0.006)	0.032*** (0.007)	0.034*** (0.006)	0.038*** (0.006)	0.020*** (0.008)	0.025*** (0.006)
Third party (γ) \times H.F. Competition		0.008 (0.009)				0.005 (0.008)
Third party (γ) \times Lim. Info. (Free)			0.000 (0.009)			0.001 (0.008)
Third party (γ) \times Lim. Info. (Costly)				-0.018** (0.009)		-0.012 (0.008)
Third Party (γ) \times High Prod. Cost					0.006 (0.009)	0.006 (0.011)
Observations	4,205	9,247	7,835	7,821	7,848	20,136
Cases	840	1560	1560	1560	1560	3,720

Notes. The table reports coefficient estimates for utility functions as specified in Section V.A, using McFadden's (1974) conditional logit choice model. θ denotes the weight consumers place on their own payoff and γ denotes the weight consumers place on the third parties payoff. Model 1 contains all consumer decisions from the Market Baseline. Models 2 through 5 each additionally contain data from one additional treatment. In these models, the omitted category is Market Baseline and the respective treatment variable is binary and takes on value 1 if an observation comes from the respective additional treatment and 0 otherwise. Model 6 contains the data from all market conditions. All models include period, gender and ln(age) as case-specific (intercept) terms (coefficients omitted). Robust standard errors (clustered by subject) in parentheses, *** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$.

across alternatives in a case. Specifically, in our estimated models, $K = 3$, corresponding to period, female sex, and (the natural logarithm of) age. Because the labeling of the different product options is irrelevant in our experiment (product choice options were unlabeled and were presented in random order), except for the option not to purchase a product in a period (which was always available and uniquely identifiable), we impose the restriction that $\alpha_{jk} = \alpha_{j'k}$, for all $j, j' \neq 0$. Finally, ϵ_{itj} corresponds to an idiosyncratic extreme-value (logit) random utility error.

Model 1 in Table V reports the coefficient estimates for θ and γ , for the Market Baseline condition.²⁰ Consumers care both about their own monetary payoff ($\theta > 0$) and about the welfare of the third party ($\gamma > 0$).²¹ Thus, the apparent social concern that we observe in aggregate market outcomes is also apparent in the purchasing behavior of individual consumers. Moreover, the ratio of the two coefficients can be interpreted as the relative concern that the average consumer places on her own payoff versus the payoff of the third party. In the case of the Market Baseline, this ratio is approximately 11, suggesting that, on average, consumers are willing to sacrifice 1 unit of wealth to benefit the third party by 11 units.

The remaining models all introduce condition-specific intercept terms to measure the extent to which concern for social impact differs in each condition, relative to the Market Baseline. Specifically, models 2 through 5 each use data from the Market Baseline and one additional market condition and

20. The table omits the case-specific intercept terms (α_{jk}). Selecting not to make a product purchase is generally infrequent. However, the coefficient estimates suggest that consumers tended to make the no-purchase option more frequently later in the experiment and as they reported an older age, though these are not always statistically significant. Omitting these intercept terms from the estimated models does not substantively change the results.

21. We chose a simple utility framework with direct concern for the third party's payoff for simplicity. If, instead, for comparability with the theoretical analysis in Online Appendix A, we modify the estimated model to reflect concern for inequality with respect to the third party, the nature and statistical strength of the results are identical to those in Table V. Also for simplicity, we assume that consumers do not care about the firm's wealth. As we note earlier, prior experimental evidence suggests that fairness between market participants is often extinguished in repeated market exchange (Kachelmeier, Limberg, and Schadewald 1991; Francoisi et al. 1995). Indeed, we confirm this to be the case in our data: if we conduct the estimation in this section and additionally include firm profits, the result is a statistically insignificant coefficient for the firm's profit but no substantive change to any of the other results.

introduce an interaction term between condition and third-party earnings to measure differential concern for the welfare of the third party. Model 6 includes data from all market conditions and simultaneously estimates all the condition-specific interaction terms. The estimates reveal fairly stable concern for social impact across most market conditions, with interaction coefficient estimates that are typically small, positive (indicating, if anything, increased concern for social impact), and generally statistically insignificant. The lone exception is the Limited Information (Costly) condition. When consumers have to pay for information about the social impact of their purchases, their purchasing behavior reflects decreased concern for the welfare of the third party.²² However, if we estimate the model separately for this condition alone, the coefficients for both Consumer Earnings and Third Party Earnings are positive and highly statistically significant ($\theta = 0.575$ (0.010); $\gamma = 0.024$ (0.005); both $p < .001$). Thus, although apparent concern for social impact appears lower in this condition, it is nevertheless present. The overall pattern of stable preferences is striking and observable quite clearly in model 6. The same estimated utility weights characterize behavior across all five market conditions: we fail to reject a test of the restriction that all four interaction terms in model 6 jointly equal zero ($\chi^2(4) = 6.06$, $p = .195$). These results are especially interesting in light of the lower market share of the fair product in the High Production Cost condition because they reveal that this behavioral change occurs without substantive changes in the estimated underlying consumer preferences. This suggests that subjects' preferences for positive social impact are a stable mechanism driving behavior in all market conditions.

RESULT 5. Consumer's purchasing behavior reflects concern for both the price and the social impact of the product and this concern is fairly stable across all market conditions.

22. The estimated model ignores the information-acquisition stage and associated cost, that is, we implicitly assume such costs are zero and that consumers know the product characteristics. In principle, one could estimate a model that includes the endogenous information acquisition decision, but this requires assumptions regarding beliefs held by consumers about the characteristics of different products, based on observed prices. Given the *ad hoc* nature of such assumptions, we limit our analysis to a comparison of product purchases based on the known (to the experimenter) characteristics of products and ignore the (small) utility implications of costly information acquisition.

Compared to the Market Baseline, social concern among consumers, relative to self-interest, is lower only in the Limited Information (Costly) condition.

V.B. Firm Behavior

We also study the decisions of individual firms regarding which type of product to produce. Table VI reports random-effects probit regression results, using as the dependent variable whether a firm chose to offer a fair (1) or unfair (0) product in a period.

Model 1 reveals no differences between conditions in the tendency of firms to offer fair products, with the exception of the High Production Cost condition, where firms offer fair products significantly less frequently. This concords with the general pattern in Figure I. Model 2 studies the effect of a variable that identifies whether a firm offered a fair product in the previous period. The positive and statistically significant coefficient suggests a tendency to repeatedly offer the same product type across periods. Model 3 adds as an explanatory variable a simple measure of the relative expected profitability of the two product types. Specifically, we calculate, for each period in a market, the average realized profit in the prior period for firms that offered the fair product minus the average realized profit for firms that offered the unfair product, including profits of 100 for firms with unsold product offers. This measure identifies how much more (or less) firms earned by offering the fair product than by offering the unfair one. The positive and significant coefficient for this variable indicates that firms respond to the prior relative profitability of the two kinds of products, becoming more likely to offer a fair product as such products become relatively more profitable.

Finally, model 4 jointly incorporates all the foregoing variables. The type of product offered by the firm in the prior period and the expected profitability of the fair product retain their statistical significance, and the magnitude of the coefficients remains similar to that in models 2 and 3. However, the treatment effect for High Production Cost decreases substantially in magnitude and is no longer statistically significant. Thus, whereas model 1 indicates a treatment effect of High Production Costs on firm decision making, model 4 reveals that

TABLE VI
RANDOM-EFFECTS PROBIT REGRESSIONS OF FIRM PRODUCT DECISIONS

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
High Firm Competition	0.359 (0.415)			0.337 (0.388)
Limited Information (Free)	-0.413 (0.474)			-0.346 (0.448)
Limited Information (Costly)	-0.112 (0.459)			-0.067 (0.434)
High Production Cost	-1.323** (0.554)			-0.565 (0.522)
Firm offered fair product last period		0.298** (0.119)		0.357*** (0.126)
Expected fair product profit premium			0.028*** (0.004)	0.030*** (0.004)
Constant	-0.123 (0.324)	-0.504*** (0.153)	-0.209 (0.164)	-0.250 (0.308)
Observations	4,752	4,554	4,396	4,396
Number of subjects	198	198	198	198

Notes. The dependent variable in all models is a binary variable taking on value 1 if a firm offered a fair product and 0 otherwise. The table reports raw probit coefficients. Models 1 and 4 contain indicator variables for the additional market conditions; Market Baseline is the omitted category. Firm offered fair product last period is a binary variable taking on value 1 if a firm offered the fair product in the preceding period. The variable Expected fair product profit premium measures the average realized profit difference between offering a fair product and offering an unfair product in the preceding period. Robust standard errors (clustered by subject) in parentheses. Models 2 through 4 exclude the first period; models 3 and 4 additionally exclude cases in which either a fair or unfair product was not offered in the prior period. The models allow for individual level random effects. Robust standard errors (clustered by subject) in parentheses, *** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$.

this is largely accounted for by the impact of the higher production costs on expected firm profits.

RESULT 6. Firms offer more fair products when such products are more profitable. This difference in expected profitability accounts for differences in the frequencies of fair product offers by firms across market conditions. Firms, on average, show a tendency to repeat prior product type choices.

V.C. Consumer and Firm Heterogeneity

The foregoing analyses obscure potentially significant individual differences in concern for social impact. Indeed, individual choice experiments—for example, using dictator games—usually reveal heterogeneous concerns for fairness (Camerer 2003;

Engel 2011). Online Appendix D presents histograms showing how often each individual consumer and firm purchased or offered a fair product, across the entire experiment. The results reveal significant heterogeneity. In all conditions, large proportions of subjects—roughly 50% in the second half of the experiment—never change their behavior, meaning they either always or never purchase or offer a fair product. The remaining subjects are fairly dispersed in their behavior, exchanging fair products with varying frequency, which is consistent with the price and expected profit sensitivity that we identified in the previous two sections.

VI. STUDY 2: MARKET AND NONMARKET BEHAVIOR IN SWITZERLAND AND CHINA

Our first study shows that many market participants in Switzerland take into account the external impacts of their market activity. We next explore possible variation across societies in social responsibility, by conducting a second study jointly in Switzerland and China.

VI.A. *Design*

The primary focus of our study consists of sessions of the Market Baseline condition, conducted (as described in Section III.A) in Switzerland and China. In these *Market Switzerland* and *Market China* conditions, five consumers and six firms interacted exactly as in Study 1, with their market behavior potentially affecting five third parties.

Aside from measuring social concern in markets using subject pools in Switzerland and China, we also obtain comparable measures of social concern in nonmarket contexts in both subject pools. This helps us identify, for example, whether any difference in market socially responsible behavior between the two populations is due to a more general difference in social preferences, or whether the market context has different effects in the two subject pools. Hence, we also conducted sessions of the No Market condition (as described in Section III.C) in both Switzerland and China.²³

23. For example, in the No Market China condition, a subject in the role of decision maker (Player B) made 24 allocation choices identical to those faced by a consumer in the Market China condition.

However, although the No Market condition in a country is directly comparable to the corresponding country's Market condition, the No Market conditions are not directly comparable across countries because the choice sets provided to the two sets of nonmarket decision makers in the two countries differ. Therefore, we also conducted a "swapped" variant of the No Market condition in which we provided decision makers in a No Market session conducted in Switzerland (*Swapped No Market Switzerland*) with a sequence of 24 choices faced by paired consumers in the Market China condition. Similarly, we provided subjects in the *Swapped No Market China* condition with the choices faced by consumers in the Market Switzerland condition. Hence, conducting these Swapped No Market conditions creates a way to directly compare nonmarket behavior across the two subject pools.²⁴

At the end of each session, we also administered the Fair Market Ideology scale developed by Jost et al. (2003). This questionnaire measures whether individuals perceive free markets as a fair system and whether inequality produced by markets is fair. We included this scale to test whether, consistent with prior research, Chinese respondents tend to judge market behavior that produces inequality less harshly than respondents in Switzerland (see Gao 2009).

VI.B. General Information and Procedures

We conducted the study at the University of Zurich and the Shanghai University of Finance and Economics. A total of 616 subjects participated, half in China and half in Switzerland. More precisely, 128 subjects participated in eight Market sessions in each country, 40 in the role of consumer. Additionally, 120 subjects participated in the No Market condition in each country, 40 in the role of decision maker. These 40 subjects received the exact choice sets faced by consumers in the same country's Market condition. In each country, we also collected Swapped No Market observations for a representative subsample

24. For example, a decision maker in China (Swapped No Market China condition) and one in Switzerland (No Market Switzerland condition) are provided with the same 24 allocation choices in a nonmarket context. These choices are identical to the 24 product choices faced by a market consumer in the Market Switzerland condition.

of four markets from the respective other country. This required 60 subjects in each country, 20 in the role of decision maker.

The general procedures were as described in Section III.E. After conducting sessions in China, which recruited from the broad student population at the Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, we recruited from a comparable distribution of study majors in Zurich—roughly 50% from the fields of finance, economics and business (Study 2 thus uses a slightly different population for the Zurich sessions than did Study 1). To ensure comparability between the two sets of instructions, we employed a back-translation procedure in writing the Mandarin version of the experimental instructions—one person translated the English instructions into Mandarin and another person did so back into English to identify and reconcile inconsistencies. The conversion from points into money aims to match the purchasing power of subjects' payoffs: points were converted into money at the rate of 10 points to CNY 2.5 in Shanghai and, as in Study 1, 10 points to CHF 2.50 in Switzerland. On average, subjects in China earned about CNY 40.7, including a show-up fee of CNY 15; subjects in Switzerland earned about CHF 41.3, including a show-up fee of CHF 15.

VI.C. *Results*

We first consider responses to the Fair Market Ideology questionnaire (Jost et al. 2003), to identify whether subjects in China hold different notions of what constitutes fair behavior in markets. We construct an aggregate measure by averaging the responses to the 25 scale items, ranging from -5 to 5 . Higher numbers reflect greater agreement with the view that market systems and the outcomes they produce are fair. The average response in China is significantly higher than the average response in Switzerland (respectively, mean [std. err.] = 0.714 [0.011] versus -0.102 [0.016], $t_{614} = 8.70$, $p < .001$). Hence, we find a greater general perception among respondents in China that the outcomes produced by free markets are fair.²⁵

25. For example, for the statement, "In free market systems, people tend to get the outcomes that they deserve" (completely disagree: -5 , completely agree: $+5$), respondents tend to agree significantly more in China than in Switzerland (1.987 versus -1.075 , $t_{614} = 13.67$, $p < .001$). For the statement, "When a company raises the prices that it charges its customers for its goods, because management has obtained market research which suggests that its customers are willing to pay

Our primary interest is in whether we observe differences in market behavior. The solid lines in Figure III present the fair product market shares in the Market conditions in Switzerland (no markers) and China (markers).²⁶ The frequency of fair products traded in Switzerland, 48.3% across the entire experiment, is very similar to that in the Market Baseline from Study 1 (44.3%), which provides a direct replication of Result 1, using a new sample of subjects, including different study majors. However, the frequency of fair product purchases in China is much lower: 16.3% across the experiment. Hence, despite studying identical market environments, we observe significantly less socially responsible behavior in China than in Switzerland. In fact, the frequency of socially responsible market outcomes in China is lower than in any condition from Study 1 (see Figure I), including the one in which the cost of mitigating the externality was four times as high.²⁷

Models 1 and 2 in Table VII report random-effects probit regressions of fair product purchases across experimental locations and time. Consistent with Figure III, the likelihood of a fair product exchange is significantly lower in China than in Switzerland, and this difference is stable over time.²⁸ We also used the data to estimate the utility models from Section V.A separately for consumers in Switzerland and China (see Online Appendix, Table E.1). Recall that the ratio between the weights placed on own payoffs (θ) and those of the third party (γ) measures the relative concern by consumers, on average, for these two impacts of

more, it is . . .” (completely unfair: -5, completely fair: +5), respondents in China judged the behavior as more fair (1.292 versus 0.633, $t_{614} = 3.15$, $p < .01$).

26. As with Study 1, we omit cases in which no product was traded (3% in Switzerland, 2% in China).

27. We also observe differences in the price dynamics between Switzerland and China. Average prices in Market Switzerland sessions are similar to those in Study 1, with average prices for the fair product of 30.1 and for the unfair product of 24.7, and a general decreasing trend over the course of the experiment. In China, we observe a smaller price premium (26.1 versus 24.9) that decreases over the course of the experiment; in the final third of the experiment there is no difference in price for the two types of products.

28. As in Study 1, consumers in both countries respond sensibly to prices, purchasing fair products more often as the relative price of fair products decreases. We also tested whether differences in the tendency for consumers to purchase socially responsible products related to individual variation in responses to the Free Market Ideology scale but find no robust relationship between questionnaire responses and behavior in the market.

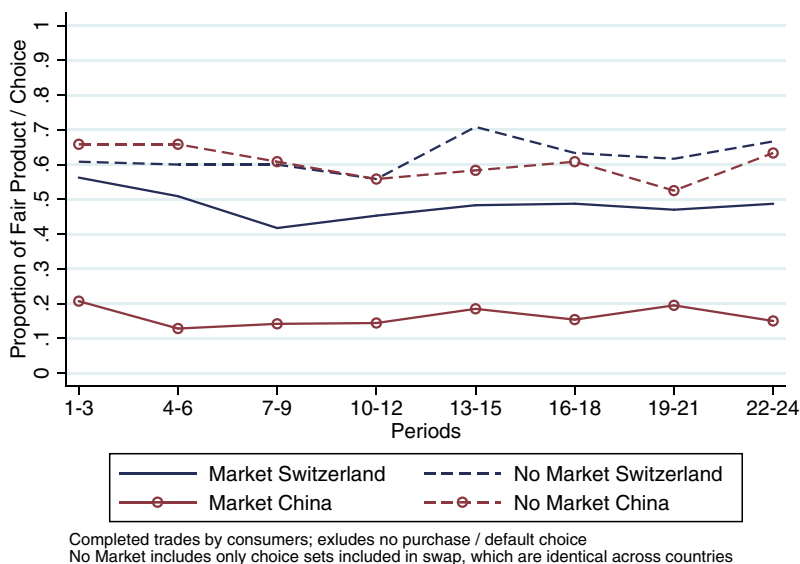


FIGURE III

Fair Product Purchases and Choices in China and Switzerland

a choice. For Switzerland, the estimated ratio is 13, which is close to the estimate of 11 from the Market Baseline from Study 1. However, for China it is almost twice as high (25).

Nevertheless, even though the manifestation of social responsibility is weaker in China than in Switzerland, we observe a persistent market share for the socially responsible product even in the market in China. As Figure III and Table VII show, this proportion is stable over time. Hence, despite it being weaker than in Switzerland, we find evidence of stable market social responsibility in China.²⁹

The No Market conditions using the swapped choice sets common to both Switzerland and China allow us to directly compare the degrees of social concern in nonmarket settings in the two countries. This is important for interpreting the difference between the two Market conditions in Figure III. On the one

29. This is also reflected in the estimated consumer utility weights, which reveal a significant positive concern for both own payoff and the welfare of the third party in China, as well as in Switzerland (Online Appendix, Table E.1).

TABLE VII
RANDOM-EFFECTS PROBIT REGRESSIONS OF FAIR CHOICES IN SWITZERLAND AND CHINA

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
		Market China & Switzerland	No Market China & Switzerland (using matched choice sets only)	
China	-1.447*** (0.297)	-1.529*** (0.322)	-0.033 (0.291)	0.145 (0.286)
Period		-0.010 (0.013)		0.004 (0.009)
Period \times China		0.006 (0.017)		-0.015 (0.013)
Constant	-0.002 (0.219)	0.126 (0.246)	0.333 (0.206)	0.280 (0.206)
Observations	1,872	1,872	1,711	1,711
Number of subjects	80	80	80	80

Notes. The dependent variable in models 1 and 2 takes on value 1 if a consumer purchased a fair product and 0 otherwise. The dependent variable in models 3 and 4 takes on value 1 if a decision maker in a No Market condition made a fair allocation choice (that gives player C a payoff of 100) and 0 otherwise. The table reports raw probit coefficients. Models 1 and 2 include all purchases made in Market Switzerland and Market China. Models 3 and 4 include only the matched choice sets from the No Market conditions in both countries. China is a binary variable taking on value 1 if an observation comes from a session conducted in China and 0 otherwise. Period takes on integer values between 1 and 24. We omit cases in which a consumer made no product purchase and the respective choices in the No Market condition. The models allow for individual level random effects. Robust standard errors (clustered by subject) in parentheses, *** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$.

hand, this difference might simply reflect a general difference in the propensity to consider the welfare of others, in which case we would expect subjects in China to also exhibit less social concern in a nonmarket context than would subjects in Switzerland. However, this is inconsistent with earlier laboratory evidence showing Chinese not to be systematically less prosocial in nonmarket laboratory decisions (Buchan, Johnson, and Croson 2006; Chuah et al. 2007; Bohnet et al. 2008). Alternatively, it is possible that the difference in behavior arises because of differences in norms specifically governing behavior in markets, with Chinese individuals exhibiting a greater tolerance for unfair or unethical behavior in markets than respondents in Switzerland, as reflected in responses to the Fair Market ideology scale and in prior research.

Figure III presents data from the No Market condition in both countries. To allow comparability between No Market data from Switzerland and China, we use only the matched choice sets that were included in the swapped versions of the No Market

conditions. Hence, the No Market lines in Figure III are based on the same 40 choice sets, each faced by one subject in Switzerland and one in China. In the nonmarket context, we find very little difference in behavior between Switzerland and China. Across the entire experiment, subjects in Switzerland and in China select choices that do not harm the third party 56.7% of the time.³⁰ Models 3 and 4 in Table VII report the results of random-effects probit regressions that test for differences in nonmarket behavior between Switzerland and China—again, using only the directly comparable matched choice sets included in the swap. There is no statistically significant difference in either levels of exhibited social concern or time trends.³¹

RESULT 7. Outcomes in both the Market Switzerland and Market China conditions reveal stable concern for the welfare of the third party. The market share of the fair product is significantly lower in the subject pool in China than in Switzerland. Social concern in the No Market context is very similar between China and Switzerland.

VII. MARKET VERSUS NONMARKET SOCIAL CONCERN

Both studies include No Market conditions that allow direct comparisons between choices made in a nonmarket context and the behavior of individual consumers in the Market Baseline. Recall from the experimental design of Study 1 in Section III that we created the No Market condition by taking the 24 product choice sets facing each consumer in the Market Baseline condition, and presenting these exact 24 choices—with identical monetary consequences for a set of three subjects—to another decision maker in the No Market condition. We did the same for the two market conditions in Study 2, Market Switzerland and Market China. Hence, we have three data sets, two in

30. If we include the default choice that gives 100 to each subject, and count this as a fair choice, the proportions rise to 62.4% in Switzerland and 60.4% in China. These frequencies do not differ significantly.

31. Table E.1 in the Online Appendix reports estimated utility weights from the swapped No Market choice data for both countries. We find very similar degrees of concern for the third party in Switzerland and China, with both models yielding ratios of approximately 6 between concern for own payoff (θ) and concern for the third party (γ).

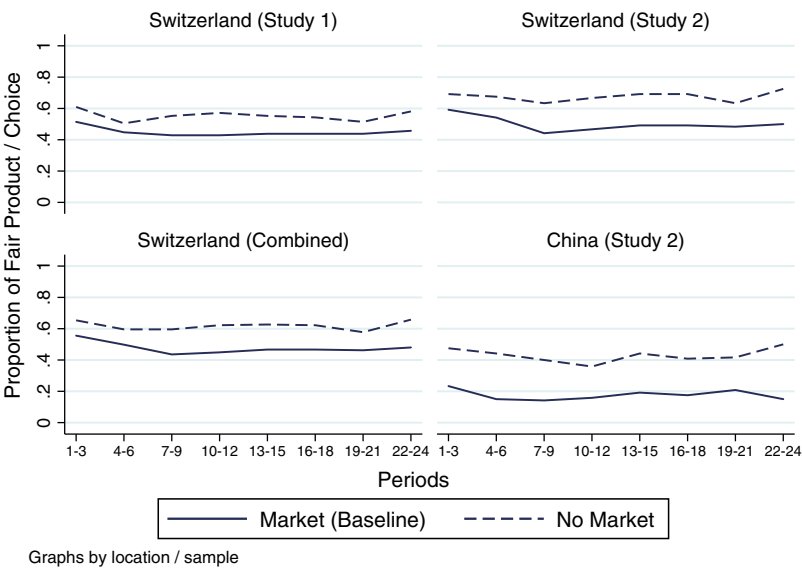
Switzerland and one in China, with which to make market versus nonmarket comparisons of the degree of concern for social impact.

Figure IV presents the frequencies of fair product purchases and fair nonmarket choices across all three data sets, as well as the pooled data from Switzerland for Studies 1 and 2. The solid lines indicate fair product purchases in the market conditions and are comparable to the corresponding lines in Figures I and III, except that here we include not purchasing a product in the market and the default egalitarian choice in the nonmarket conditions—which yield payoffs of 100 for all three participants—as “fair.”³² In every comparison, the Market and No Market lines reflect choices from identical choice sets. The top two panels show a similar finding in the two studies in Switzerland: in both cases, the proportion of fair behavior is higher in the No Market condition than in the Market condition, with differences of 10 percentage points in Study 1 and 18 percentage points in Study 2. The bottom left panel, which pools the data from both studies in Switzerland, shows an aggregate difference of 14 percentage points. These differences are fairly stable across periods. We observe a similar pattern in China, shown in the bottom right panel. Here, the difference is larger (25 percentage points), which is consistent with our observation in Section VI that there is a greater difference between market and nonmarket social concern in China than in Switzerland.³³

Table VIII presents the results of random-effects probit regressions of whether a subject made a fair choice. The results support the observations from Figure IV. The first two models compare the Market Baseline and No Market from Study 1, the

32. In the No Market conditions, this is a natural interpretation of the egalitarian default choice. Recall that not purchasing a product is rare (1% in the Market Baseline in Study 1, which is also true in Study 2 (3% in Market Switzerland and 2% in Market China). The corresponding default choice is more frequent in the No Market conditions: 3% in Study 1, 8% in Switzerland (Study 2), and 11% in China.

33. The difference for China is somewhat constrained by the fact that many choice sets (54%) faced by consumers and decision makers in China contain no fair product alternative, other than the default; this is much less frequent in the choice sets in Switzerland (Study 1: 26%, Study 2: 24%), and is a consequence of firms offering fewer fair products in China. If we compare only cases in which a consumer saw at least one fair product and one unfair product (see Online Appendix Figure E.1), the differences between market and nonmarket fair behavior do not change much for Switzerland (e.g., the aggregate difference with the pooled data is 15 percentage points, close to the 14 percentage points difference in Figure IV), but the difference is considerably larger for China (35 percentage points).



Graphs by location / sample

FIGURE IV

Fair Purchases/Choices in Market and No Market Conditions

next two do so for Market Switzerland and No Market Switzerland from Study 2, and models 5 and 6 pool the data from both studies in Switzerland. Across models 1–6, the constant term is not significantly different from zero, indicating that the frequency of fair choices in markets in Switzerland was close to 50%. The coefficients for No Market are always positive, but only statistically significant in some specifications, indicating that although we consistently observe more fair behavior in the nonmarket context, the statistical strength of this result is inconsistent. Nevertheless, in the combined sample from Switzerland, we find a statistically significant tendency to act more fairly in the nonmarket context than in the market.

Models 7 and 8 present a comparison of Market China and No Market China. We observe some differences with models 1–6. First, the coefficient for the constant term is negative and statistically significant, indicating a strong tendency toward the unfair product in the market. Also, the coefficient for the No Market variable is larger for China than for the comparisons from Switzerland. Hence, as we observed in Section VI, the impact of

TABLE VIII
RANDOM-EFFECTS PROBIT REGRESSIONS OF FAIR MARKET AND NONMARKET CHOICES

	(1) Switzerland (Study 1)	(2)	(3) Switzerland (Study 2)	(4) Switzerland (Study 2)	(5) Switzerland (Combined)	(6) Switzerland (Combined)	(7) China (Study 2)	(8)	(9)	(10) Pooled (all data)
No Market	0.345 (0.324)	0.317 (0.305)	0.801** (0.314)	0.584 (0.358)	0.586*** (0.226)	0.457* (0.238)	1.030*** (0.279)	0.938*** (0.290)	0.741*** (0.177)	0.625*** (0.185)
Period		-0.007 (0.008)		-0.012 (0.014)		-0.010 (0.008)		-0.006 (0.011)		-0.010 (0.007)
Period × No Market		0.002 (0.012)		0.018 (0.017)		0.011 (0.011)		0.008 (0.015)		0.010 (0.009)
China									-1.109*** (0.186)	-1.144*** (0.195)
Period × China										0.003 (0.009)
Constant	-0.081 (0.229)	0.009 (0.208)	0.035 (0.226)	0.188 (0.257)	-0.019 (0.161)	0.105 (0.168)	-1.339*** (0.185)	-1.269*** (0.195)	-0.101 (0.143)	0.017 (0.149)
Observations	1,680	1,680	1,920	1,920	3,600	3,600	1,920	1,920	5,520	5,520
Number of subjects	70	70	80	80	150	150	80	80	230	230

Notes: The dependent variable in all models takes on value 1 if a consumer in a Market condition purchased a fair product or made no product purchase or if a decision maker in a No Market condition made a fair allocation choice (that gives player C a payoff of 100) and 0 otherwise. The table reports raw probit coefficients. Cases in which a consumer made no product purchase and the respective choices in the No Market condition are counted as fair. The Market condition is the omitted category in models 1 through 8. No Market is a binary variable taking on value 1 if an observation comes from the No Market condition and 0 otherwise. Period takes on integer values between 1 and 24. Market Switzerland is the omitted category in models 9 and 10 that pool the data from both countries. China is a binary variable taking on value 1 if an observation comes from a session conducted in China and 0 otherwise. The models allow for individual level random effects. Robust standard errors (clustered by subject) in parentheses, *** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$.

market versus nonmarket contexts appears somewhat stronger in China than in Switzerland.³⁴

The final two models identify the overall effect of the nonmarket context, across all the data. We include variables to capture the fact that market behavior in China looks very different from market behavior in Switzerland—this is reflected in the negative and significant coefficients for the China variable. Starting, from these separate levels of market behavior, the coefficient for No Market identifies the effect on socially responsible behavior of the nonmarket context, on aggregate, across all comparisons.³⁵ The positive and highly statistically significant coefficients indicate a strong effect of market context on the expression of social concern.

RESULT 8. Socially responsible behavior is more prevalent in the No Market condition than in the corresponding Market condition across all comparisons. The differences are somewhat stronger in China than in Switzerland.

34. In Online Appendix Table E.2 we again estimate the utility model from Section V.A, allowing concern for the third party to vary between market and nonmarket contexts. Consistent with Table VIII, this interaction is small and statistically insignificant for the comparison in Switzerland from Study 1, but larger in both size and statistical significance for the Swiss data in Study 2 ($p < .05$) and for the combined Swiss data ($p < .01$). For the combined comparison for Switzerland, the nonmarket context increases the relative weight placed on the third party's payoff by 70% (the ratio of importance of own payoff (θ) relative to that of the third party (γ) declines from 13 to 7). For China, the differences are much larger in both magnitude and statistical significance—for example, the weight placed on the third party increases by 223% (the ratio of own concern versus that for the third party is 28 in the market and 9 in the nonmarket context).

35. We do not include the fully interacted model (i.e., with China \times No Market interactions) because our goal is to estimate the overall effect of the nonmarket context, relative to market behavior, jointly across all data sets. The interacted model would instead provide independent estimates of the market effect in different populations, which is already visible from the separate models. Moreover, statistical inference of the relative size of the market versus nonmarket differences between Switzerland and China using such an interacted model would be problematic, given the differences in choice sets between countries in the No Market data. Instead, we provide a more appropriate basis for this statistical comparison in Online Appendix Table E.2, where we rely on parameter estimates from our utility model, as in Table V. As this analysis reveals, the difference in concern for social impact between the market and nonmarket context is statistically significantly larger in China than in Switzerland.

VIII. CONCLUSION

This article studies whether concerns for social responsibility persist in repeated market interaction. We develop a laboratory product market, in which socially responsible behavior by firms and consumers involves incurring additional production costs to mitigate negative externalities imposed on individuals otherwise uninvolved with the market.

The data from Study 1, conducted in Switzerland, show first that there is a nontrivial share of socially responsible products supplied and demanded in all market conditions, and that—importantly—the market share is stable over time. Second, the socially responsible product, which costs more to produce, sells at a price premium that persists with market experience. In most cases, this price premium increases over time, suggesting that consumers' willingness to pay for socially responsible products is not eliminated with repeated market interaction. Third, we show that individual-level market behavior is consistent with a preference for positive social impact, though such concerns are heterogeneous.

We also document the robustness of social responsibility in markets to varying market conditions, such as increased seller competition and limited consumer information.³⁶ But we identify one feature of markets for socially responsible products—the technology costs of production—that strongly affects market share. This suggests a critical role for production subsidies as a mechanism for facilitating the adoption of socially responsible products in markets and improving market efficiency. Importantly, the pronounced reaction of market behavior to higher production costs occurs without substantive changes in the estimated underlying preferences of market participants, suggesting that subjects' preferences for positive social impact are an important mechanism driving behavior in all market conditions.³⁷

36. Further evidence that socially responsible market behavior is robust to alternative market characteristics is provided by Danz, Engelmann, and Kübler (2012), who show experimentally that consumers with monopsony power in a duopoly market setting are willing to pay more for products produced by firms that pay higher wages to their workers. Their focus is on how such consumer concern is affected by variation in minimum wage policies.

37. Moreover, the robustness of social responsibility in markets to a default state of limited information—which strongly decreases social concern in nonmarket settings (Dana, Weber, and Kuang 2007)—suggests that in some ways, market

A critical feature of our markets is that we provide a technology that can mitigate the externality, at a cost to market participants. In this sense, our design allows social responsibility to be consistent with market exchange, rather than entirely orthogonal.³⁸ The prevalence of such technologies is widespread in many existing markets. For example, “green,” “ethical sourcing,” and “cruelty-free” are essentially production methods that typically involve higher costs that must be borne in some combination by firms and consumers. Hence, it is natural to study social responsibility in the presence of such technologies and understand their role in facilitating socially responsible market behavior. Indeed, our experiment provides clear evidence of the importance of such technologies, and of their costs, for social responsibility in markets.

Study 2, comparing behavior between subject pools in Switzerland and China, finds that socially responsible market behavior is not solely driven by market characteristics or technology but also varies across populations. Our data show that the frequency of fair product purchases in China is significantly lower—roughly a third of the level observed in Switzerland—despite the structure of the experimental markets being identical and despite the fact that subjects in Switzerland and China do not differ in their behavior in our nonmarket context. Indeed, the market share of the fair product in China is lower than in any condition from Study 1. This suggests that cultural differences may play as important a role for the efficiency of market outcomes as other key economic factors (North 1981; Tabellini 2008), though more work is necessary to test the extent to which our findings with student samples extend to broader populations.

Finally, in both studies, we employ a novel design that allows us to conduct a direct comparison between the behavior of individuals in market and nonmarket contexts, holding constant most other important factors about the choices they face. Our nonmarket condition is a variant of the much-studied dictator

social responsibility may be robust to factors that negatively impact nonmarket prosocial behavior. One possible interpretation of this difference is that the market context (in comparison with nonmarket individual choice contexts) already provides individuals willing to exploit justifications for acting self-interestedly the ability to do so.

38. For related evidence that the feasibility of prosocial outcomes matters for their realization, in the context of principal-agent relationships, see Charness and Dufwenberg (2011).

game and thus provides a useful benchmark to which we can compare the level of prosocial behavior in our laboratory markets. Across three data sets, we observe a consistent pattern of diminished social concern in the market context. Hence, market behavior does seem to reflect less concern for social impact than comparable individual choice settings, even in choices that are consequentially and procedurally identical (cf. Falk and Szech 2013). Moreover, the smaller differences we observe in Switzerland, relative to China, highlight that socially responsible behavior may be more robust to market contexts in some populations than in others.

Hence, viewing all our results together, we provide a mixed response to the titular question of our article—do markets erode social responsibility? On the one hand, we find positive levels of socially responsible behavior in all our market conditions, both in Switzerland and in China—though the level of socially responsible behavior is much lower in China than in Switzerland. Moreover, irrespective of the different levels of socially responsible behavior we observe in different market settings, in no condition does this level persistently erode over time with repeated market interaction. On the other hand, our comparison of behavior in market and nonmarket contexts reveals that our subjects behave less socially responsibly in the market setting. Hence, market interaction does lower social concern.

Broadly, our results draw attention to the important challenge of understanding better the organizational, technological, and cultural conditions under which markets affect prosocial behavior. To this end, an appealing feature of our design is that it easily lends itself to further study. Thus, one of our contributions is what we believe to be a valuable and easily modified experimental paradigm for studying the factors that determine social responsibility in markets.

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SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

An Online Appendix for this article can be found at QJE online (qje.oxfordjournals.org).

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