

Exploring the Relationship Between Demographic Factors and Consumers' Buying Behaviour Towards Cause - Based Marketing: An Assessment Study

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Abstract

Cause - related marketing has been gaining strength for the last two decades not only in the Western world, but across the globe. Since its advent in the USA, it has been growing continuously in Europe and other developed countries as well. This marketing strategy is slowly penetrating into the markets of developing countries and has the potential to become a driving force in the field of social marketing. Companies cannot hope to succeed in another country simply by applying the successful model of a different country. Corporations need to have country-specific data of consumers' opinions so that they can come up with appropriate marketing strategies. Since the contribution to the cause is directly related to the sales and profit, consumers can sometimes be sceptic about the companies' motives behind these strategies or choose to support them too. However, at the end, these strategies are extremely crucial in creating a pragmatic approach in luring the customers' choice in an extremely competitive environment. Using a survey method, the paper attempted at evaluating customers' opinion regarding cause - related marketing by analyzing three measures: perception of customers, image of a company, and intention of customers when purchasing CRM products.

Keywords: cause marketing, gender, consumer behaviour

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Corporate philanthropy in the form of volunteering and social or environmental responsibility has existed for a long time, but developing these initiatives into corporate investment has fuelled the emergence of the concept of cause - related marketing (CRM). The credit of introducing the term 'cause - related marketing' goes to American Express - when they associated themselves with the Statue of Liberty Restoration project in 1983. The marketing campaign of American Express was transactional, based on which they promised to donate a cent for every time someone used his/her card and a dollar for every time a new card was issued in the USA. Card usage increased by 28%, which showed that people really appreciated this new concept of marketing campaign of American Express (Varadarajan & Menon, 1988). The idea of introducing a cause related to the national monument really publicized American Express and its products to a great extent, which ultimately helped in generating a lot of revenue for the company (Ross III, Stutts, & Patterson, 1991). Since then, CRM has been gaining strength steadily in all the markets of the world. Many companies have successfully adopted this model, which has resulted in their increased presence in the social sphere. For India, this is still a new phenomenon, and

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according to a study by La Ferle, Kuber, and Edwards (2013), the perceptions of Indian students about CRM campaigns are more genuine as compared to the conventional marketing strategies. The companies are likely to be benefited the most during the initial stages of the campaign, and this applies not only to the Indian market, but also to other emerging markets where the concept of CRM is still raw. The purpose of the present paper, therefore, is to contribute to this evolving literature by examining consumers' attitudes and perceptions towards CRM.

Definition of CRM

Cause-related marketing can be defined as a marketing strategy in which a company associates itself with an NGO to initiate a social campaign and promotes the company's brand at the same time. These types of associations are highly debatable, and over the years, it has been a matter of great concern whether the companies launch these social campaigns only for commercial motives or the society is also being benefited as promised through these campaigns (Bennett & Sargeant, 2005). Basically, there are two ways in which a company can indulge itself in a social cause; one is corporate social responsibility (CSR) and the other is CRM. In terms of making one's presence felt in the social sphere, CRM can look very similar to the idea of CSR, but there is a fundamental difference between these two concepts. On one the hand, CSR is imposed on the companies by the government as a responsibility towards the society, and also, there are no commercial advantages for the companies. On the other hand, CRM is a pure marketing strategy operated with a background of social initiatives adopted by companies to gain popularity among the customers. With this, it can be said that CRM is conceptually a commercial activity in which companies and NGOs form a partnership to benefit both the business and social aspects. Other than the above-mentioned stakeholders, that is, companies and NGOs, the third stakeholder is the customer, whose perception and attitude are extremely important in deciding the fit between a brand and a cause.

There are a number of variables which can govern the success of a CRM campaign. One of the most important variables is the amount of donations pledged by a company, which can influence the customers in deciding whether to prefer a company or not (Mishra, Sinha, Singh, & Koul, 2013). This can influence the perception and buying intention of the consumers towards CRM products. This paper, hence, analyzes the effect of demographic variables such as gender, age, income, marital status, educational qualification, and occupation of the consumers with respect to their perception and purchasing behaviour.

Skepticism Around CRM

It is very natural for a customer to be skeptic about the concept of CRM. This is due to the fact that the contribution to some social cause or charity is associated with the purchase of some product of a company, thereby adding to its profit. So, there is always a suspicion in consumers' minds that whether the company is benefiting the cause or exploiting it (Anuar, Omar, & Mohamad, 2013). Trust development among customers is a very essential part of running a socially driven marketing campaign.

A study by Green and Peloza (2014) showed that when it comes to big companies, people do not show any tolerance towards the irresponsible brand-cause fit, which leads to a deficit in trust. A doubt is created among the consumers when they see that instead of benefiting the cause, the companies are indulging in profit making campaigns by increasing their sales. These doubts and skepticism generate a negative image of a company's intentions, which also affects the customers' intentions of buying a company's products (Szykman, Bloom, & Levy, 1997). However, by increasing the knowledge and awareness among the consumers and by being transparent, companies can lower the skepticism for the campaign (Brønn & Vrioni, 2001). The fit between the brand and the cause becomes extremely important in deciding the feasibility of the marketing campaign towards the cause as well.

Companies need to assure the customers in terms of usage of the money as collected for the adopted cause so as to make them believe in their campaigns. An inappropriate partnership can increase the cynicism and suspicion of

the customers towards a campaign. The Pepsi example from Spain is a classic example highlighting this issue. It was seen that the Spanish customers showed a strong concern towards social issues, but at the same time, they did not tolerate any mishandling or abuse of the concept (García, Gibaja, & Mujika, 2003). Inappropriate brand-cause fit can lead consumers to perceive the marketing campaigns as devious and fraudulent, which can deeply hurt the brand image (Heath & Chatzidakis, 2012). It is very critical for a campaign's success that the cause it is supporting should be consistent with the brand image (Chang & Liu, 2012).

Advantages/Benefits of CRM

Both the company and the social cause can hugely benefit each other through a strategically implemented and well-planned CRM campaign (Cui, Trent, Sullivan, & Matiru, 2003). A well-developed CRM campaign can greatly increase the image of a company and consumers' perception towards it. The CRM campaign provides an alternative option of marketing over the conventional method to the companies. Through a marketing campaign, it has often been observed that the consumers react more favourably towards the brand and are often willing to switch brands if the respective company manages to build an image that is acceptable to the consumers. Companies can use this marketing strategy for image advertisement and trust building, which can further influence consumers' choice of brands (Mishra et al., 2013). Apart from the companies, the non-profit cause also gets benefited hugely through increased amount of donations (Youn & Kim, 2008). The social cause associated with a CRM campaign not only benefits itself from the donations, but also benefits from increased awareness and promotional support among the people (Lavack & Kropp, 2003). In most of the cases, consumers show willingness for a contribution towards environmental (Dagher & Itani, 2014) or other social issues through cause marketing initiatives. Owing to the huge market potential in terms of making presence in the social sphere, brands can have an everlasting impact through cause - related marketing. This marketing technique is regarded as stable and can also help in tackling superior competitors in the market (Yechiam, Barron, Erev, & Erez, 2003). Owing to the growing competition in the market place, companies are adopting the cause marketing way by means of linking itself (the brand or the company) to a popular cause and positioning itself as a socially responsible corporate entity (Pandey, 2007).

Review of Literature

Many studies have been conducted on consumers' behaviour toward CRM, which has been a matter of great research interest in the field of marketing for academic scholars. For example, an empirical study conducted by Ross, Patterson, and Stutts (1992) mainly focused on the attitude and behaviour of the consumers towards the companies carrying out CRM activities. The study found that the consumers generally showed a positive behaviour towards the organizations involved in the CRM campaign. A study conducted by Dahl and Lavack (1995) concentrated on the effect of the size of donation on consumers' perceptions and purchase intentions. The results from this study came to the conclusion that consumers became more skeptic about the cause, which pledged a low donation. Another study conducted by Strahilevitz and Myers (1998), which was based upon the perceptions of consumers, found out that a CRM campaign involving luxurious or frivolous products was received by the consumers in a more favourable manner. The results of the study conducted by Cunningham and Cushing (1994) showed that a charitable cause associated with a brand played a significant role in influencing the purchase intention of the consumers.

A similar study conducted by Cone Communications (1997) on the purchase intentions of consumers showed that majority of the respondents agreed to switch the CRM brand if the price and quality of the product were kept comparable to other products. A study conducted by Cui et al. (2003) concentrated on the responses and behaviour of the young generation on cause marketing, and the results showed that the young generation actually appreciated the efforts made by the companies to help a social cause.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents (Total Respondents = 254)

	Demographic Variables	%Responding
Gender	Male	52%
	Female	48%
Marital Status	Married	42%
	Unmarried	58%
Age (in years)	<25	37%
	25-34	37%
	35-44	10%
	45-54	10%
	55 or more	6%
Income (in ₹)	<5,00,000	25%
	5,00,000-10,00,000	27%
	10,00,000-15,00,000	22%
	>15,00,000	26%
Educational Level	High School	23%
	Graduate	39%
	Post-Graduate	31%
	Above PG	7%
Occupation	Student	34%
	House wife	5%
	Business	24%
	Professional(Doc/lawyer)	10%
	Private service, Govt. service	27%

The studies discussed above mainly focused on consumers based in developed countries, where CRM has reached a level of maturity among the consumers. However, this study is significantly distinct as it focuses on the consumers of a developing country - India. CRM as a marketing strategy is still in its early stages in this country (like it is in many other developing countries). This study has tried to capture the depth of CRM among the Indian consumers who still are quite less familiar about this concept. Since the respondents belonged to a metro city of a developing country, this study would give good insights to marketers about their behaviour and attitudes towards a CRM campaign. The list of some of the above-mentioned researchers and their contributions are presented in a tabulated form in the Table 2.

Methodology

The survey instrument was developed keeping in mind the parameters required to analyze the effects of demographical variations around CRM enjoined offers. The questionnaire consisted of demographic details like

Table 2. Summary of Past Studies

Author	Findings
Ross et al. (1991)	Female respondents showed a more favourable attitude towards CRM.
Dahl and Lavack (1995)	Consumers were more skeptical towards CRM campaigns with low donations.
Strahilevitz and Myers (1998)	CRM campaigns involving frivolous products were received more favorably.
Cunningham and Cushing (1994)	CRM influences the purchase intention of the consumers.
Cone Communications (1997)	Consumers are willing to switch the brands.
Cui et al. (2003)	Generation Y showed favourable attitude towards CRM.

name, gender, marital status, age, income, which were then analyzed against the scale of perception, image, and purchase intentions. A total of 17 statements were designed in order to analyze the perception of the consumers, image of a company, and buying intention around CRM activities. The first five statements were related to the perceptions of a consumer about a CRM initiative, the next five questions were designed to analyze the image of a company involved in CRM, and the remaining statements analyzed the buying intention of a consumer. The respondents were asked to rate each statement on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1- *definitely disagree*, 2- *disagree*, 3- *neutral*, 4 - *agree*, and 5 - *definitely agree*. The instrument was pre - tested, then reviewed, and revised accordingly before being given out to the respondents. It was given out to 275 respondents, however, 254 questionnaires were found to be usable. The time period of the study is from November 14 - March 15. For the purpose of the study, convenience sampling was adopted so as to reach out to the respondents of varied demographic backgrounds. All statistical analyses were done on Microsoft Office Excel 2013, Minitab 17, and SPSS (V20). The mean scores were evaluated on the MS Excel sheet and one - way ANOVA of the data was done in Minitab 17. The mean scores of the responses were evaluated for every respective category of each of the demographic variables. Through one-way ANOVA, the *F*-values and *p* - values were evaluated for every response in order to analyze the variation and statistical significance between every category under each of the demographical variables.

The respondents covered in this study mainly hailed from South Delhi and the NCR region around Delhi. The subjects belonged to the economic status of middle to upper class. All the respondents were educated with educational qualification of high school and above. The respondents fell in the age group of 18 years and above, with their income falling in the range of ₹ 2 lakhs and above. Both the genders were represented fairly for the sake of a comprehensive demographic study. The profile of the respondents was kept very diverse, which was done purposefully in order to get divergent views from across the sections of the society and not from the people belonging to a restricted demographic background alone. The Table 1 depicts the statistical breakup of the demographic profile of the respondents.

Analysis and Results

↳ **Consumers' Perceptions :** The first six questions (1-6) of the total 17 were designed to analyze the respondents' perceptions about the companies engaged in CRM activities. As observed from the Table 3, approximately 55-60% of the respondents gave a score of 4 (*agree*) or 5 (*definitely agree*), indicating a positive perception about the same. This showed willingness on their part to participate in such marketing initiatives. For example, as shown in the Table 3, 78.3% of all respondents *agreed* or *definitely agreed* when asked to respond to the statement, “I like to see companies adopting and supporting meaningful causes.” But at the same time, only 53.9% of the respondents *agreed* or *definitely agreed* with the statement, “I react favourably to the brand undertaking CRM”. The consumers held a decent perception about this marketing strategy, but being a relatively new idea in the market, the process of trust building will take some time.

The data from the Table 4 shows that the female respondents' perceptions about the CRM campaigns were more positive than the perceptions of the male respondents. Out of the six questions related to the respondents'

Table 3. Image, Intention, and Perceptions Associated with Cause - Related Marketing
(1- *definitely disagree*, 2-*disagree*, 3- *neutral*, 4- *agree*, 5-*definitely agree*)

		1	2	3	4	5
1.	I like buying products which stand for a social cause.	2.8%	8.3%	30.3%	41.3%	17.3%
2.	I like to see companies adopting and supporting meaningful causes.	0.8%	4.7%	16.1%	53.1%	25.2%
3.	Cause sponsorship makes me feel favourable towards the sponsoring company.	2.0%	10.2%	31.5%	37.8%	18.5%
4.	The company supporting a cause makes me like the sponsoring company.	2.4%	15.4%	30.3%	40.2%	11.8%
5.	I react favourably to a brand undertaking CRM.	2.0%	11.0%	33.1%	42.5%	11.4%
6.	I feel positively towards a brand/company engaging in CRM.	1.2%	9.1%	28.0%	47.6%	14.2%
7.	Companies that advertise that they are donating or supporting a cause are good corporate citizens.	3.9%	15.7%	33.9%	35.0%	11.4%
8.	Cause marketing enhances companies' image.	0.8%	9.1%	20.9%	45.7%	23.6%
9.	Cause marketing is a positive thing in the business today.	1.6%	7.1%	20.1%	52.4%	18.9%
10.	Cause marketing initiative by a company would improve trust in the company.	0.8%	10.2%	26.8%	45.3%	16.9%
11.	Cause sponsorship would improve the perception about a sponsor.	2.4%	11.0%	27.2%	48.8%	10.6%
12.	I would be willing to switch to a brand which supports a social cause if the price and other things remain the same.	2.8%	10.6%	29.5%	37.0%	20.1%
13.	I am willing to pay more if a company is supporting a cause.	6.3%	17.7%	38.2%	28.7%	9.1%
14.	Cause sponsorship would make me more likely to use the sponsoring company's products next time I buy.	2.0%	17.7%	32.7%	40.2%	7.5%
15.	Cause sponsorship would make me buy the company's product next time I buy.	2.8%	16.1%	33.1%	39.4%	8.7%
16.	I will recommend the product with CRM initiatives to someone who seeks my advice.	2.4%	13.4%	35.0%	39.8%	9.4%
17.	I would like to share about the cause promotion with others.	3.5%	11.0%	33.9%	39.8%	11.8%

perceptions about the CRM campaigns, the F - value reported is found to be significantly higher for three of the questions, which shows a variation in the responses of the male and female respondents. In a similar way, the data from the Table 5 shows that the perceptions of married people were better than their unmarried counterparts, with significant variations in their responses. The mean scores observed in the Table 7 too are greater than 3, and also, the statistical significance for various statements is low, which states that there are very less variations in the perception of the respondents of varied income groups.

🔗 **Image :** The next five statements were designed to evaluate the effect of the CRM activities on brand image. Most of the responses show that CRM activities can contribute in developing a good image for a company. When asked to respond to the statement, "Cause marketing enhances companies' image," 69.3% of the respondents *agreed* or *definitely agreed* with this notion. But at the same time, a major portion (almost 25%) of the respondents gave a neutral response to the statements related to the image of the CRM company. Almost 71% of the respondents agreed that the concept of CRM is a 'positive thing' in the business, and more than 60% of them admitted that it improves trust in a company, thereby enhancing its image. Companies also need to understand that the image of a brand can get seriously harmed if the cause marketing campaign is perceived negatively.

The mean scores for all the statements related to image range between 3.4 and 4. In the analysis according to the gender of the respondents, the pattern observed is almost similar to that observed for the perceptions of the respondents, which shows that female respondents were more attracted towards a CRM brand than the male respondents. Although the statistical significance is not much high between the responses of male and female respondents, but the mean score is higher for the female responses. The data from the Table 5 shows that the statistical significance (F - value) is considerably low when comparing the responses of statements relating to image. The mean scores for all the questions are always greater than 3.5 for both the married and unmarried respondents.

Table 4. Comparative Mean Scores and One-Way ANOVA Results for CRM Image, Intentions, and Perceptions According to Respondents' Gender
(1- *definitely disagree*, 2-*disagree*, 3- *neutral*, 4- *agree*, 5-*definitely agree*)

		M	F	F-value	p-value
1.	I like buying products which stand for a social cause.	3.52	3.88	7.348	0.007
2.	I like to see companies adopting and supporting meaningful causes.	3.88	4.22	8.667	0.004
3.	Cause sponsorship makes me feel favourable towards the sponsoring company.	3.52	3.84	5.728	0.017
4.	The company supporting a cause makes me like the sponsoring company.	3.41	3.51	0.530	0.467
5.	I react favourably to a brand undertaking CRM.	3.46	3.62	1.699	0.194
6.	I feel positively towards a brand/company engaging in CRM.	3.55	3.88	7.260	0.008
7.	Companies that advertise that they are donating or supporting a cause are good corporate citizens.	3.28	3.51	2.640	0.105
8.	Cause marketing enhances companies' image.	3.78	3.94	1.600	0.207
9.	Cause marketing is a positive thing in the business today.	3.75	3.93	2.027	0.155
10.	Cause marketing initiative by a company would improve the trust in the company.	3.64	3.75	0.770	0.380
11.	Cause sponsorship would improve the perception about a sponsor.	3.49	3.67	1.797	0.181
12.	I would be willing to switch to a brand which supports a social cause if the price and other things remain the same.	3.55	3.77	2.370	0.125
13.	I am willing to pay more if a company is supporting a cause.	3.11	3.30	0.819	0.178
14.	Cause sponsorship would make me more likely to use the sponsoring company's products next time I buy.	3.25	3.55	5.435	0.021
15.	Cause sponsorship would make me buy the company's products next time I buy.	3.27	3.55	4.426	0.036
16.	I will recommend the product with CRM initiatives to someone who seeks my advice.	3.30	3.68	8.950	0.003
17.	I would like to share about the cause promotion with others.	3.35	3.72	7.929	0.005

✎ **Purchase Intentions :** The last six statements of the questionnaire were designed to analyze the intention of buying and willingness to use a product associated with a CRM initiative. As observed from the data of statements 12-17 from the Table 3, more than 50% of the respondents did not show much willingness or intention in buying the product of a brand associated with CRM. When the respondents were asked whether they were willing to switch to the brand associated with a CRM, 57.1% of the respondents *agreed* or *definitely agreed* with the idea. However, when they were asked to respond to the statement, "I am willing to pay more if the company is supporting a cause," only 37.8% of the respondents *agreed* or *definitely agreed* with the respective statement, indicating price sensitivity on their part.

As seen in the earlier tables, the mean scores observed in the Table 6 also are greater than 3, but at the same time, variations in the responses are not very significant as seen in the Table 3 and Table 4. The mean scores observed in the Table 6, relating to age, show that the perceptions of the respondents of age >35 years were more positive than those of the respondents of lower age groups. This observation is clearly opposite of what might have been expected. As observed in the Table 3, the respondents also did not show much agreement when they were asked whether they would recommend a CRM product or share about the promotion cause with others. For the last six statements which are related to consumers' intention of buying the CRM product, the mean scores of female respondents are higher than that of the male respondents. This shows that on seeing a good brand-cause fit, female consumers were more willing to trust in them. But then also, not much statistical significance is observed between the responses of male and female respondents.

The *F*-value in case of one way ANOVA implies the significance of variation between different groups for the same statement. The larger the *F*-value, the more is the variation among various categories. Similarly, the *p* - value implies the similarity in responses or the mean values for various groups in case of the same statement. The *p* -

Table 5. Comparative Mean Scores and One-Way ANOVA Results for CRM Image, Intentions, and Perceptions According to Respondents' Marital Status
(1- *definitely disagree*, 2-*disagree*, 3- *neutral*, 4- *agree*, 5-*definitely agree*)

		Unmarried	Married	F-value	p-value
1.	I like buying products which stand for a social cause.	3.44	3.88	13.647	0.001
2.	I like to see companies adopting and supporting meaningful causes.	3.84	4.16	9.85	0.002
3.	Cause sponsorship makes me feel favourable towards the sponsoring company.	3.47	3.8	7.636	0.006
4.	The company supporting a cause makes me like the sponsoring company.	3.31	3.61	6.165	0.014
5.	I react favourably to a brand undertaking CRM.	3.49	3.52	0.049	0.825
6.	I feel positively towards a brand/company engaging in CRM.	3.6	3.71	0.907	0.342
7.	Companies that advertise that they are donating or supporting a cause are good corporate citizens.	3.24	3.48	3.499	0.063
8.	Cause marketing enhances companies' image.	3.86	3.77	0.518	0.472
9.	Cause marketing is a positive thing in the business today.	3.76	3.85	0.580	0.447
10.	Cause marketing initiative by a company would improve the trust in the company.	3.71	3.62	0.571	0.451
11.	Cause sponsorship would improve the perception about a sponsor.	3.45	3.67	3.559	0.06
12.	I would be willing to switch to a brand which supports a social cause if the price and other things remain the same.	3.54	3.71	1.691	0.195
13.	I am willing to pay more if a company is supporting a cause.	3.23	3.08	1.394	0.239
14.	Cause sponsorship would make me more likely to use the sponsoring company's products next time I buy.	3.27	3.42	1.738	0.189
15.	Cause sponsorship would make me buy the company's products next time I buy.	3.3	3.42	1.121	0.291
16.	I will recommend the product with CRM initiatives to someone who seeks my advice.	3.4	3.42	0.020	0.888
17.	I would like to share about the cause promotion with others.	3.48	3.42	0.279	0.598

value always lies in the range of 0 and 1, and a high p - value signifies the similarity in responses or the mean values. If the p - value is less than 0.05, then there is no chance of mean values being identical or similar. So, a small F -value and a large p - value show that the responses among various groups are close to being uniform and identical. As observed from the data of Statement 1 in Table 4, the F - value is 7.348, and the p - value is 0.007. In this case, the F - value is too high and the p - value is too small (<0.05), and so, it can be concluded that the responses among the male and female respondents have a significant variation from each other. However, when a similar analysis was conducted for the same statement in Table 7, it is observed that the F - value (0.470) is low and p - value (0.716) is high enough to signify that the responses among various income categories are almost similar.

Furthermore, the statistical significance observed in the Table 5, Table 6, and Table 7 for the statements related to purchase intention are considerably low, and so, it can be inferred that there is not much variance in the responses of the participants with reference to marital status, age, and income groups. This particular trend of a low F -value and high p - value is especially evident in Table 7, which signifies that the respondents from varied income groups depict a similarity in their responses.

Managerial Implications

The study highlights various possibilities for company managers to come up with marketing strategies which are more consumer centric, which can help the companies in building trust among the consumers. Through such social marketing campaigns, the companies can benefit from not only winning the trust of the consumers, but also through instilling motivation among their employees. The brand-cause fit is another factor, which plays a critical

Table 6. Comparative Mean Scores and One-Way ANOVA Results for CRM Image, Intentions, and Perceptions According to Respondents' Age
(1- *definitely disagree*, 2-*disagree*, 3- *neutral*, 4- *agree*, 5-*definitely agree*)

		<25	25-34	35-44	45-54	>55	F- value	p- value
1.	I like buying products which stand for a social cause.	3.44	3.54	4.00	3.96	4.07	3.891	0.004
2.	I like to see companies adopting and supporting meaningful causes.	3.81	3.96	4.35	4.15	4.13	2.828	0.025
3.	The cause sponsorship makes me feel favourable towards the sponsoring company.	3.45	3.58	4.04	3.69	3.87	2.324	0.057
4.	The company supporting a cause makes me like the sponsoring company.	3.27	3.53	3.58	3.38	3.80	1.637	0.166
5.	I react favourably to a brand undertaking CRM.	3.49	3.58	3.50	3.27	3.53	0.610	0.656
6.	I feel positively towards a brand/company engaging in CRM.	3.62	3.67	3.81	3.42	3.80	0.794	0.53
7.	Companies that advertise that they are donating or supporting a cause are good corporate citizens.	3.23	3.30	3.62	3.27	3.93	2.165	0.073
8.	Cause marketing enhances companies' image.	3.91	3.84	3.92	3.50	3.53	1.497	0.204
9.	Cause marketing is a positive thing in the business today.	3.74	3.86	4.19	3.50	3.60	2.489	0.044
10.	Cause marketing initiative by a company would improve trust in the company.	3.80	3.65	3.65	3.38	3.60	1.167	0.326
11.	Cause sponsorship would improve the perception about a sponsor.	3.41	3.56	3.77	3.50	3.93	1.598	0.175
12.	I would be willing to switch to a brand which supports a social cause if the price and other things remain the same.	3.54	3.53	3.92	3.58	4.07	1.676	0.156
13.	I am willing to pay more if a company is supporting a cause.	3.26	3.08	3.23	3.12	3.13	0.400	0.808
14.	Cause sponsorship would make me more likely to use the sponsoring company's products next time I buy.	3.23	3.31	3.65	3.31	3.60	1.401	0.234
15.	Cause sponsorship would make me buy the company's products next time I buy.	3.34	3.29	3.69	3.23	3.40	1.064	0.375
16.	I will recommend the product with CRM initiatives to someone who seeks my advice.	3.36	3.44	3.62	3.23	3.40	0.660	0.621
17.	I would like to share about the cause promotion with others.	3.47	3.51	3.81	3.23	2.93	2.463	0.046

role in deciding the purchasing intention of the consumers. The company's involvement with a social cause clearly gives a boost to its brand image. As discussed earlier, CRM is already a well accomplished strategy in developed countries, but it has a long way to go in the developing markets. Such analysis of the data, as given by this study, will help the companies to understand the behaviour of the consumers in a comprehensive manner. These behavioural patterns can help the companies in coming up with an appropriate fit, which can be easily blended for a particular target group.

Conclusion

This study was undertaken to study the consumers' behavioural patterns by analyzing their perceptions, image, and buying intentions for brands associated with cause marketing campaigns. The results obtained from the analysis of the data throw a significant amount of light on various parameters which decide the behavioural pattern of consumers regarding the CRM activities undertaken by companies. It is also evident from the results that people do give attention to these marketing campaigns, which in the long term, are poised to help companies and social causes. The companies need to ensure that the brand-cause fit is appropriate in order to maintain a good perception about the CRM activities. As observed from the analysis, people in general reacted favourably towards cause

Table 7. Comparative Mean Scores and One-Way ANOVA Results for CRM Image, Intentions, and Perceptions According to Respondents' Income
(1-*definitely disagree*, 2-*disagree*, 3- *neutral*, 4- *agree*, 5- *definitely agree*)

		<5 lakhs	5-10 lakhs	10-15 lakhs	>15 lakhs	F-value	p-value
1.	I like buying products which stand for a social cause.	3.51	3.70	3.63	3.65	0.470	0.716
2.	I like to see companies adopting and supporting meaningful causes.	3.76	4.00	4.04	4.09	1.996	0.115
3.	The cause sponsorship makes me feel favourable towards the sponsoring company.	3.27	3.71	3.77	3.68	3.567	0.015
4.	The company supporting a cause makes me like the sponsoring company.	3.14	3.62	3.52	3.45	3.004	0.031
5.	I react favourably to a brand undertaking CRM.	3.35	3.62	3.43	3.59	1.350	0.259
6.	I feel positively towards a brand/company engaging in CRM.	3.54	3.74	3.54	3.74	1.134	0.336
7.	Companies that advertise that they are donating or supporting a cause are good corporate citizens.	3.24	3.36	3.38	3.39	0.311	0.818
8.	Cause marketing enhances companies' image.	3.63	3.86	3.82	3.97	1.467	0.224
9.	Cause marketing is a positive thing in the business today.	3.52	3.80	3.96	3.92	3.227	0.023
10.	Cause marketing initiative by a company would improve trust in the company.	3.60	3.67	3.66	3.76	0.321	0.81
11.	Cause sponsorship would improve the perception about a sponsor.	3.35	3.65	3.68	3.50	1.767	0.154
12.	I would be willing to switch to a brand which supports a social cause if the price and other things remain the same.	3.51	3.58	3.79	3.59	0.805	0.492
13.	I am willing to pay more if a company is supporting a cause.	3.25	3.10	3.07	3.23	0.478	0.698
14.	Cause sponsorship would make me more likely to use the sponsoring company's products next time I buy.	3.24	3.42	3.38	3.30	0.489	0.691
15.	Cause sponsorship would make me buy the company's products next time I buy.	3.19	3.41	3.46	3.45	0.952	0.416
16.	I will recommend the product with CRM initiatives to someone who seeks my advice.	3.25	3.51	3.43	3.42	0.874	0.455
17.	I would like to share about the cause promotion with others.	3.14	3.59	3.46	3.59	3.232	0.023

marketing campaigns. People are also becoming increasingly aware about these marketing campaigns which calls for companies to engage in meaningful campaigns. The study helps us in understanding that female respondents showed more positivity towards CRM initiatives than their male counterparts. When observed closely (Table 4), the mean scores and the statistical significance are considerably higher for female respondents, particularly for the statements regarding perceptions about the CRM campaigns. The female correspondents also showed better intention to buy products of a brand associated with a cause. This corroborates with the results obtained by Ross et al. (1992).

The intention and attitude of female consumers towards CRM products seemed to be more encouraging as compared to their male counterparts. But yet again, the responses of the male respondents are easily in the range which can be termed as favourable or positive. These variations in responses shall help the companies in designing their marketing campaigns accordingly. The perceptions of the respondents were largely observed to be appreciable, but yet, the challenge remains in front of the companies to make the people believe that the cause marketing campaign is here to actually help the cause and not only to promote the brand. Through various studies, it has been found that consumers are often loyal to their regular brands and outlets (Sarabia - Sanchez, 2005). So, it

often proves to be a Herculean task for the companies to change consumers' perceptions towards their brands. There have been experimental studies assessing the relationship between attitude and its impact on purchase intention and discussing the moderating effects of cause campaigns on the same (Gadhavi, Shukla, & Patel, 2014). It was found that the price of the product still remains a major factor in deciding which brand to go for, as when asked, the respondents showed reluctance in shelling out more money for a brand associated with a social cause. Companies need to motivate employees and the consumers alike to believe in the company to reach the cherished organizational objectives. Hence, it would be appropriate to conclude that a CRM campaign can be extremely effective in luring consumers if implemented in the right spirit and is undertaken with effective judgment and sincerity.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Further Research

The nature of this experimental study is explorative in nature, with the use of convenient and snowball sampling methods, which can be its first limitation. Furthermore, the study was conducted with responses from 254 respondents, and so, a possibly larger sample can be used for future studies. The subjects for the study were from a metro city of India, which provides scope for conducting a similar study in tier 2 and tier 3 cities of India, or in rural parts of the country. Comparison studies between the two can also be undertaken in the future. This basically is a consumer centric study conducted in order to evaluate consumers' behaviour and attitude towards the concept of CRM. Similar kinds of studies can be further extrapolated to a brand specific study or an industry specific study around CRM. Lastly, the inter effect and moderation effect among the consumer behaviour constructs of perception, image, and purchase intention to each other can be attempted in the future as well.

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