

# **SOCIAL CAUSE RELATED MARKETING AND ITS IMPACT ON CUSTOMER BRAND PREFERENCES**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Social Cause Related Marketing (CRM) has emerged as a top management priority in the last decade due to the growing realization that it one of the most valuable intangible tool that firms have to gain better corporate image from Internal as well as External Customers. This paper identifies some of the influential work in CRM area, highlighting definitions, meaning and previous findings in the same field. The main aim of paper is to find out the relationship between Social Cause Related Marketing and Customer Brand Preference and also the impact of CRM as an independent variable on Customer Brand Preference as a dependent variable. The Study was conducted in Gwalior region. The Findings of the study matched with objectives undertaken. The results driven from Regression tests have clearly shown the impact of Social Cause Related Marketing on Customer Brand Preference which is significant at 0% level and also the relation between the two. The respondents gave high importance to Self Image in case of CRM and Brand Awareness in Brand Preference with the Eigen values of 32.870 and 35.008 respectively. The paper also outlines some gaps that exist in the research of variables and formulates a series of related research questions.*

**Keywords: Social Cause Related Marketing, Brand Preference and Corporate Social Responsibility**

## **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

Stole (2006) Cause Related Marketing (CRM) is the hybrid of product advertising and Corporate Public Relations. He has also mentioned that there are six main types of CRM arrangements. The first four relate to standard corporate practices and they are: advertising, providing cause's message, public relations, organized for tying up a knot with nonprofit Groups; Corporate as a sponsor, providing financial help to an event; licensing, where a business pays to use a charity logo on its products or services; direct marketing, where both a business and a non-profit raise funds and promote brand awareness; Purchase-triggered Donations, in this company contributes an amount from the price of product to a social or charitable cause.

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CRM has become an extreme need for today's corporate world as it continuously provides multiple benefits like positive word of mouth, survival and competitive advantage (Collins 1993), sure returns on investments and ever raising goodwill. The corporate undertaking the CRM practices also fulfills its social responsibility to a greater extent which do affects and results into bigger and better profits undoubtedly.

Increasingly, for-profit companies are aligning their brands with social missions to make a lasting impact on the world, elevate their brand visibility and building meaningful relationships. Incorporating a social cause into your brand can command additional attention and separate you from your competitor. If any company wants to reach beyond more than just monetary impact, a social cause is an excellent path.

Social media marketing has been a boon for social cause marketing, especially tools like Twitter and Facebook in order to promote their causes and they have received great support from the users of these medium. Numerous other studies have also been conducted to show that cause-related marketing has helped to increase a company's profits. Example of American Express (to which the term "cause marketing" is attributed), can be the best fitted where the company saw a 17% increase in new users and a 28% increase in card usage. Consumers are now looking closely at companies who make claims regarding their involvement in social issues.

Skory and Repka (2004) mentioned in their study that seventy-eight percent of people have a more favorable view of a company that contributes or sponsors a cause that they think is worthy. Cause Related Marketing is an exciting concept where both business and charity (or good causes) can benefit. It also attracts new sources of funds, resources and support.

### ***Types of Cause Marketing***

Cause marketing can take on many forms, including:

- Product, service, or transaction specific
- Promotion of a common message
- Product licensing, endorsements, and certifications
- Local partnerships
- Employee service program

**BRAND**-A brand is a product, service, or concept that is publicly distinguished from other products, services, or concepts so that it can be easily communicated and usually marketed. A brand name is the name of the distinctive product, service, or concept. Branding is the process of creating and disseminating the brand name. Branding can be applied to the entire corporate identity as well as to individual product and service names. Brands are often expressed in the form of *logos*, graphic representations of the brand.

Brands are generally developed over time through:

- Advertisements containing consistent messaging
- Recommendations from friends, family members or colleagues
- Interactions with a company and its representatives
- Real-life experiences using a product or service (generally considered the most important element of establishing a brand)

**BRAND PREFERENCE** -The stage of brand loyalty at which a buyer will select a particular brand but will choose a competitor's brand if the preferred brand is unavailable. Consumers usually has some sort of brand preference with companies as they may have had a good history with a particular brand or their friends may have had a reliable history with one. [Measure of brand loyalty](#) in which a [consumer](#) will choose a particular brand in presence of [competing brands](#), but will [accept substitutes](#) if that brand is not available.

Brand preferences selective demand for a company's brand rather than a product; the degree to which consumers prefer one brand over another. In an attempt to build brand preference advertising, the advertising must persuade a [target audience](#) to consider the advantages of a brand, often by building its reputation as a long-established and trusted name in the industry. If the advertising is successful, the target customer will choose the brand over other brands in any category

## 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

It is quite important to understand concept of Corporate Social responsibility (CSR) along with Cause Related Marketing (CRM) to get the difference between the two. Carroll (1999) has written the definition of CSR given by Bowen in his paper who is considered as the father of concept born in Spokane, Washington 'CSR refers to the obligations of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in

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terms of the objectives and values of society'. Kawamura (2004), explained that CSR emphasizes ethical and social aspects of corporate behavior such as corporate ethics, legal compliance, prevention of improprieties and corruption, labor and employment practices, human rights, safety and hygiene, consumer protection, social contribution, procurement standards, and overseas operations. In contrast Cause-related marketing (CRM) is defined as the process of formulating and implementing marketing activities that are characterized by contributing a specific amount to a designated nonprofit effort that, in turn, causes customers to engage in revenue providing exchanges (Mullen, 1997).

Corbishley and Mason (2011) conducted a quantitative study in shopping malls, using a structured questionnaire and sample size of 400 administered via interviews. Results established that there is a relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and the evaluation of a CRM offer. In their study 94% respondents agreed that it is important for businesses to spend money on charities. The number of respondents that had recalled purchasing a CRM product amounted to 69%.

Boulstridge and Carrington (2000) propose in their research that awareness of company activity in the area of social responsibility was very low, in spite of increased coverage by the media of corporate activities and the rise of business activity in this area. They conclude that the effect is just not getting through to the average consumer.

Carringer (1994) believes that CRM has become a good choice for corporations as it provides a message that is unique, well targeted and effective. It is a most efficient way for companies to differentiate themselves in a highly competitive environment.

With the passage of time various factors have forced the private sectors to rethink their relationship to their communities. The two edged benefit says that Cause related marketing is a mutually benefited commercial pact between a profit making company and a nonprofit organization with a view to assist the nonprofit organization in raising fund or to benefit the society by supporting a *cause*.

Varadarajan and Menon (1988) have seen Cause Related Marketing in the early stages but absolutely in a projective way. They defined Cause Related marketing as the process of formulating and implementing marketing activities that are characterized by an offer from the firm to contribute a specified amount to a designated cause when customers engage in revenue-providing exchanges that satisfy organizational and individual objectives. They have identified large number of objectives but six main objectives seems more promising i.e. Increase sales, Enhancing corporate Stature, Thwarting negative publicity, Customer Pacification, Facilitating Market Entry, Increase the level of trade merchandising activity for brand promoted.

Bloom et al (2006) have clearly written in their research paper that companies have been able to use cause-related marketing to help make a distinction of their brands from competitors in consumers' minds and as expected get desirable effects, including greater efficiency for other marketing efforts, an ability to charge higher prices, increased market share, greater brand loyalty and better stakeholders management. Sometimes this may also result in negative way as the consumer has become extra smart to understand the logic behind.

Sheikh and Zee (2011) have revealed in their study that the concepts like CSR and CRM do have an effect on customers' attitudes. They have also mentioned that CRM might be more cost-efficient, its positive effect is limited to customers with high cause affinity. In contrast, CRM has a negative effect on customers with low cause affinity, or who oppose the cause. CRM not only affects the external customer but also the internal customer i.e. the employees. Internal customers strongly favor the firms' involvement in cause-related activities and the firm is positively perceived as an employer, by both the business and non-business communities. The internal customers responses appear to be an increased awareness of worthy causes throughout our society, as well as employees also contributes to their surrounding environment or community of which they are also part of. (Rebollo, 2009, Gourville and Rangan, 2004).But the current paper mainly focuses on External Customer.

Shabbir et al. (2010) disclosed in their study relationship between Cause Related Marketing (CRM) campaigns, brand awareness and corporate image as possible antecedents of consumer purchase intentions in the less developed country of Pakistan. The data was collected from 203 students studying in different universities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The findings indicated that consumer purchase intentions are influenced by the cause related marketing campaigns, it was also observed that the brand awareness and corporate image partially mediate the impact of CRM campaigns on consumer purchase intentions.

Babu and Mohiuddin (2008) conducted a study using demographic variables. The demographic variables have great influence on the purchasing decision making process of customer. The findings have showed that a customer is influenced by the companies' cause related marketing programs while adopting a new brand or executing its purchase intension and the customers prefer to support generally health and life saving issues.

Farache (2008) conducted a study to understand consumers' perceptions regarding Cause Related Marketing [CRM]. The study was done on 200 consumers. The research found that consumers have a better perception of firms that work with charities and good causes than those that do not. They believe that the partnership between corporations and charities has an impact on the good of society. However, they are aware that corporations themselves benefit from this partnership. Concerning good causes, consumers prefer to support those related to Children. The

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researchers noticed that an individual connection with a cause might have considerable influence on consumer attitudes and behavior in relation to a specific cause.

In Indian context, the groups like Tata, Reliance, HUL, P&G etc have adopted the CRM Techniques quite positively. Some examples like Tata Tea worked with Janaagraha on a voter registration drive, with the campaign name "Jaago re!!" (Wake up!) Following this, the company moved the campaign on to opposing corruption. The Jaago Re website encourages discussion on this and other social issues. Tata Tea will also come out with a 'Jaago Re Corruption Index'. This will gauge the perception of people on corruption and quantify it along with this promoting December 9, internationally marked as 'Anti-Corruption Day', to make it into a national activity.

Idea mobile is out with a new ad campaign in which they are appealing the nation to save tree in every possible way. It positions mobile as a great idea to eliminate huge wastage of paper and has even demonstrated different ways of doing it through its latest television commercial. With these kinds of ads we are understanding as well as dealing with day to day problems of life and trying to tell how technology can help solve it (Ptacek & Salazar, 1997).

IDEA Cellular set to launch a new brand campaign under the popular, What an Idea, Sirji! series, to demonstrate the power of telephony, in a country where 850 mother tongues and 22,000 dialects are spoken. India is a land of a billion people talking in 22 recognized languages, 850 mother tongues, and 22,000 dialects; it is also a land of opportunities for the young Indians who are ambitious, go-getters, and have dreams in their eyes. However, this diversity and vastness, at times, poses a hurdle in the growth of the youth of this country. Taking note of this growing concern of the society, IDEA Cellular has set out to demonstrate how a simple solution can build bridges between people speaking different languages. The recent advertisement of IDEA Cellular has shown a greater concern for increasing population of India and somehow they have also reflected another problem i.e. frequent power cut.

***P&G launches SHIKSHA'08*** you can now help educate more Underprivileged children via simple brand choices. P&G commits Rs. 1 crore, to its partner CRY, which will be allocated to projects focused on enabling the child's right to education. Project Shiksha is part of P&G's global philanthropy program P&G Live, Learn and Thrive that focuses on the development of children in need across the globe, with Education of Children via Shiksha being the priority in India. Till Date, Shiksha has set 67,000 children across 435 communities on the path to the right to education with a donation of over Rs.4 crore with a motto of "Padhega India, Badhega India", the program aims at providing education to all for a brighter India. Shiksha is being supported by celebrities like Sushmita Sen, Rahul Bose, Konkona Sen, Tabu, Soha Ali Khan, Lara Dutta, Preity Zinta, Kiran Bedi, Sanjana Kapoor, Jatin Das, Shaan and others. The program was launched by Bollywood actors Kajol and Sharmila Tagore.

## **2. OBJECTIVES**

- To develop and standardize a measure for evaluating Social Cause related marketing.
- To develop and standardize a measure for evaluating consumer Brand preference
- To Evaluate the underlying factors of Social Cause Related marketing and consumer Brand preference
- To identify the relationship between Social Cause Related marketing and consumer Brand preference
- To open new vista for further researches.

## **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

- **THE STUDY:** The study is exploratory in nature with survey method being used as a tool for data collection.
- **THE SAMPLE DESIGN:** Population included shoppers from Gwalior region. Since the data was collected through personal contacts the sample frame included all the shoppers from Gwalior and nearby regions those were present at Gwalior during the data collection face of the study. Sample size for the study was 100. Individual respondents were treated as the sampling elements in this research. Non probability sampling technique was used to identify respondents for inclusion in the sample.
- **TOOLS USED FOR DATA COLLECTION:** Self designed questionnaires based on Likert type scale were used for collecting data. The responses were solicited on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 indicated minimum agreement with the statement and 5 indicated maximum agreement.
- **TOOLS USE FOR DATA ANALYSIS:** Item to total correlation was used for checking the internal consistency of the questionnaires. Cronbach's alpha Reliability coefficient was calculated based on responses received from the respondents on each questionnaire separately for evaluating the reliability of the questionnaires. Factor analysis was used for analyzing the underlying factors of social causes of marketing and brand preferences. Regression test was applied to find out the relationship between social cause related marketing and brand preferences.

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### 4. RESULTS

#### 5. Consistency Measure

S. No.	Item	Computed correlated value	Consistency	Accepted/dropped
1.	I do purchase when the product is related to a social cause.	0.551332	Consistent	Accepted
2.	I do Purchase the products that are related to some selected social cause.	0.712247	Consistent	Accepted
3.	Marketing of a product with a social cause helps to remember that product.	0.639887	Consistent	Accepted
4.	In my knowledge everyone is keen towards such product.	0.620498	Consistent	Accepted
5.	I am impulsive sometimes in buying social cause related products.	0.597349	Consistent	Accepted
6.	I personally believe that if such product is promoted well can affect the consumer buying decision.	0.611607	Consistent	Accepted
7.	I believe that consumer purchases are impacted by because related marketing campaign.	0.55342	Consistent	Accepted
8.	I feel happy when I buy a social cause related product.	0.52373	Consistent	Accepted
9.	I give me immense pleasure when I buy such product, even when it's out of my budget.	0.529184	Consistent	Accepted
10.	I am very loyal to the brand through good or bad times.	0.531508	Consistent	Accepted
11.	It is very difficult for other brand to replace social cause related product.	0.579412	Consistent	Accepted
12.	The brand reminds me the things that one has done for society.	0.54128	Consistent	Accepted
13.	The brand reflects my personality that I purchases.	0.529126	Consistent	Accepted
14.	The brand reminds me, brand's image and my self-image are similar.	0.592884	Consistent	Accepted
15.	Social cause related products purchases should not be forced by brands.	0.614941	Consistent	Accepted
16.	I feel proud to be associated with brand.	0.44789	Consistent	Accepted
17.	I do follow the messages given by such social cause related campaigns.	0.504994	Consistent	Accepted
18.	The brand plays an important role in my life.	0.523136	Consistent	Accepted
19.	I will not switch to another brand if the brand I use support a nonprofit organizations.	0.633773	Consistent	Accepted
20.	Well known brands provide a role in reducing risk.	0.704244	Consistent	Accepted
21.	I engage in physical action and behaviors when I use brands.	0.618365	Consistent	Accepted
22.	The internet reduces the effects of brand and its impact on consumer decision making.	0.537382	Consistent	Accepted
23.	Social cause related marketing campaigns have a positive impact on the brand awareness.	0.63993	Consistent	Accepted
24.	Social cause related marketing campaigns have a positive impact on the corporate image of the company.	0.584957	Consistent	Accepted



25.	Different brands with the same price and quality, it is more likely that I will choose the brand that I know is related to social cause.	0.606696	Consistent	Accepted
26.	I think product placement in the mind impact brand preferences.	0.636406	Consistent	Accepted
27.	I think it is the social responsibility of a brand to relate itself with a social cause.	0.593766	Consistent	Accepted
28.	I do have strong emotions for the brand if it is related to a social cause.	0.670079	Consistent	Accepted
29.	The brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses.	0.605575	Consistent	Accepted
30.	Brand personality affects consumer decision-making.	0.475987	Consistent	Accepted
31.	I would buy other products offered by same brand.	0.435727	Consistent	Accepted
32.	I will stop using the product, If in any case I come to know that the money collected is not use where it was promised to be.	0.576474	Consistent	Accepted
33.	I specially ask for the social cause related products.	0.541864	Consistent	Accepted

### Factor Analysis

KMO and Bartlett's Test Social cause related		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.844
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	502.882
	Df	136
	Sig.	.000

Consistency of all the statements in the questionnaire was checked through item to total correlation. The measures having item to total correlation lower than the critical value (i.e.0.194219) were declared as inconsistent and dropped from the questionnaire.

The results of item to total correlations for Social Cause Related Marketing are displayed in the table below. It is evident from the table that all the items have higher than critical value of item to total correlation and are therefore, considered consistent.

Factor Name	Eigen Value	Var. No.	Variable Convergence	% of Var	Loading
Self Image	32.870	13	It reflects my personality.	32.870	0.672
		14	It reminds me, brand's image and my self-image are similar.		0.628
		15	Social cause related products purchases should not be forced by brands.		0.576
		11	Difficult for other brand to replace social cause related product.		0.527
		5	Impulsive sometimes in buying social cause related products.		0.522
		12	Reminds me the things that one has done for society.		0.483

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Dedication	8.494	1	Purchase when the product is related to a social cause.	41.365	0.797
		8	Feel happy when I buy a social cause related product.		0.614
		2	Purchase the products that are related to some selected social cause.		0.572
		6	Personally believe that if such product is promoted well can affect the consumer buying decision.		0.517
Intensity	7.614	3	Marketing of a product with a social cause helps to remember that product.	48.979	0.422
		9	Immense pleasure when I buy such product, even when it's out of my budget.		0.764
		4	Everyone is keen towards such product.		0.625
Loyalty	6.603	7	Consumer purchases are impacted by because related marketing campaign.	55.528	0.588
		16	Proud to be associated with brand.		0.744
		10	Loyal to the brand through good or bad times.		0.632
		17	Follow the messages given by such social cause related campaigns.		0.603

**Table 1: showing item to total correlations for Social Cause Related Marketing and Brand Preference.**

### 5.2 Reliability Measure

The reliability of Emotional Intelligence questionnaire was computed by using SPSS-16 software. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were computed to calculate reliability of all items in the questionnaire.

**Table 2 (a): Reliability Statistics for Social Cause Related Marketing**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.867	17

**Table2 (b): Reliability Statistics for Brand Preference**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.870	16

It is considered that the reliability value 0.7 is a standard value and it can be seen that in the reliability method that applied here, reliability value is approximate to the standard value, so all the items in the questionnaire are reliable. So the statements in the questionnaire were treated as reliable statements.

### 5.3 VALIDITY

The face validity was checked and found to be high.

#### 5.4 FACTOR ANALYSIS

The raw score of 33 items were subjected to factor analysis to find out the factor that contributes towards cause related marketing and brand preferences. After factor analysis 4 components were identified in each table. The details about factors, the factor name, Eigen value, Variable convergence, Loadings, Variance% and cumulative% are given in the table.

**Table 3: KMO and Bartlett's Tests results**

KMO and Bartlett's Test brand preference		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.867
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	496.326
	Df	120
	Sig.	.000

Factor Name	Eigen Value	Var. No.	Variable Convergence	% of Variance	Loading
Brand awareness	35.008	12	Brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses.	35.008	0.736
		8	Different brands with the same price and quality, it is more likely.		0.712
		6	Social cause related marketing campaigns have a positive impact on the brand awareness.		0.690
		10	The social responsibility of a brand to relate itself with a social cause.		0.664
		15	Stop using the product, If in any case I come to know that the money collected is not use where it was promised to be.		0.567
		3	Well known brands provide a role in reducing risk.		0.468
Brand Image	8.545	11	Strong emotions for the brand.	43.553	0.783
		9	Product placement in the mind impact brand.		0.698
		4	Engage in physical action and behaviors when I use brands.		0.681
		16	Specially ask for the social cause related products.		0.639
		5	Internet reduces the effects of brand and its impact on consumer decision making.		0.623
		7	Social cause related marketing campaigns have a positive impact on the corporate image of the company.		0.418
Brand Role	7.723	1	The brand plays an important role in my life.	51.276	0.794
		2	I will not switch if they support a nonprofit organizations.		0.442
Decision making	6.625	14	Other products offered by same brand.	57.901	0.775
		13	Brand personality affects consumer decision-making.		0.736

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of sampling adequacy value for Social Cause Related and Brand Preference was .84 and .86 respectively indicating that the sample size was adequate to consider the data as normally distributed .The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was tested through Chi-Square

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Value 502.882 and 496.326 both significant at 0%level indicating that the inter-item correlation matrix was not an identity matrix and therefore the data was suitable for factor analysis.

### **Table 4 (a) Factor Analysis of Social Cause Related Marketing**

### **Table 4 (b) Factor Analysis of Brand Preference**

The results of factor analysis have clubbed 17 statements of Social Cause Related Marketing into four factors and the factors which has received highest Eigen Value of 32.870 is Self Image. Rest of the statements falling in the category of Brand Preference got clubbed into four factors and the factor receiving highest Eigen Value of 35.008 is Brand Awareness.

## **6.5 REGRESSION**

The regression is calculated by taking the Cause Related marketing and Brand Preferences but using SPSS Software. In this cause related marketing is taken as independent variable and brand preference as dependent variable.

**H<sub>0</sub>= There is no significant effect of cause related marketing on Brand preference**

**H<sub>a</sub>= There is significant effect of cause related marketing on Brand preference**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	11.729	3.709		3.162	.002
	Cr	.737	.062	.768	11.858	.000
Dependent Variable: bp						

$$Y = A + BX$$

$$Y = 11.729 + .737X$$

Here,

Y= independent Variable (Cause related marketing)

X= dependent Variable (Brand preference)

The multiple regressions were applied between cause related marketing and brand preference. The result of regression indicates that independent variable cause related marketing has a significant impact on dependent variable brand preference signified by the coefficient beta factor

of 0.768.also the t-value significant even at 0% although if we compare the computed t-value with critical value (1.96) at 5 % of significance.

## **6. SUGGESTIONS**

- In the study, Gwalior region is taken as population but population can be increased.
- The analysis is based on only one hundred respondents, as soon as we increase the respondents, result may vary.
- The research on cause related marketing (independent Variable) as correlates of brand preference (dependent variable) can also be conducted in other sectors.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

The questionnaire on Social Cause Related Marketing and Brand Preference were designed and standardized. Reliability of the questionnaire was checked through Cronbach's alpha which was found to be high. Factor Analysis converged into four factors for both the variable. Regression test resulted in a significant effect of Social Cause Related Marketing on Brand Preference.

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